A Curse

by andlat

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Chapter 1

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A curse seems like one of those things that only exist in fairy tales. The prince must find true love or be doomed to be a beast forever or Sleeping Beauty's whole deal. My curse was different. Whenever someone said a special phrase, I froze in place, basically a mannequin, until the phrase was uttered again. I know, it's a weird curse. I don't even understand what the point was.

Once I became old enough to have a summer job, my parents decided that I might as well use what they called my special gift. They considered it modeling, but I was, for all intents and purposes, a mannequin at the local sporting goods store. I would put on some local sports uniform or whatever gear they wanted to highlight and then I was frozen in place and posed accordingly. It did not even hurt really, holding so still, and I got unfrozen for breaks and things like that.

Looking back, it was my big mouth that really got me into trouble. I can't really blame that on a curse, can I? My sister was watching some silly reality show and I commented that one of the contestants' short hair made her look like a boy in a dress. My sister's eyes seemed to flash.

"You know, some boys do wear dresses."

"Sure, sissies."

"That's what they're called." She said with a nod. "I've even

seen a few when I work at Prissy Miss." I shook my head in disbelief.

"How can they even call themselves boys?" I said in disbelief. Her eyes flashed again and I knew I was in trouble. How had she learned the curse phrase? I had plenty of time to wonder, as well as think about how I should never have made those comments when we were home alone, as she put me in her car. Where were we going? Unable to even move my head, I could only get the slightest hints until we arrived at Prissy Miss. Oh, no.

Any time I was in this part of town, I would cross the street to avoid having to walk in front of the windows of Prissy Miss. That's how bad it is! It specialized in little girl formal wear, like the sort of dresses flower girls wear. Technically, I had probably worn a Prissy Miss dress or two back when we were little and my sister insisted we play dress-up – I'm glad she didn't have my special phrase then! – but I by no means wanted to wear one now!

She carried me inside and I recoiled inwardly at all the dresses as far as the eye could see. Spying a conspicuously empty pedestal, I had a sneaking suspicion I would soon be on it.

Taking me to the backroom, she began to search the racks for something. I remembered her once saying that I was more like a doll than a mannequin as I saw the frilly, poofy dress and bloomers she planned to put me in. When I really focused, I could maybe wiggle my toes, but that made me

powerless to stop her. I couldn’t even cover myself as she stripped me naked right there in this frou-frou girl store! There was nothing I could do as she dressed my immobile body in the bloomers and an equally frilly undershirt before my vision was obscured by the dress coming down over my head. I tried to get her attention as she molded my face into an expression of shocked delight, all but certain that I would be vomiting if I had control. She spent what felt like an eternity positioning my hands just right before deciding she was done.

She set me up right in the middle of the store, nice and high so every shopper could see my bright yellow party dress and the bloomers underneath. I recoiled with horror at just how many mirrors I could see myself in.

As she abandoned me, I tried to find solace in the fact that maybe, just maybe, people would assume I was just another girl mannequin, but my sister returned, carrying a large sign. She showed it to me.

"Even boys can't resist Prissy Miss dresses." She read, smiling up at me on my pedestal. She set the sign up and stepped back to admire her handiwork. "Well, store opens in about an hour, so I better get out of here." I managed a small noise only audible in the pre-open quiet of the store. "Oh, it's my day off. Did I forget to mention? I'll be back to pick you up tomorrow." She laughed. “At the end of my shift, course.” I watched as she all but skipped merrily away, leaving me there to begin what would be at least twenty-four hours in this dress.