

## The Padded Palace Act I: Chapter 10

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Water trickled down from cracks in the gutter that hung overhead. The dark grey sky set an ominous tone for the afternoon, as Latasha stood hand in hand with Skye, waiting in the doorway.

Dressed in a pair of shortalls and a noticeable diaper bulge to anyone who looking for it, Skye's eyes were growing just as wet as the pavement outside. "When will my daddy be back?" she asked earnestly as if in the back of her mind, she already knew the answer.

Next to her, Latasha's heart was racing, uncertain if she should tell Skye the truth or lie to her for just a little longer. "He'll be back soon. I'm sure...the rain is just causing traffic."

Skye gripped Latasha's hand harder, which Latasha returned in kind.

A loud crackle of thunder erupted nearby, causing Skye to yelp. Latasha brought her in close, doing her best to comfort her. "There, there," she said, brushing Skye's hair gently, "It's gonna be okay." She pulled her in for a big hug, nuzzling the girl's head into her shoulder.

"Will you promise to take care of me forever?"

The voice that entered Latasha's ears was not Skye's, but a male voice instead. The figure she was holding slowly grew bigger. She didn't dare look down to confirm who it was. She tried to break from the hug, but she was held tightly, unable to break the hold. A single tear fell from her eye as she obediently responded.

"I will. I promise."

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\*CUCKOO! CUCKOO! CUCKOO!\*

Latasha's eyes shot open at the sound of the cuckoo clock sounding off its midnight alarm. "Damn it, I fell asleep on the couch again," thought Latasha, as she sat up, feeling a small kink in her neck from slumbering in an upright position. She picked up the remote resting next to her and shut off the TV.

Tossing the remote aside, Latasha placed her face in her hands, groaning. Ever since Connor had started working for her, she'd been having some vivid dreams and... HE would always show up. She looked at the alcohol shelf in her kitchen, contemplating the idea of drowning her sorrows. Since tomorrow was the start of the weekend, she wouldn't have to worry about a bunch of Littles running around, and Connor could always look after Skye for the morning.

Still, Latasha knew that drinking wouldn't make her feel better, so she decided against it. "What I need now is a good night's sleep," Latasha thought as she stood up and made her way upstairs. She crept her way over to Skye's room and peeked inside, seeing her Little sound

asleep. She smiled at her blissful baby girl and cautiously approached the side of her crib. She leaned against the wooden slats as she stared down at Skye, who was cuddling Lyle and sucking on a bright blue pacifier from beneath a set of fluffy comforters.

Latasha brushed Skye's hair gently, watching as she smiled brightly in her sleep. "Sweet dreams, sweetie," she whispered as she made her way toward the door and softly closed it behind herself.

In the hallway, Latasha couldn't shake off her nervous energy, even after visiting Skye's room. She suddenly got the urge to pad up for the evening. Sure she was a bonafide Mommy, but she was still a diaper lover, and wearing a nappy did always seem to make her feel a bit better. With an ear-to-ear grin, she rushed into her bedroom, stripped off her pants, and leaped across the bed to pull from her own supply of crinkly Megamax diapers. Or at least, she would have, if she had any left. "Dang it!" she thought, knowing that if she wanted a diaper, she'd either need to sneak back into Skye's room or go down to the nursery.

Not wanting to risk Skye waking up from the rustling of plastic, Latasha begrudgingly made the decision to walk all the way back downstairs for a bit of comfort. "Hey, at least I can use the changing table." And so, back down the staircase she went to grab her nighttime supplies. However, when she flipped on the nursery's light switch, her eyes were met with quite a surprise. The room was a mess!

"Goddamn it, Skye! I told you not to come down here at night," Latasha muttered to herself. The crib blankets were all thrown around, stuffed animals kicked across the room, and there was even a dress crumpled up in the corner. "Playing dress-up late into the night again, huh? Your bottom is gonna be so sore tomorrow."

Latasha bent down and picked up the dress, intending to get it put away in the wardrobe. However, she stopped as she saw a large, crusty stain on the front of the dress. "And you soiled your dress too...what did you spill on this?"

Latasha's thoughts soon turned to the dress itself, which was an old one that she specifically remembered boxing up a few months ago. "What was this doing here? It should be in Connor's..."

Freezing in place, a lightbulb went off in Latasha's brain. "No...h-he was far too timid to do something this bold." She folded the dress over her arm and was about to continue cleaning up when suddenly...

**\*SNOOORRE!\***

Latasha's heart nearly dropped out of her chest. She set the dress back down and slowly moved towards the source of the noise: the top comforter of the crib that had been laid atop the plushie pile. Peeling back the blanket, she confirmed her suspicions. She couldn't believe her eyes. Why was Connor sleeping in the nursery?

Latasha had hundreds of theories, but no concrete evidence. Part of her postulated that the stain just might happen to be jizz, but she didn't want to assume and be wrong. She pulled the

blanket back further. “Okay, so no diaper. He’s still wearing boxers. So then why is he in the nursery?” She laid the blanket back onto him and continued to investigate. The changing table showed no signs of usage, the wardrobe wasn’t picked through, and, other than some misplaced plushies, the toys were where she had left them.

All the while, Connor didn’t even stir one bit from his deep slumber. Latasha laughed off the thought that he really does sleep like a baby. She contemplated picking him up and carrying him up to his room for the night. He wasn’t as small as Skye, but he wasn’t too much bigger either. Still, that seemed like a bit too much Mommying for someone who didn’t want that.

With everything she’d stumbled across, Latasha had completely forgotten her original objective. Walking over to the changing table, she grabbed herself a black Megamax from one of the shelves, along with a bottle of powder. She’d let Connor sleep where he was and deal with him tomorrow. He did look comfy, after all.

On her way out, Latasha grabbed the dirtied dress and turned back one last time, staring at Connor and imagining him all padded up. “What a sight that would be?” Just as she was about to switch off the lights, her focus shifted to the diaper pail, which was the only thing she didn’t check. Not that she felt like she needed to. She’d emptied it earlier in the evening, so it was bound to be empty. But...what if it wasn’t?

She was positive it was a silly thought, but Latasha knew her mind wouldn’t let it go until she confirmed it with her own eyes. Now standing at the diaper pail, she took a deep breath and opened the lid. “You see, brain. Completely emp-”

Yellow, swollen, and left unraveled, there was no mistaking what Latasha found at the bottom of the pail. And this couldn’t be Skye’s diaper either, since Skye would never go for the white medical diapers unless she had no other options.

The dress, the diaper, the fact that he was still in the nursery cuddling a collection of cotton-filled stuffies. There was only one logical explanation.

“Connor, Connor, Connor...” whispered Latasha as a wicked grin crawled across her face. “I think someone’s been very naughty.”

TO BE CONTINUED...