

"Oh fiddlesticks bananas" said Ollie somewhat unhappily.

She had just finished doing her business on the toilet yet was still sitting on it, skirt lifted and panties down, when the loose toilet paper roll had slipped from her grip and fallen towards the corner.

"\*Groan\*...Welp, no choice, time to do the penguin" said Ollie as she got up and waddled towards the toilet paper a yard and a half away, her panties still keeping her from walking properly.

Meanwhile a few feet away, Carl walked seasick towards the same unisex bathroom that Ollie was in.

And she forgot to lock it.

"Oh...pork skin empanadas, never again" he said as he reached for the door handle.

"GOTCHA!" said Ollie, when the door opened.

Carl looked inside, noticing the two obvious numerators: Ollie's otherworldly gaze of frozen emotion and that she was very much bending over with no underwear nor enough skirt to disprove the former.

The event was so sudden.

"Heh... Eh... Hi Carl" said Ollie, her gaze contorting with a misplaced smile.

Carl merely adapted a gaze that made Edvard Munch's The Scream look like the Mona Lisa before closing the door quickly.

He ran out of the building with excess adrenaline.

The next day, Carl tried to put the awkward encounter with Ollie behind him. He went to the park, a place where he usually found solace. The sun was high and the breeze was just right, perfect for swinging. He pumped his legs back and forth, feeling the cool metal chain dig into his palms as he swung higher and higher. His mind was a whirlwind of thoughts, but he pushed them aside to enjoy the moment.

As Carl reached the apex of his swing, he saw a peculiar sight. Ollie emerged from the nearby bushes, not alone, but followed by a brigade of cats. Each feline had a look of determination, their eyes focused solely on Carl. His heart skipped a beat. The cats formed a semi-circle around him, each one

seemingly more intimidating than the last. And at the front of the pack was Scoops, his fur standing on end, tail lashing like a whip. Carl gulped, his eyes darting to Ollie for an explanation.

Ollie, noticing Carl's panic, lethargically snapped her fingers. The cats, like a well-trained army, immediately dispersed, trotting away from Carl and leaving only Scoops by the monkey bars. The feline general stared him down, a low growl rumbling in his throat. Carl felt his knees wobble, unsure if he should be relieved or terrified. Ollie sauntered over, a knowing smile playing on her lips. "Don't worry, Carl," she said, her voice dripping with mischief, "They're just my little entourage."

Carl, incapable of keeping it in, covered his face.

"I'm..." Carl began, looking at Ollie as he broke the ice "I'm sorry for not knocking, Ollie! It was an accident! Not just because my parents grounded me for skipping school and told be to do so, but because...Do you hate me, Ollie?"

Ollie raised an eyebrow at Carl's stuttering apology. She took a moment to let the words hang in the air, a smirk growing on her face. "Well, Carl," she said, "I guess you're just going to have to make it up to me." Her eyes twinkled with an unspoken challenge.

"ANYTHING! I deserve it! More than when your friend dressed up as you and gave me an atomic wedgie!" He said, slightly in tears.

Ollie's smile grew wider. "I knew you'd understand."

Carl nodded, his cheeks red with embarrassment. "What do you want me to do?"

Ollie tapped her chin thoughtfully. "I've got it," she said with a wink. "You're going to be my personal assistant for the day."

Carl looked at her bewildered.

"Ok" he enunciated.

Ollie's grin widened. "Great," she said, "First, we're going shopping. And, you're going to carry all my bags." She pointed to her bike, where a basket was attached to the front. "You can put them in there."

Carl stood up, giving a "Yes m'am" to the idea.

"But first, let's go to the ice cream shop," said Ollie. "I've got a craving for mint chocolate chip."

"Oooh, yummy" "he added "Mine is chocolate Mousse"

Ollie strutted towards the ice cream shop, her hips swaying with the confidence of someone who knew they had the upper hand. Carl trailed behind, still a little shaky from the encounter with the feline brigade, but eager to make amends.

"So, what's the plan, Ollie?" Carl asked, trying to sound more casual than he felt.

Ollie looked at him over her shoulder, her

eyes gleaming. "First, we're going to have some fun. Then, you're going to pay for my ice cream."

Carl was shocked. On one hand he'd been saving up for a game for the new Zenyport 12, and obviously his parents had suspended his allowance for the rest of the year. But this was Ollie, he'd french kiss her feet if needed be.

"All right, Ollie" he said, taking his wallet out.

The bell above the door jingled as they entered the ice cream shop, the cool air offering a brief respite from the warmth of the day. The shop was adorned with pastel colors and whimsical decorations, the smell of fresh waffle cones wafting through the air. The chime of the bell



seemed to signal the start of their mission.

Ollie strutted up to the counter, her eyes scanning the flavors displayed in the gleaming freezer. She pointed to the mint chocolate chip. "Two scoops for me," she said with a wink to the teenage boy behind the counter. He nodded, his cheeks flushing slightly as he served her. Carl stepped up next, ordering his chocolate mousse, handing over the cash. The exchange was quick and efficient, leaving him feeling a bit like a pawn in Ollie's grand scheme.

They nonetheless sat together, enjoying their august flavours.

"You know, Carl," Ollie began, licking her mint chocolate chip, "You really need to work on your timing."

Carl looked at Ollie, realizing what she meant, reddening in the process as he turned away. His words were obviously incapable of manifesting his guilt, so he nodded.

"I know, I know," he said, his voice muffled by his chocolate mousse. "It won't happen again."

Ollie took a bite of her ice cream, watching Carl's reaction. "Oh, I'm sure it won't," she said, her tone dripping with amusement. "But just to make sure, let's make it interesting."

Carl looked at her warily. "Interesting?"

Ollie leaned in, her eyes glinting with excitement. "Every time you mess up

today, you have to buy me something," she said, her voice low and conspiratorial.

"Could be anything from a toy to a snack. And if you do something really special, I might just let you off the hook."

Carl's face fell. This was just the money he saved up. Now the remainder of his allowance was at risk. However he just wanted Ollie to forget about that encounter, regardless of price.

They left the ice cream shop and headed towards the shopping mall, Carl with his wallet feeling lighter than a feather. As they walked, Ollie pointed out various stores with a glint in her eye, hinting at her intentions for the day. Carl took a deep breath, mentally preparing for the financial assault ahead.

In the first store, a trendy boutique, Ollie tried on outfit after outfit, each one more outrageous than the last. She paraded around the changing room, making Carl hold the curtain open as she stepped out, modeling each ensemble. He couldn't help but feel a mix of admiration and dread as she twirled in front of the mirror. She had an infectious energy that made him want to laugh despite his nerves.

After what felt like hours, Ollie settled on a neon green romper with yellow polka dots and a pair of platform sneakers that looked like they belonged in a sci-fi movie. "Perfect!" she exclaimed, striking a pose. Carl's wallet quivered in his pocket, but he nodded in agreement. He paid for the ludicrously priced outfit, trying to hide his cringe from the cashier.

He couldn't help but feel depressed. He knew he had this coming, yet Ollie was indeed starting to remind him more of her megalomaniacal friend, Julia Goldburger, than the Ollie his ideal crush was once aimed at. He should have known: the best things always come after enduring the worst. Like being there to see them cut the paw off a monkey before you could make a wish on it even hard work came at a price. Eitherway he kept going, knowing well it took too much work at times until it broke a part of you.

There had to be a light ahead.

As they left the boutique, the mall's bright lights reflected off Carl's sweaty forehead. Ollie's excitement was palpable, her eyes sparkling as she pointed to the next store on their list: "Carl, come on! Let's go to the

arcade!"

Somehow he felt a tinge of excitement at this and followed Ollie.

The arcade was a cacophony of bleeps, bloops, and children's laughter. The smell of hot pizza and greasy tokens filled the air. Ollie's eyes lit up like Christmas lights as she surveyed the sea of games and flashing lights. Carl, on the other hand, felt his wallet cringe in anticipation.

Then of course, sure, he no longer could play that game he was saving up for. But this was close enough if not better.

Ollie grabbed a fistful of tokens and dashed to the Dance-o-Mania machine, her favorite game. She thrust a token into the slot and the screen blazed to life. The beat

dropped, and she began to dance, her moves so fluid they seemed choreographed. Carl watched, amazed, as she scored a perfect combo. The crowd gathered around, cheering her on.

"Your turn," she said, grinning. Carl took the tokens with a heavy sigh, trying to mimic Ollie's grace. But his steps were clumsy, his rhythm off-beat. He stepped on invisible banana peels, his score plummeting. The crowd tittered, and Ollie's smirk grew wider. "Oops, looks like you owe me another one," she said, pointing to the prize counter.

Carl should've known as he took out the required money with the passion of a sloth.

"Alright," he muttered, "What do you want?"

Ollie's gaze swept over the prize counter, finally landing on a giant teddy bear that looked like it could swallow Carl whole.

"That one," she said with a right

"All right" he said, with a dull demeanor as he approached the cashier "one giant teddy bear, please"

The cashier looked at him with a puzzled expression, but Carl's desperation was palpable. He handed over the cash and the bear was passed over the counter, its glassy eyes staring into his soul. He lugged it over to Ollie, who was busy taking selfies with her new ice cream outfit.

"Here you go, Ollie" he said with unsubtle indifference, handing her the bear.

Ollie squealed with glee, taking the giant



teddy into her arms. "Thank you, Carl!" she exclaimed, giving him a peck on the cheek. The unexpected gesture made his heart race, and he felt a strange mix of joy and resentment. "What's next?" she asked, her eyes gleaming with excitement.

Carl looked to his side.

"I dunno, want to get pizza? I'll even buy your favourite" he said, one hand in his back. He feared he might've gotten accustomed to this.

Ollie's smile grew. "Pizza sounds great," she said, "But only if you win me a prize first." She nodded towards the claw machine, her eyes gleaming with mischief.

Suddenly Carl found himself right back where he started. He followed through,

eitherway. Trying at first to reach for a toy yet ultimately havibg it fall before it could leave the opening.

"Uh" said Carl embarrassed "I mean there's also Hungry Jack's if you'd rather.. Y'know..."

Ollie giggled, her eyes gleaming with mischief. "No, no, Carl. You're playing the claw machine," she said, handing him another fistful of tokens. "I believe in you."

Carl now mimicked the Screaming Pope if he had kept his mouth closed. He contained a sigh and went ahead. Eventually he won her an alicorn, a pegasus/unicorn hybrid, and handed it to her.

"Hope this'll do, Ollie" he said, his voice

losing its zest.

Ollie took the alicorn with a giggle, nuzzling its plush nose. "It's perfect, Carl," she said, her eyes sparkling. "Now, let's get that pizza."

They stumbled into Hungry Jack's, the smell of melted cheese and pepperoni greeting them like an old friend. Carl's stomach growled, a reminder of how little he'd eaten that day. Ollie, seemingly unfazed by the events of the day, ordered a large pizza with everything on it, except for anchovies, because apparently, those were the devil's snack. Carl just stuck with plain cheese, his wallet begging for mercy.

"Wait a minute" he said "HUNGRY JACKS DOESNT SERVE PIZZ-"

But Carl was snapped out of his delirious reality as he bolted upright in bed, his heart racing. The sound of his alarm clock pierced the silence of his room, the digital display reading 6:30 AM. The whole day had been a dream, a wild concoction of his guilt-ridden subconscious. The weight of the giant teddy bear on his chest vanished, replaced by the comforting pressure of his own blankets. He let out a sigh of relief, running a hand through his messy hair.

"Oh, thank goodness," he murmured, sinking back into his pillow.

The room was still dark, save for the flickering light from his TV that had been left on the night before. He reached for the remote, shutting off the cartoons he'd fallen asleep to. His eyes scanned his room, taking in the familiar posters of his

favorite video games and action figures, all a stark contrast to the vividness of his dream. He felt a strange mix of disappointment and relief that it had all been a figment of his imagination.

The encounter with Ollie still lingered in his mind, like a pesky mosquito that wouldn't leave him alone. He knew he had to face her today, and he had no idea how to approach the situation. He lay there for a few moments, trying to figure out how to handle it, when his stomach growled loudly, reminding him that he'd missed dinner last night.

He slid out of bed, his feet hitting the cold floor. He shivered and grabbed his phone, noticing a text from Ollie. "Hey, Carl, hope you're okay after yesterday. No hard feelings, right?"

He felt his face flush, his heart skipping a beat. The text was a blend of teasing and genuine concern, but the memory of her bare backside was burned into his retinas. He typed back a hasty response, hoping to play it cool. "Yeah, I'm fine. Just had a weird dream. See ya at school."

He hit send and took a deep breath, trying to compose himself. He knew he couldn't avoid her forever, and he had to find a way to move past the awkwardness. As he shuffled to the kitchen to grab some cereal, he couldn't shake the feeling that his day was going to be anything but ordinary.

School came and went, with Carl trying his best to avoid Ollie. But fate had other plans, as the universe often does in these

situations. He saw her at the end of the day, standing by her bike, the same one with the basket that had held his ice cream in his dream. She looked up as he approached, her eyes filled with curiosity.

"Hey, Carl," she said, her voice a mix of innocence and mischief. "How's it going?"

He forced a smile, trying to act like nothing had happened. "Fine, Ollie. Just a regular day," he said, hoping she wouldn't bring up the incident.

But Ollie had other ideas. She leaned in closer, her voice a whisper. "You know, I had the weirdest dream last night," she began, her eyes sparkling. "You were my personal shopping assistant, and you had to buy me everything I wanted. It was pretty wild."

Carl's heart stopped. He couldn't believe she was actually bringing it up. "Oh, uh, yeah. Dreams can be weird like that," he said, his voice strained.

Ollie's smile grew wider. "Tell me about it," she said, "But I'm feeling like we should make it come true. You know, just for fun."

Carl's jaw dropped. This couldn't be happening. But before he could protest, she continued, "I'm kidding, of course. I just wanted to see if you were okay."

He let out a sigh of relief, his cheeks reddening. "Yeah, I'm fine," he said, trying to play it cool. "It was just a weird coincidence."

Ollie laughed, a sweet sound that seemed



to melt away the tension. "Well, if you ever need anything, just let me know," she said, winking before hopping on her bike and pedaling away.

Carl watched her go, feeling a mix of emotions. He'd survived the day without buying a single thing for her.