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We Can Do It

by Susan Hulbert

"Listen, if you're so worried about not making any money, I can get you a job tomorrow," Sarah shouted. "You'll have to learn a whole new set of skills, and you may not like it all, but if you want to make a lot of money. I can show you how."

"I'm skilled enough," I snapped back. "I've passed my degree, danced on the university's ballroom dancing team, played tennis for the state, and I can cook."

"But you're broke and you've no idea how to make any money." Sarah shouted.

"If I have to paint myself green and stand in the middle of the mall, I'll do it." I shouted back.

"Right, it's your day off tomorrow." Sarah reached the office door. "I'll pick you up at four. Dress smart casual... and remember, one complaint and you're on your own." Please don't think she was my girlfriend or anything like that. She was far more sophisticated and worldly for someone like me. She was one of those girls who has a job as a way of passing the time between things; things like no jobs and parties, marriages and flings with inappropriate men with money.

And she was my best friend and a really nice person.

I wasn't in a good place. I'd come to the coast with high hopes, but nothing in the way of the skills needed. I was sofa surfing among friends until they got fed up with me. I don't blame them. I had no money, no real prospects, and I was cramping their style anyway.

This week, I was staying with Rosa and Sarah in of Sarah's houses. Their usual roommate was away for a few months working in the Caribbean, and Sarah was between boyfriends... or husbands. Sometimes it got too complicated to follow.

She owned other houses, but she liked the company.

"You should be careful, Aaron," Rosa said from the other side of the room. "I don't think you'll fit in with Sarah's friends."

"She's okay..." I said carelessly. "Under that hard exterior."

"There's a harder interior." Rosa finished my sentence, but not in the way I intended. "She's arm candy for anyone with the money."

"You're being unfair," I protested.

"She doesn't get to look that good on the money she gets here." Rosa wouldn't let go. "Look at her clothes, the shoes, and the car she drives. Think how she pays the hairdresser, the nail salon, the gym, not to mention the penthouse across town." "Maybe she has a trust fund?" I said.

"Maybe she does, and maybe I'm being catty," Rosa replied.

"I was joking." I tried to laugh it off. "She works at some sort of agency."

"It's called The Litigation Agency but I don't think they've got anything to do with the law."

"She's not such a monster as you're making out," I said. "She's picking me up tomorrow afternoon to see if she can help me to a better job... I think."

"Maybe I'm doing her a disservice." Rosa paused at the door on her way out. "But don't say I didn't warn you."

So that was how it all started. Four o'clock the next afternoon I was standing on the pavement outside the block where I rented a room in their apartment. Dress smart-casual, she'd said. I didn't have anything but casual. If it was smart... well, that was a matter of opinion. It was the best that Walmart could provide.

"Don't stand there staring. Get in." Sarah was waving to me from the red two-seater waiting at the opposite kerb.

I opened the door and folded myself into the passenger seat, trying to fasten my seat belt as she accelerated away.

"You don't scrub up well." Sarah looked me up and down as she drove. "Is that the best you can do?"

"It's the money thing," I replied sharply. "I don't have any, so I can't dress any better."

"Never mind. You'll have to do as you are."

We drove through the city, into the commercial centre but not into the public parking. Sarah turned into a valet parking lot, tossed her keys to the attendant, and waited for me to get out of the car and walk around to join her.

"When we get to the office, shut up and let me do all the talking."

I looked at her in surprise. "If this is meant to get me a job, shouldn't I have something to say for myself?"

"Maybe, but this isn't that kind of job," Sarah replied. "You wanted something to make big bucks and this could be your opportunity. Remember, you were the one who offered to paint himself green."

"Yes, but..."

"No buts," she snapped. "You might have to use a bit of paint but if you're willing to fit in and do what you're told, it could be your passport to an easier life."

"You're talking in riddles." I was puzzled.

"Enough. You'll learn soon enough if you fit in here."

I didn't have time to say more as she turned into the door of something called The Litigation Agency and I followed. It looked like a law office, but the perfumed air wasn't very lawyerly, and the chamber music playing didn't fit my impression of a law office anyway.

"Sit," Sarah told me, pointing to a chair and watching as if I was a dog.

Surprised by her tone, I sat where I was told and watched as she spoke to the girl on the reception desk. It was one of those with a raised counter, with the girl sitting at a lower desk behind so my view was really restricted. I couldn't hear much of the conversation.

I could just hear Sarah telling her that I was the person she'd told them about and that I'd been a ballroom dancer. I didn't catch the rest.

"They'll take you in for a physical in a few moments and after that if they're interested in you, we'll get to the interview stage."

"I don't understand..."

"At the moment, you don't need to understand, just remember to say as little as possible. Think of the money."

Before I could ask more, a severe-looking lady in a white coat came into the room, looked at the papers on her clipboard, and called me forward. She took me into a room, like a doctor's consulting room, with a number of instruments and an examination table.

At the side was a chair-like contraption with what looked like leg pieces and soft straps around where the ankles and the arms would rest. There was a slight scent of antiseptic in the air, mixed with something sweeter. A mask fastened to a cylinder by tubes rested at the foot of the table.

"Please don't be afraid of all these medical bits and pieces." She said. "I'm going to give you a quick physical examination and take a few measurements to determine if I can pass you to the next stage. Go behind the screen and strip off. You can use the paper panties you'll find on the chair."

I did as I was told, feeling unsure of where this was going as I pulled the scanty and very flimsy paper panties up my legs. They felt strange; tight and concealing virtually nothing.

"Is this really necessary?" I asked, beginning to feel more apprehensive. "I've only come to ask about a job."

"Of course you have, dear," she said soothingly. "And I'm here to examine you for that position."

Taking a deep breath, I tried to shed my feelings of nervousness. "What do you want me to do?" I asked.

"First we do height and weight," she said, leading me to the wall where I was measured.

"You're five foot and five inches," she said, and then I stood on some scales. And one hundred and seventeen pounds. That sounds good although you could do with losing a few pounds."

"Does it?" I'd always been sensitive about my lack of height and skinny body.

She smiled and carried on, measuring my hips, waist and then around my chest, recording everything on her clipboard.

"What size shoes do you wear?" she asked, looking me in the eye with a smile that made me feel even more self-conscious.

"Six and sometimes a little smaller; it depends on how they fit," I replied, then sat patiently whilst she tested my blood pressure and listened to my chest. Her cold stethoscope made me wince at first touch.

"That's all very good. Now pop up onto the bench. I want a couple more measurements and to test your reflexes."

After the bench, I was asked to sit in the chair and didn't protest as she fastened Velcro straps around my wrists and then my ankles. The chair tipped suddenly and I let out an involuntary cry.

"Oh dear, I'd better make sure that you're really secure," she said, reaching more straps round my thighs and knees, my chest, and then a final one around my waist.

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"I feel trussed up like a turkey," I tried to joke.

She looked at me and half-smiled. "Yes, you really are, aren't you?"

She reached behind me and the next thing I felt was the gas mask being pulled over my nose and mouth.

"It's only a little gas and air to help you relax."

I heard the hiss of the gas being turned on and a slightly sweet odour filled my nose. Instinctively I held my breath, but then could hold it no longer and inhaled deeply. A warm feeling began to run through my body and I felt spacey and more than a little lethargic. I think I was half-asleep.

The chair tilted back further, and my legs were up in the air. I saw her reach for a lever and my legs were parted quite uncomfortably. I felt her hands on my penis and, much as I hated it for doing so, it grew quickly to her touch.

To my surprise she measured it, both length and girth, noting these figures on her chart. She disappeared behind the chair and out of my vision, humming softly to herself. She returned and I saw her pulling on a pair of surgical gloves. I couldn't have guessed what was coming.

"Try to relax and this won't be too uncomfortable," she said, lubricating the gloves with some oily substance from a dispenser on a shelf. "Some people really like this part, or so I'm told."

I didn't say a word. I don't think I could have protested; it was all so far away as the gas continued to fill my mask. I closed my eyes as I felt her finger probing at my anus. She seemed to probe a lot more than necessary, although I'd never had an examination like this before, so how could I know?

I should have protested but the gas was still working, making it all feel so remote and not unpleasant.

I felt one finger, then another, working and wriggling inside me. The pressure continued and I couldn't tell if she was inserting more but I could feel the stretching and stretching.

Suddenly a chill... no, a *thrill* rippled through me as she reached a sensitive spot. My penis responded almost at once, growing to its thickest and most urgent. I couldn't help myself. It came all over sudden and I groaned in pleasure as I came and came all over myself, and probably all over her arms too.

"I think that was a surprise," she said, keeping the pressure on my rear. "I think you enjoyed the feeling more than you expected."

I tried to reply but I was panting with the exertion and the wild pleasure of it all. I mumbled something incoherent as she continued my internal examination. My breath returned and slowly her fingers withdrew. I could feel the muscles contracting as the last digit came away.

"I'm so sorry," I mumbled through the mask.

The exhilaration turned to embarrassment as I realised what I had done.

"Don't worry; I've seen it all before," she said, taking a sample from the glistening drips on my stomach and placing it in a test tube.

She took the mask off. I took a few deep breaths, trying to get back to normal. It wasn't coming quickly.

"Is that everything?" I asked now that I'd got my breath and a little composure back.

"A free vitamin injection to say thanks for being so tolerant, then you can get dressed."

I said nothing as I felt the pressure of an injection in each of my bottom cheeks. Another warm tingle radiated over my body as the Velcro was released and the mask was removed from my face. I was allowed to stay there for a few moments as my senses returned.

Surprisingly there was no continuing effect from the gas at all. The chair returned to a normal position, and I stood rather shakily, feeling a bit lightheaded, kind of nice but still spacey. And my bum was tingling... nicely.

"You can get dressed now and I'll take these preliminary results through to the office. I think they'll want to speak to you right away, so you can rest and wait until you're called."

"What about Sarah? She was waiting for me."

"We'll call her for you. She said something about shopping and for us to call her. She'll pick you up outside."

"I don't understand why they gave me that medical examination," I said as Sarah pulled out of the car park. "It was more than a little embarrassing."

"I didn't want to warn you in case I scared you off," Sarah replied.

"You could have done that easily if I'd been warned."

"Guess why I didn't tell you." She grinned wickedly at me and without meaning to, I caught her mood and we both laughed.

"I think you need to explain," I said when we'd calmed down.

"Okay, I'm taking you to dinner. I promise to tell you everything then."

We pulled into a mall, outside one of the better Italian chain restaurants, one I could rarely afford.

"My treat." Sarah swung out of the car and stood waiting for me to catch up.

We made small talk as we ate. Then after the plates were cleared and coffee had been served, we sat to finish the wine.

"I think it's time to come clean," I said. "I don't think the agency has anything to do with litigation."

"Of course not; that would be too boring. We're more of an anything and everything agency for particular tastes. Maybe we should have called it The We Can Do It Agency but that wouldn't have looked so respectable on the business cards. She paused and looked at me as if considering how to continue. "How shockable are you?"

"Not very."

"How broad-minded are you then?"

"I'm a modern man," I replied. "I believe in live and let live. Everyone has the right to live their own life."

"And how do you feel about some compromises to make real money."

"I don't seem to have many choices left." I shrugged my shoulders. "But how about you tell me what this is all about?"

"Okay. I'll tell you but you must promise to hear me out and don't jump to conclusions or react before you've had time to think about it."

"I promise," I said.

"The agency is for female impersonators." Sarah paused to let this sink in. "Boys who dress up as girls; boys who look like they're girls, even some who want to be girls."

I remember looking at her with my mouth hanging open for a few moments before I could think what to say.

"So that was what the physical was about," I said slowly, shaking my head and trying to catch up with all the implications.

"I think you passed." Sarah smiled at me. "I'd have gotten a call if not."

"Gee, thanks," I said. "So, they think they could make a good girl out of me."

"I think they'd be disappointed if they made a *good* girl out of you. They'd be hoping for someone more... wicked or adventurous perhaps.

"I fell for that one," I laughed. "But I don't think it's me."

"I'm sad to hear you say that." Sarah reached out and took my hand. "I'd like you to think it through before you dismiss the idea."

"I'm not gay," I said firmly and realised that I'd made my voice deeper to say it.

"Of course you're not," Sarah replied. "That's not a requirement."

"I bet most of them are."

"Some are of course but we don't ask, and we don't tell," Sarah said. "Some of our girls are definitely straight. I know because their wives or girlfriends have brought them to us."

"Why would they do that?" I asked. "It's weird."

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"Not when you remember how well paid they are," Sarah replied.

"I was forgetting that."

"Keep it in mind." Sarah squeezed my hand. "Right now, you've no job, no car, no girlfriend, and nowhere to live if I wasn't letting you stay with me rent free."

"I know, and I'm grateful..." I paused. "But how would I do it? I mean, what would I have to do?"

"Nothing you don't consent to," Sarah said.

"But I'd have to pretend to be a girl with some guy."

"That's the essence of it, yes." Sarah nodded.

"I don't want to be some sort of male prostitute."

"I don't want you to be anything like that," Sarah said. "Our girls aren't sleazy, and we don't have nasty clients. We know who they are, and they know that there'd be consequences if they didn't treat our girls right."

"This is too much to take in." I remember feeling really confused right then. "Could I think about it?"

"I need an answer," Sarah said. "If you're willing, you could start almost immediately."

"And if I'm not?"

"I think you'll have to find somewhere else to live."

"Can we go for a drive?" I took a deep breath. "I need to think, and I can't do that here where all these people coming in might overhear us."

We drove to a quiet area where Sarah could park near the river. There were seats and in the late afternoon sun, Sarah and I sat side-by-side, watching the water flow by.

My mind was racing as we sat there quietly. All kinds of pictures flashed across my memory. I'd had so little experience with girls and none with boys and yet that was probably what I was being asked to contemplate now.

"You're asking me to be gay for pay," I said after a long silence.

"That's not entirely true," Sarah replied. "We're offering you the opportunity to make real money and to do it, you have to dress up and be convincing."

"So that means convincing sexually."

"Not necessarily," Sarah said. "You may have sex if you choose, but you don't have to unless you feel it's right for you at the time."

"And if it doesn't?"

"You get the jobs where there's no risk of being asked."

"For less money?"

"What do you think?"

I was silent for a while. It wasn't an awkward silence, and I didn't feel pressured. I let my mind wander and tried to envisage what I might do, what I could do, and what I was probably being asked to do.

"Why did I get those injections?" I asked.

"Don't worry about them. They were only a mild primer for if you wanted to come along with us."

"And if I don't?"

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"They'll wear off. They're only to smooth your skin, supress your beard growth. It's all temporary." She smiled reassuringly.

"How do you know that the clients are clean?"

"I wondered if you would ask that." Sarah smiled. "I guess if I can assure you on that point, you're going to decide to come along with us."

"Yes."

I was surprised to hear myself say that, but I figured that I knew how men were wired... and plumbed.

I thought "I can handle that" – forgive the pun – especially for the money on offer.

"I told you that no client is allowed to be anonymous. We take samples and get them analysed before we allow any of our girls near them. We ask for repeat tests and always advise safe sex," Sarah said.

"In that case, count me in," I said, trembling a little as she hugged me, and wondering why on earth I had agreed.

I think it was the money.

Next day, I was called in. I was shown into a tastefully decorated office, more like a comfortable sitting room but with a desk at one end. I sat in an easy chair. Daphne Flight, my interviewer, smiled and sat opposite me.

"I've read your physical and you've certainly passed all our tests." She looked up from the papers in front of her and smiled at me.

"I know what you do. I don't understand what they were all for, but I've got no health problems at all."

"That's what our nurse said," Daphne replied. "She said your vitals were really healthy and, as far as this organisation is concerned, really attractive."

"Thanks, but I'm still not sure what my job here would be." I was having second thoughts and decided to play dumb.

"I guess not."

"And you haven't told me either."

"Maybe we'd better start with your potential earnings with us." Daphne put her papers down. "You could be looking at north of fifty thousand in the first year, with no upper limit."

"Fifty thousand?" I said incredulously. "Is it legal?"

"Of course, it's legal." Daphne looked at me as if I'd asked a silly question. "If you get other earnings on top of what we pay you, we only ask for a small percentage. The rest is all yours and of course, there are the tips."

"Tips?" I asked.

"Of course; this is a service industry after all."

"Earnings on top of the fifty thousand and tips. I'm having trouble with the figures. Are they for real?"

"Of course, they're real," Daphne said. "Of course, you'll have to give your full-time attention to get those sums."

"You'd better tell me what I have to do for all this." I think my disbelief was still sounding out loud right then. "What kind of litigation does The Litigation Agency take on?"

"None whatever; we're not lawyers. We adopted the name because it sounded good, and it looks good on our clients' bank statements and credit card bills." Daphne paused and looked at me. "We're an introduction agency."

"I thought they'd all died out with the internet and all those dating sites."

"We're different," Daphne said. "We provide business services that people couldn't get elsewhere."

"I'm missing something here."

"We sell services to our clients of the harder-to-find variety, and I think you'd be more than suitable to work with us." She looked at me, expecting that I'd understand all this.

I didn't and looked at her puzzled.

"We sell sex," she said bluntly when it was clear that I hadn't taken any of her hints. "I thought Sarah would have gone through all this with you."

"She did, but I wasn't taking it all in," I admitted. "Please could we go through it again?"

"Okay, what part of 'we sell sex' is giving you difficulty?"

"You want me to be some kind of male prostitute?" I said incredulously.

"Not at all." Daphne shook her head. "We may get a request for help to show off a private art exhibition. Maybe they need something a little different, like five boys dressed as Marilyn. We can provide that."

"But I'm nothing like Marilyn," I stuttered.

"No, but you could be. I read that you were a dancer, so you could probably move, simper, and pout the right way. Makeup and hair can do the rest. It's all a matter of acting."

"Does everyone know that this is what you do?"

"Of course not, but Sarah thought you'd be good for us and that we could be good for you."

"She didn't tell me everything about this," I said. "I'm more than a little scared now that I've had some time to think. You didn't tell me all this before the physical."

"There was no point in telling you unless you made the physical."

"And I did." I was still struggling with the concept that they could see me fitting in with this.

"You really did, especially with your reaction to the internal examination. You hardly objected and then came so readily."

"Is that important?"

"Only if you want to make fifty thousand or more."

"I can't believe this." I stood and went out the door.

Sarah was just coming through the door. I pushed past her and out into the street. There was a small garden opposite with benches. I flung myself down onto one and tried to calm myself and think things through.

I felt Sarah sitting beside me. I didn't look at her.

"You didn't tell me the whole truth about that place," I said.

"I told you the truth," Sarah said sharply. "Maybe I didn't tell you everything."

"I think they want to make me into some kind of transvestite to have sex with whoever pays them to hire me."

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I knew as I said it that she'd already explained all this to me. I was struggling again to convince myself and wanted some sort of re-assurance.

"Something like that."

"That's too sordid. I couldn't do that."

"Wait a minute. You're the one who wants to make money and they're not going to make you do anything." Sarah put her hand gently on my back.

"It sounded like that to me." I didn't want to be pacified.

"Okay, so don't bother. I said all this yesterday. That's the last time I try to help you out," Sarah said severely.

She started to stand, and I felt suddenly guilty at snubbing her effort to help.

"You could have told me more," I said weakly and looked up at her.

I think she could see the tear forming in my eye.

"There was no use telling you if you didn't pass the physical." She sat down again. "I didn't expect them to tell you so bluntly. Maybe they thought that I'd told you more than I had."

"So, what should have happened?"

"I don't know but it should have been gentler than that."

"Perhaps they thought it was what I intended when I went there."

"Maybe," Sarah said more softly. "Maybe I should have explained more before all this."

"How about doing some more explaining now?" I asked, getting my emotions under control.

"Okay, here goes." She took my hand and looked at me directly. "I told you that we deal with female impersonators, transvestites, and boys who want to act like girls."

I looked at her with some sort of horror on my face. Reality was hitting me hard.

"Don't get it wrong. They don't want drag queens or super exhibitionists. They want sensible people to deal with up-market clients."

I looked at her, still silent.

"That means clients with money to pay for whatever they want."

"I don't know that I could do whatever they want," I said, finally finding my tongue.

"You won't be asked to do anything you don't want." Sarah took my hand and looked at me intently. "The clients don't humiliate the girls. They don't ask for more than the girl is willing to give."

"So, the girl, or perhaps it's me we're talking about, has to be willing to offer sexual services."

"That's one way of putting it but no more than you want to do or feel comfortable with."

"And that's the way to make big money?" I asked, feeling calmer now.

"Why not try it out? You may like it, or you may hate it, but there's only one way to find out."

"I guess... It's only sex after all." I laughed a little bitterly.

"Don't dismiss it; you may get to like it that way. How would you know? You've never tried it, have you?"