

Through Your Eyes

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THROUGH YOUR EYES

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By

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BLURB:

Keith and Maria Leagues are a loving couple enjoying a vacation in the vibrant streets of New Orleans. While on a voodoo tour, instead of having lunch with the rest of the group, the couple ventured off to a shop that wasn't part of the tour. While there they are encouraged to buy an ancient relic that will help them get a better perspective about the opposite sex. The next day Keith and Maria find themselves trapped in each other's body until that goal is achieved.

Will they survive their ordeal with a better understanding of their spouses' differences after, literally, walking a day in the other person's shoes?



Chapter One

“**A**nd here,” the old guide started with a heavy Cajun twang, “is what some claim was the last home of Madame Marie Laveau herself,” he finished gesturing towards a large brick house draped in bright green ivy. “She was known to move about Louisiana, not one to be tied down, I suppose, but she died right here in this home. The people continue to give tribute to her even after her death more than twenty years ago,” he added with an obvious nod toward the pile of dolls, flowers, wine bottles and rotting food left at the gate of the large house.

“Why would people want to leave offerings at her home, Mr. LeBlanc?” someone in the group asked.

“Well, she was known to be a voodoo woman. She would curse anyone that did wrong on her block. I guess people figure if they leave the offerings, it would be something to keep her happy rather than upset her spirit,” he answered with a shrug. “You do best to stay on a voodoo woman’s good side, eh?”

A chorus of ohs and head nods went through the crowd at his answer. Mr. LeBlanc continued down Bourbon Street.

“Come along, now. This is as good a time as any to break for lunch. There’s a great spot just down the street.”

Maria pulled her phone out to take a few pictures of the house and the offerings before taking her place behind the crowd. The old man’s slow pace gave her a chance to catch up.

“Do you think any of this stuff is real, Keith?” Maria asked, excitedly. Keith smirked. “Probably not, but it’s fun to imagine.”

Maria lingered behind the group pointing to a small shop across the street with a bright blinking marquee.

"Look honey. Madame Celeste's Curiosities," she read aloud, gripping Keith's arm.

"That shop isn't on the tour," he pointed out looking at their map.

Maria grinned. "Good. Let's check it out."

Keith gave a faux groan. "Yes dear."

"Oh, you and your yes dears. Where's the adventure in sticking to the map, Keith?"

"Babe, the tour was created for visitors like us to get the best experience in a short amount of time. They choose guys like Mr. LeBlanc because they're natives and know what they're talking about."

"I'm not saying he doesn't, but he's not the only native that can give us a behind the scenes commentary on this city."

"Okay, fine. Let's finish the tour and then go check out that store."

Maria clicked her teeth as she stepped into the street. "Or...we can go check it out really quick and then join the others for lunch."

Keith let out a genuine groan as he followed her across the street.

"Trust me, honey. Women are multitasking pros. We can juggle work, family, social life, and still find time to look amazing while we do it," she told him with a wave of her hand. "This is just a simple add on to our day. An add on is a piece of cake. We'll be right back on track with the tour before anyone even realizes we're gone."

"Yeah, okay, but just so you know, men are built for efficiency. We get one task, we crush it, and then we move on to the next. You can keep that multitasking crap to yourself."

"Efficiency? Is that what you call leaving half the groceries in the car because you forgot?"

"I didn't forget. I was prioritizing. Other stuff had to be done first."

Maria giggled. "Oh, yes. I'm sure the sandwich you were needing couldn't wait another second."

Keith scoffed. "Oh, okay, you can joke, but let's not forget that men are physically stronger, too."

“Oh, please. Women are stronger mentally that’s where it counts, and we definitely can handle pain better. You guys get a cold and act like you’ve got to start writing your will.”

Keith stopped at the door and gasped. “Hey! Cold symptoms hit men differently, Maria,” he stated pointing at her.

Maria muffled her giggles. “Oh, yeah, yeah. Of course they do. The symptoms are so much stronger in men.”

“Whatever. You wouldn’t understand,” he said, pushing the door open.

Maria laughed as they entered the dimly lit shop. The scent of burning incense and aged wood filled the air along with the faint sound of wind chimes from somewhere in the back of the store. Shelves along the walls were lined with jars of powders in all different sizes and colors.

“Uh huh, the creep factor is way past ten in this place,” Keith noted as he looked around the room.

“Mmm hmm, but it really feels authentic, don’t you think? All the things Mr. LeBlanc pointed out about the magic tied to this city,” Maria paused to run her fingers over a collection of wood carved talismans on the window ledge. “It’s kind of cool,” she added with a shrug.

Keith picked up a jar off the counter. He snorted and turned to Maria.

“Graveyard dust? Looks like sawdust to me.”

Maria swatted his arm. “Not everything has to be a joke, Keith. This place looks like it can be really real.”

He twisted his lips. “Oh, come on. You can’t seriously believe in all that magic stuff he was spouting or that half this stuff in here really works.”

Maria rolled her eyes. “Men. Everything is just black and white with you. If y’all don’t understand it, you don’t take it seriously.”

“You say that all that time. I love that you think in color, babe,” he said paused to do air quotations. “You believe in the possibility of magic, unicorns and even Tinkerbell’s fairy dust.”

Maria chuckled. "I don't go that far."

"Uh huh, but the fact of the matter is you wouldn't last a day in my shoes."

Maria snorted. "As if you could survive as a woman."

"Perhaps you should test that theory."

Maria and Keith turned to the sound. The woman that stood on the other end of the counter seemed to appear out of nowhere. Maria and Keith shared a glance.

"Oh hello. Uh, we didn't see you come in."

"I heard the bells, ma'am and came from the back room. I am Madame Celeste," the woman said with a slight bow of her head. "How can I help you today?"

"You heard some of our conversation when you came in and said we could test our theory. What did you mean by that?" Keith asked.

"Oh yes. You bicker like this often, no?"

"Well, I mean, we're not really bickering," Maria began, then sent a look to Keith.

He shook his head. "Uh uh."

"Yeah, see, it's just an old debate for us. That's all," Maria finished.

"I see. Well, perhaps you'd benefit from truly understanding and appreciating the differences of being the opposite sex. You know, to really see each other from a new perspective."

Maria lifted a brow. "How would we do that?"

The woman reached beneath the counter and pulled out a small, deep purple box with a bright yellow ribbon. Opening it she revealed a tiny porcelain statue of a man and woman entwined so close the two shapes were almost indistinguishable.

"This is the Relic of Reflection. It is said that this here couple helps those who share the same bond see the world through the other's eyes," she explained, showing off the statue.

Keith and Maria reached for the figurine at the same time. She scoffed when they touched it together.

“Yeah, I wish that were true,” she said, sliding the statue toward her.

“You wish what was true?” Keith countered, bringing the figurine closer to him.

“I wish that you could see things through my eyes, like she said,” Maria clarified.

“Oh really. Well, I wish that you could see that, too.”

The woman put her hand on top of theirs for a moment. Maria sent a quick look to Madame Celeste but then pulled her hand away.

“I think this would be a cool souvenir. It has its own story. Let’s buy it, Keith.”

Keith rolled his eyes. “Come on, Maria. You’re not serious.”

“Keith, do you really want to keep getting the same stuff from the same places everyone else is getting their souvenirs? This is different. It’s our own little find.”

Keith groaned as his hand slid over his face. Maria turned a smile to Madame Celeste.

“Do you want a bag or is the box fine as is?” Madame Celeste asked.



Chapter Two

Keith stumbled out of bed throwing the covers on top of her. Maria stretched and rolled over. Feeling strangely top heavy, she fell onto the floor.

“What the—”

Maria gasped, and her hand immediately covered her mouth to push the sound back in.

What’s wrong with my voice?

She looked down at her hands with wide eyes and sat up slowly.

Wha— These aren’t my hands. What the hell is—

“Ahh!” she screamed just as another voice screamed.

“Ahh! Maria, get in here!”

Maria’s shock deepened hearing the familiar voice. Her heart pounded as she scrambled off the floor. She caught sight of herself in the mirror on the way to the bathroom and stopped. Keith’s face stared back at her.

“No, no, no, no,” she whispered, grasping the beard on the chin. “This can’t be happening.”

Maria continued across the room, nearly tripping over her much larger feet. Her jaw dropped when she stood in the doorway of the bathroom staring at her own body standing naked in front of the toilet.

Pointing at each other, talking at the same time incoherently, they screamed then abruptly turned away from each other. They paused to catch their breath then slowly faced each other only to scream again.

“Okay, okay, okay, wait. We can’t sort this out if we’re screaming and talking at the same time. We have to get past the shock, babe, so we can figure this out,” Maria’s body said.

“Okay, you’re right. What’s happened? Why are you screaming?”

"I came to the bathroom like normal, but when I stood in front of the toilet to pee it ran down my leg onto the floor."

Maria scoffed. "You didn't think something was wrong until you peed on the floor?"

"I was half asleep, Maria, on autopilot. I reached for my dick to pee and my dick was gone!"

Maria couldn't help but laugh. "Mmm, no, I can assure you it's right where it usually is," she said, wiggling her hips side to side making it swing. She laughed harder when she saw her jaw drop.

"Maria, this is not funny. I want my dick back this instant!"

"You said that like I took it! I don't know what happened. I turned over in bed and fell on the floor because your freaking body is so heavy it threw me for a loop."

"Whoa. Hold on. That creepy shopkeeper told us we would get a better perspective of being the other sex."

"Oh my gosh."

"I never thought she meant anything as literal as this, but you just had to have that souvenir."

"Really? That's where you're going right now?"

"Okay, sorry. Now that we know what happened, what are we going to do about it?"

"I guess we have to go back to that shop and get that Madame Celeste woman to switch us back," she suggested, throwing her hands up.

"Okay, yeah, great plan. Let's clean up and do that."

Maria hesitated. "Yeah, so, Keith."

"Yeah, babe."

"I have to pee."

"Okay."

"Keith, I don't, I mean, you know—" Leaving the sentence unfinished, she gestured toward the toilet.

"Oh, hmm, okay. Let me finish with this mess and I'll show you."



MARIA STOOD AWKWARDLY in front of the toilet, as her borrowed body fidgeted nervously.

“Nothing’s happening.”

“It will. You just have to relax. Just pick him up and aim.”

“Okay, okay, relax. Just pick him up and— Oh my God! Eww!”

Keith scoffed. “What eww? Don’t act like this is the first time you’ve grabbed him.”

“No, it’s not, but when I’m grabbing him, he’s bigger, much harder and he actually fills my hand.”

“Aww, thanks, hon.”

“Yeah, but now he’s just this shriveled up, squishy thing that barely—”

“Hey, hey, hey, that’s enough description. I get it. Just grab it.”

Sighing dramatically, Maria followed his earlier instructions. Seconds later, a stream sprayed wildly, hitting the toilet seat and floor.

“Ahh! What’s going on? I’m trying to stop! Why can’t I stop peeing?” Maria cried, helplessly trying to aim the stream.

Keith rushed forward to help redirect her efforts. “That’s not how our body’s work, babe. You can stop peeing?”

“Yes. You can’t?”

“No. Once we start peeing, we can’t just stop it mid-stream.”

“What? Why not?” she screeched.

“I don’t know! How come you can?”

“Oh my gosh! Your body is just too complicated,” she muttered while going to the sink.

“Let’s just get ready so we can go back to see that shopkeeper and get changed back to our own bodies.”

“Alright, I’ll find something of yours to put on.”

“So, I finally get to pick out the panties you put on,” Keith said with a chuckle.

"That's a highlight for you in this situation?"

Keith grinned.

Maria scoffed. "It's weird watching me grin at that question. Panties and bras are in that top drawer."

Keith rummaged through the drawer. Finally choosing a pair, he pulled them in place without trouble. He pulled out a bra next and stared at the garment.

"Why not just let them hang loose? I like them like that anyway," he mentioned.

"I won't even dignify that comment with a response."

"Fine."

Keith wrapped the bra in front of her breasts as he awkwardly reached behind his back to secure the straps in place. First with his left arm, then the right, he spun Maria's body in a circle trying to connect the two straps before sitting on the dresser with a frustrated grunt.

Maria chuckled. "We close it in the front and then turn it back to fix it in place," she explained, twisting the garment to the front of her body. "Dang, these big ole fingers of yours are making this harder than usual."

Finally getting the snaps closed, she turned it back around to the front of her body.

"There we go. Now we—"

"Ooo, wait, let me do this part," Keith said, lifting her breasts to adjust them into the cups. "Yeah, you really do have nice boobs, babe," he mentioned, bouncing them with his hands.

"Stop doing that," she chastised. "It's weird watching my own body play with my boobs like that."

"Fine. For the record, these are so much easier to remove than to put on," he said, flicking the strap on his shoulder. "Why do women willingly wear this torture device, anyway?" Keith grumbled, glaring at his reflection.

"Because we do that's why."

Keith laughed.

Maria scoffed. "Wow, do I really sound like that?"

"Like what?"

"My laugh sounds, I don't know, strange."

"I've always liked your laugh. What's strange is hearing it when I'm the one that's laughing," he explained and laughed again.

Maria shook her head and dug through the bottom drawers. "Here. I was going to wear this today," she said and tossed him a shirt and pair of shorts.

Keith dressed in her clothes and shoes then stood. "Okay, I'm ready to go."

"Ready? We're not ready. You're not taking my body anywhere looking like that."

Keith looked down at her body. "Like what? You just gave me these clothes."

"I don't go outside without eyeliner and lip gloss, Keith."

"You're kidding, right?"

"Are you saying you don't even notice that I put on makeup every day?"

"Umm, no, I'm not saying that. Okay, sure. I'll just do that now."

Maria followed him to the bathroom and leaned against the doorframe.

"Need help?" she teased.

"Nope, it's just a line on your eyelid. How hard could it be?"

"You're putting the line on the bottom of your eye, actually."

Keith shrugged and grabbed the eyeliner from the small bag on the sink and leaned closer to the mirror. The first attempt ended with a wide, jagged line that extended underneath the eye.

Maria snorted. "Oh yeah, that looks great. The heat of the day will make you, or rather me, look like a raccoon by the end of the day. Well done."

"Hush. You're distracting me," Keith muttered, wiping it off with tissue to start again. "Ow!" he shouted, blinking furiously, dabbing his eye. "Why do you do this anyway?"

"Because I like the way it looks," Maria said.

After a few more tries, Keith finally managed a thin dark line under both eyes. He threw the pencil back into the bag then removed lipstick. Pressing too hard, he smeared it across his lips and then turned to see his body doubling over with laughter.

"Oh my god, you look like a clown!" Maria shrieked.

Keith groaned as he scrubbed the lipstick away.

Maria chuckled and dug into the bag. "Here, this is lipgloss. Shine, not color, and don't be so heavy handed."

"Okay."

"Just be grateful I'm wearing sneakers and not heels today. Now come on, princess. Let's go get our body's back."

Keith followed his body out of the bathroom.

"Can we get some food first? I feel like I haven't eaten in days."

"Uhg, fine."



Chapter Three

Keith groaned as he gripped the top of the small jar. Abruptly, he banged the lid on the edge of the table and then tried twisting again.

“Oh, come on!” he grunted.

“What’s wrong?”

Keith raised his hands. “I’m trying to open a jar with these! It’s like working with doll hands.”

Maria chuckled. “Not everyone has lion paws for hands, Keith.”

He scoffed as he tried again. “How do you live like this?”

“I ask for help,” she confessed.

She reached for the jar. With Keith’s much larger hand, she twisted the lid, and the top came off with a satisfying pop.

“Sometimes it’s necessary to ask for help, and I’ll admit it’s nice having brute strength on tap when I have to,” she said then flexed Keith’s biceps dramatically.

“Well, I’ll be happy when it’s me wielding the strength again.”

Keith continued to walk along the buffet. He stacked waffles, scrambled eggs, bacon, and a mountain of hash browns onto his plate before leading them to a nearby table.

“Keith, what are you doing? I never eat that much food in the morning.”

“But I’m starving. Are you always this hungry?”

Maria shrugged. “Not really, but I don’t over stuff myself when I am. I eat until I’m full, not until I fall out of the chair.”

Keith shrugged and continued shoveling food into his mouth. When his plate was finally empty, Maria stood.

“Okay, let's go. I want my body back before you put twenty extra pounds on me, I can't get rid of.”

Keith nodded. “Yeah, okay. I'd like to be able to reach the top shelf without climbing onto a chair by tonight.”

Maria chuckled. “And I don't ever want to experience peeing standing up again.”

They both laughed and left the restaurant.



“WELL, HELLO AGAIN. Back so soon?”

Keith slammed the amulet onto the counter with a loud thud.

“Ouch! Damn it, Maria. You and these little ass hands,” he barked, cradling his right hand.

Maria rolled her eyes. “This thing worked, Madame Celeste. We've changed bodies.”

Madame Celeste looked between them and smiled.

“Really? How extraordinary.”

“Extraordinary? That's all you can say? We want our bodies back! Fix us!”

The shopkeeper grinned. “Ah, so you've discovered that walking in someone else's shoes isn't so easy.”

“Spare us the lesson and just undo the spell.”

The shopkeeper chuckled, shaking her head. “I can't undo anything, cher. The amulet and your own words made this happen.”

Keith exchanged a glance with Maria.

Madame Celeste tapped the amulet with a long, painted nail. “The amulet heard you and granted your wish. The spell won't lift until that wish is fulfilled.”

Maria scoffed. “Well, what does that mean? Do we have to hug it out or something?”

“You need to begin to understand and truly appreciate the differences between men and women,” she clarified and then pointed at them. “Between the two of you.”

Keith gripped the bridge of Maria's nose. “So, let me get this straight. We're stuck like this until we've learned some kind of lesson?”

Madame Celeste gave them a knowing smile.

“Call it what you like, but until you stop complaining and start empathizing about your situation you'll be in each other's shoes—literally.”

“This is a nightmare.”

“Or it can be an opportunity for growth,” Madame suggested. “Either way, it's up to you to make it right.”

Keith sighed, snatching the amulet off the counter.

“Fine. Let's go, Maria. The faster we figure this out, the faster I can stop wearing this damn bra.”



KEITH LAID ACROSS THE bed. “Uhg! I am sweaty in some really uncomfortable spots, babe. This bra is not helping. Does this happen to you a lot?”

Maria chuckled. “Uh huh, especially during the summer.”

“How can you stand it?”

“I usually take a nice cool shower and that helps.”

“Alright, it's your body. You know best,” he said on the way to the bathroom.

Maria grabbed the remote and lounged in the chair in front of the TV.

“Oh yeah, babe. You were right. I feel much better.”

Maria turned to see her body with a towel wrapped only around the waist. Her boobs swung gently as Keith leaned over slightly to pat her braids dry. She chuckled.

“Keith, your towel should be—”

Her words ended in a gasp. She looked into her lap with wide eyes. Reaching down she gripped the growing erection between her legs.

What the—

The more she touched it the better it felt. Her jaw dropped. She stood up, pushed her pants down and grabbed the stiffening erection fully.

“Umm, babe. What are you doing?”

“Oh my gosh, Keith. This feels amazing,” she said stroking the shaft.

“Babe?”

She sat back in the chair and continued stroking. “Wow. I can see why you want me to touch it all the time. This really does feel good. I could do this all day!”

Keith burst into laughter. “Babe, you do realize you’re sitting there jerking off.”

“No, I’m not. I’m experimenting.”

“Yeah, okay, but from here your experimentation looks a lot like masturbating.”

“Oh, okay, sorry. Well then, let me try something else.”

Maria pulled the pants up and quickly closed the distance between them. She yanked her body closer for a rough kiss. Keith pushed back abruptly.

“Whoa, whoa, whoa. What are you doing?”

“What does it look like? I want to have sex. I want to see what it feels like on this side. All that experimental rubbing and touching felt good. I’m ready.”

Keith was quiet for a moment then looked down at Maria’s body and frowned.

“I don’t feel excited at all. I mean, I love you and I want you but this body of yours is not on the same page. I don’t feel anything. Is this how it is for you? I don’t excite you anymore?”

“No Keith, it’s not like that at all. Come here. I know what to do.”

Maria pulled her body to the bed and removed the towel.

"Although my little experiment found your on-off switch, a woman's body doesn't really have one like that," she mentioned with a smirk. "You know how to turn mine on," she added, pulling her body close again for a slow soft kiss.

Maria continued putting gentle kisses on her neck. She used Keith's large hands to glide over her cheek, down her neck and across her breast.

"Oh!"

"See, these big hands of yours are strong, but they can be gentle at the same time when you want them to be."

"And you like it when I do that?"

She chuckled. "Can't you tell?"

"Oh yeah, I'm starting to feel warm all over...and excited."

"Good. You'll like this next part, too."

Maria continued the kisses on her body as she slipped a hand between her legs. Keith groaned and wiggled beneath her touch.

"Mmm, now that's working. I kinda feel tingly all over now."

"Uh huh."

"Yeah, I'm ready now," he said, pulling at his body.

Maria climbed on top and grinned.

"Okay, now what?"

"What do you mean now what? You do what I would do. Peg A in slot B and move around so we can have sex."

"Right, right."

Maria wiggled the pants back down to kick them off. She climbed back into position, reached for the erection, and groaned.

"What's wrong?"

"Umm, it went squishy again."

"What?"

"I don't know what happened. I was trying to figure out how to do all this from this side and—"

"Are you kidding me? You done rubbed and kissed and got me excited and now you lost your hard-on?"

Maria rolled to the left to lay beside her body with a deep sigh.

"It's not my fault. It just...went down."

"So now I'm the one all excited and we're not going to do anything?"

"Sorry. I had no idea how much focus all that takes."

Keith blew out a breath. "Yeah, I'm sorry, too. It happens. I guess I had no idea how frustrating it is for you when it does happen."

Keith turned to her and she to him. They stared at each other for a moment before bursting into laughter.

"This whole swap has been...weird, but I guess it's kind of a good thing, right?"

Keith shrugged. "I mean, if nothing it's been a real eye opener, for sure."

"Keith, we're supposed to go home tomorrow. What if we're stuck like this? How will we function in each other's body? You can't run my store, and I can't drive a dump truck. What will happen if—"

"Hey, hey, uh uh." He palmed her cheek and turned to his side. "We're not going down that road, okay. We'll figure this out and get our bodies back. This isn't the first issue we've had to tackle in our relationship and I'm pretty sure it won't be the last," he reminded her. "We'll figure this out too, babe, together. Okay?"

She covered the hand on her face with her own. "Okay."

Keith scooted up on the bed and lifted her arm in invitation. "Come, here, babe."

Maria positioned Keith's heavier torso into her small frame pushing the air from her lungs.

"Okay, nope. Wow, I didn't realize how heavy I am when I lay on you. I'll try to be more conscious of that. Here, I'll just lay on you," he suggested reversing their positions. "Today was a lot, babe. Let's just call it a night."



Chapter Four

Keith stretched and rolled over to hug his wife. They seemed to open their eyes at the same time and gasped.

“Maria!” he shouted, bolting to a sitting position. “I’m me again!” He gripped his genitals and laughed. “Yes! All of me. I’m back.”

Maria patted her body. “Keith, we’re really back!”

They looked at each other for a beat, then burst into joyful shouts like kids who’d just won a prize. They leapt out of bed, inspecting themselves in the mirror, laughing and cheering as Keith twirled her around.

“This is amazing! It feels so good being a woman again,” Maria said, practically bouncing on her toes.

“Best. Morning. Ever,” Keith replied, scooping her up in another bear hug.

Keith looked at his watch. “Hey, look at the time. We should be packing. We have a flight to catch this afternoon.”

“Yes. New Orleans was beautiful, but I’m ready to leave this city behind.”

They dressed and rushed to pack their things, throwing clothes and toiletries into their suitcases with little care for order.

“We have to stop by Madame Celeste’s shop,” Maria mentioned, zipping her suitcase. “We need to give that thing back to her. I’d rather not take it back with us.”

Keith nodded, grabbing their bags. “Agreed. Let’s get finished with all this once and for all.”



MARIA AND KEITH FROWNED at each other as they stood in front of the derelict building.

"This doesn't make sense. How can this place be boarded up like this? Where's the blinky sign with her name? It was so cute. We were just here yesterday."

Keith ran a hand over the dilapidated wooden boards covering the windows then leaned forward to peek through a gap.

"I know, but it doesn't look like anyone's been here in years. There's lots of dust on the floors, looks like some ceiling beams have fallen, too."

"Hey there, excuse me!" Maria called out abruptly.

"Hi, can I help you?" a woman said, coming closer.

"Hi, we just wanted to ask a quick question. We were just here yesterday talking to Madame Celeste, the woman that runs the shop. What happened to this place? How did it get boarded up so fast?"

The woman let out a disbelieving laugh. "This here place?" she asked, pointing a thumb at the door. "Oh, no, no, no, cher, you couldn't have been in this place. Madame Celeste closed her shop down years ago just after her sister died."

"Her sister?"

"That's right. Her sister, Marie Leveau, lived in that house down the way," she confirmed, pointing to a large ivy-covered house.

Maria's mouth dropped as she turned to Keith. "The witch the guide told us about?"

"This place has been closed for at least twenty years now," the woman told them.

"Twenty years?" Keith said with wide eyes.

The woman chuckled. "Yes, so it couldn't have been this shop. You all have a nice day," she told them and continued down the street.

"This is the shop, Keith. I'm sure of it."

"Yeah, so am I, but what happened?"

Maria shrugged. "I have no idea. So, what do we do now?"

Keith sighed. "I don't know. I guess we'll just have to deal with the amulet later. We have to get going to the airport before we miss our flight."



KEITH AND MARIA STOPPED at a coffee shop in the airport on the way to their terminal.

"You know, despite how crazy everything was on this trip, it wasn't all bad," Maria admitted, sipping her coffee. "I had a great time here. Didn't you?"

Keith shrugged. "I don't know. I'm kind of partial to the first three days of our trip. That was before we encountered a witch's sister who basically wanted to teach us a lesson by switching our bodies and freaking us out."

Maria turned twisted lips to him but laughed.

"Okay, granted, those days were definitely better, but I think the whole swap thing did what she wanted. I mean, it has brought us closer. I do understand some things about you now that I didn't before."

Keith smiled. "Yeah, I feel the same way, although I could have done without learning how uncomfortable a bra is," He chuckled. "All in all, I think we'll be stronger because of it."

Maria nodded, looked around conspiratorially then pulled him closer while they walked.

"My favorite part was experimenting with your body."

Keith burst into fits of laughter. "I can't even begin to tell you how weird that was to watch."

"I'm just saying that women have it easier when it comes to emotional stuff," a man said. "Guys aren't even allowed to cry. Society would chop them into bits, calling them all kinds of names. It's just not the norm."

Maria and Keith exchanged a look as the comment of a young man caught their attention.

"Oh please," the woman retorted. "That's such crap. Society allows men way too much grace for any and all infractions, but you're mad about crying? Whatever. Try dealing with unwanted attention every time you leave the house just because your dress fits your curves nicely. That will get on your nerves real quick."

Keith and Maria smiled at each other. They continued to walk past the couple to find seats in front of their terminal.

"Does that conversation sound familiar?"

"It's downright déjà vu-ish," Keith muttered.

Maria reached into her bag and pulled out the amulet.

"I didn't want to take this back home with us, but I think I know what to do with it now," she muttered, jerking her head in the couple's direction. Keith nodded and Maria returned to where the couple continued their debate.

"Excuse me," she said, catching their attention.

The couple's conversation paused when they turned to her. Maria smiled.

"Hi. This might sound a bit strange, but—"

Attention passengers for Flight three twenty-five going to Indianapolis. Boarding will now begin at Gate B Twelve. We ask all passengers with priority boarding, including first-class, business-class, and those needing special assistance, to proceed to the gate at this time.

All remaining passengers should make their way to the gate to line up in line B.

Thank you for flying with us, and we wish you a pleasant journey!

"That's us, babe," Keith called out.

Maria nodded then turned back to the couple before.

"Well, as I was saying, this may sound strange, but I think you should have this," she told them, handing the woman the amulet. "It will help you see things better...from each other's perspective."

The man and woman looked at the amulet, then at Maria.

"Umm, thanks... I think?" the woman said, with a raised brow.

“Good luck,” Maria said with a wave as she walked back to Keith.

“Do you think it will work for them like it did us?” he asked, taking her hand.

Maria shrugged. “Don’t know. I’m just glad it won’t happen to us again.”

Keith laughed and brought her hand to his mouth to kiss her knuckles.

“Amen to that, babe,” he said as they joined the line for their flight home.



THE END

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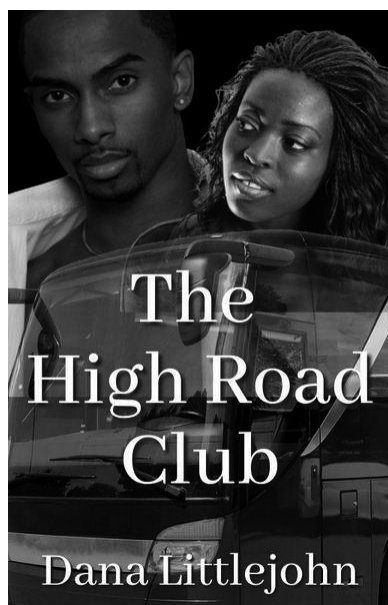
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Ronika O'Neal took the long bus ride back from visiting her sister in Tulsa. During a nap the scent spicy cloves and cinnamon made her feel warm and cozy. She turned to get comfortable and realized she was on someone's shoulder. Lieutenant Delaney didn't complain when the beautiful woman he sat beside cozied up to him as she slept. In fact, he welcomed it and hoped for more.

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About the Author

As a young child, I wrote Hickory Dickory Dock type poetry as I doodled all over my papers in school. I still don't know which I did more, but by Jr. high school I wrote more than doodled and even got up the nerve to enter them in a contest or two. But it was my short stories that took all my time and energy.

I showed a few to my friends and they had me doing weekly installments of a story and had passed it around the lunch room. During the 80's; when I was in High School, I tried my hand at rapping. Rap Music was just a toddler with the arrival of the Sugar Hill Gang a few years back and everyone wanted to Rap. So with my 'crew' The Puma Fly Girls, (come on, you had a weird crew name too), we rapped and I wrote the rhymes for myself as Shorty Dee Ski and for another of my girls in my crew. (Don't Laugh. If you are a child of the 80's you were some kind of 'ski' too.)

In 2003, I picked up my pen again and I haven't put it down. Come along for the ride as I go on an imaginary trip into my world. You'll enjoy every minute of this wild ride.

Read more at <https://www.danalittlejohn.com/>.



About the Publisher

I invite you into my world with open arms to see my imagination run wild...

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