

Flower Girl's Frilly Fate

by andlat

Abigail is obviously too old to be flower girl. Her cousins agree, but none of the adults seem to. Luckily, she knows just who should take her place and a little thing like him being her brother won't stand in her way

The Costume Box

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Chapter 1

Flower Girl's Frilly Fate

"Can't believe I'm actually letting people see me in this." Abigail muttered as she turned slightly from side to side. She had refused to put on the tights. You didn't need to try those on and besides, the dress was bad enough as it was. The giant bows on the shoulders and these petticoats could not be right. The dress looked like it was too small for them! She slid on a pair of dressy strapped shoes and trudged out to show Mom, dress bouncing as if it was mocking her with every step.

"No tights?" Mom asked, eyebrow raised.

"You don't need to try those on." Abigail insisted. "And are you sure this is right?"

"It looks just like the photo." Mom reassured her, but Abigail had other things on her mind, namely her brother Michael snickering. She glared at him.

"Michael, stop."

"His name is Mikey." Abigail said. That, at least, got him to stop laughing as he glared at her.

"You look ridiculous." He said. She knew he was right, but she glared all the same. She had not asked to be the flower girl. Aunt Melinda had decreed she would be the flower girl, as her youngest female relative.

"Mikey's younger than me." Abigail had vented to Mom. She

was too old to be a flower girl!

"Yes, but he's a boy."

"Hardly."

"Abigail."

"It's true." Abigail knew a lot of boys and Michael never seemed to measure up to them. They were fast, strong, tough. He squealed like a little girl whenever she so much as touched him. One of her favorite things to do, immature as it was, was to give him a wedgie and call him her little sister. It had made her feel better when she had first gotten the news, hearing him squeal as she tugged on his boy panties. Sure, he called them briefs, but a girly boy like him wore panties. That was the simple fact.

"I really think it would look better with the tights."

"I'll wear them the day of." Abigail said with a sigh.

"And the right shoes."

"Yes." Abigail rolled her eyes as Michael started laughing again. She knew she should never risk this in front of Mom, but giving him a brutal wedgie while dressed like this was too good an opportunity to pass up. Michael squealed his soprano squeal as she yanked his waistband up to his shoulder blades.

"Abigail!"

"Sorry, Mom." She said, stepping back. "Oh, and sorry, Mikey." She hurried away before Mom pushed the tights

issue further, Mikey's desperate squeal echoing in her ears. It was a crazy thought, but she was as sure of it as anything. Mikey was going to be the flower girl. She would need some help though.

Her cousins Stacey and Amy were more than happy to indulge her. They got everything planned out in the weeks leading up to Melinda's wedding. All Abigail had to do was keep acting like she had come to terms with being the flower girl. She went to the salon to get her hair done, picking a style that would look flower girl worthy, but could easily be put into a simple ponytail once her plan was in action. She even texted with Aunt Melinda about her official flower girl duties: photos, flower petals, photos, and more photos! She was enticed by the mention of a 'special surprise', but nowhere near enough to reconsider.

As for Mikey, she tried to bribe him into not getting a haircut to make his sissification easier, even offering to not bully him for a whole month. When he came back from the barber with his hair short, Abigail hid her annoyance until that night when she gave his boy panties a solid tug and told him little sisters don't go to the barber.

"Just wait until the wedding when everyone's gonna see the flower girl give you a wedgie and expose you as a little sissy squealer." She hissed in his ear as he struggled to fix his stretched out briefs. She left him to it, feeling better. If only he knew what really awaited him.

The wedding weekend arrived and Abigail was delighted to

learn that they really did have their own room. Mom and Dad were on the other side of the wall, but at least she was alone with Mikey. She had promised to be on her best behavior, feeling like Mikey was the favorite since he never had to promise things like that.

The wedding morning started bright and early. Michael was still rubbing at his eyes as they ate breakfast down in the lobby. Stacey and Amy just so happened to come over and join them just after Mom and Dad left to go socialize or whatever it is grown-ups do at weddings.

As they walked back to their room, Michael could not help but notice that his cousins were following them closely. They must be near us, Michael thought, though he could've sworn Mom had said they were on a different floor.

"Why are they following us?"

"Oh, I didn't think to tell you." Abigail said. "Stacey and Amy are helping with makeup and hair and stuff." Michael accepted it, figuring he could watch TV while the girls did all that stuff.

He sank into the desk chair that he had rolled around the room in the night before. He had only just reached for the remote when Abigail snatched it away from him and he suddenly became aware that all three girls were between him and the door.

"You don't have time, Mikey." Abigail said.

"We've got to get the flower girl ready." Stacey added,

holding up a bag.

"And why am I involved?" It was the wrong thing to say.

"Mom said I only got picked to be flower girl because I'm the youngest girl, but really, you're a better fit."

"But I'm a boy."

"So?"

"I'm not doing it."

"You are."

"Everyone will laugh at me."

"Sounds like you're thinking about it." Abigail grinned as his cheeks turned a little pink. "But don't worry. That's what Stacey and Amy are here for. They're gonna do everything they can to make sure Aunt Melinda has a pretty flower girl."

"You're joking."

"Nope." Abigail nodded to Stacey and Amy.

"Let's get started." With a wicked grin, they pushed Michael onto the desk chair and pushed it toward the bathroom.

"Abigail, can you grab Mikey's dress?"

"I'm not wearing a dress!"

"Abigail told us you loved seeing it on her. Just you wait until you're wearing it." Stacey patted his cheek.

"I've got his tights too." Abigail said, grinning as she handed

the dress and tights off to Amy before closing the bathroom door. "Have fun, Mikey!" She called through the final crack before closing it tight.

"No, please, no!" Michael yelled, his voice high and muffled by the wall between Abigail and all the excitement. She grinned. This was going to be great!

"It's perfectly natural to be nervous about being a flower girl." She heard Amy say.

"This will help you relax and have fun." Stacey said before loud pop music began to play, drowning out their voices. At breakfast, she had snuck a peek at the makeup bag Stacey and Amy had brought, but had hardly recognized half of it. I should learn more about makeup, she thought. Can't have my little sister knowing more than me!

"He might really be my little sister after today." She said, unzipping Michael's suit bag. If he was going to wear her flower girl dress, it only made sense for her to wear his suit. It was the only wedding appropriate option she had.

As she was buttoning up the shirt, the bathroom door opened and out came Michael's t-shirt and sweatpants. She hurried over to sneak a peek, but Stacey stood at the door, blocking her view.

"Our flower girl's still getting ready. Isn't that right, sweetie?"

"Let me go!"

"She's bashful." Stacey said loudly enough for Mikey to hear

as the song ended and another one began. "Ooh!" Her arm shot out, her shiny red nail pointing past Abigail. "You're looking dapper by the way. Hand me that nail polish bag, would ya?" Abigail grinned and grabbed it. "Hey, Amy, are we doing Pink-A-Doodle or It's a Girl for Mikey's nails?" The door closed and the music turned back up before Abigail could hear the answer. Either one sounded like a winner!

She grinned as she tried to picture just what Michael would look like once Stacey and Amy were done. Sure, they had texted her their plans, but she had understood maybe half of it? She finished dressing, figuring it was better not to know for sure what would emerge from the bathroom.

Dressed, she admired herself in the mirror, even grabbing her phone to snap a few selfies of her leaning coolly against the wall before stowing her phone in Michael's cavernous pockets.

"Really should steal his clothes more often." She mused. Not that she had never done so before. There had been that trip where Mom had packed one suitcase for the both of them. Abigail, ever the early riser, had stolen his cargo shorts, leaving Michael to spend the day on the boardwalk in a pair of black shorts with pink stripes on the sides that were easily no more than half the length of the ones he had thought he would be wearing.

Abigail sat on the bed and stared down at her feet. She had not considered shoes. Michael's feet had recently grown, so would her feet fit his shoes?

"How much walking will there be?" She shrugged. "Probably less since he's the flower girl now." She grinned at the closed bathroom door. They had to be nearly done, right?

Abigail tested out his shoes and nodded approvingly. They would work. She turned on the TV, wondering how long she would have to wait.

It was another twenty minutes before the door finally opened. Stacey and Amy stepped out grandly.

"Ready?" Stacey asked, her face alight with excitement.

"Oh, definitely." Abigail said, nodding eagerly. This felt like her birthday!

"Presenting..." Amy began. "The star of aunt Melinda's wedding, in his debut as flower girl, Michael Addams!"

"Do the walk." Stacey hissed, but Abigail's eyes were on the shorter girl between them as she walked out like a supermodel. She wore the tights, the dress, everything Abigail had been dreading. Her hair cascaded down her shoulders with a slight wave to it. Her lips were plump and pink, as were the nails Abigail could only barely glimpse since the girls had her hands clenched in fists. It was only that and the glower on her face that told Abigail this was a boy all dolled up.

"Oh, you look amazing!" Abigail hurried over.

"You're wearing my suit."

"Well, you didn't need it." She walked around him

appraisingly.

"We did his nails, his lipstick, a teensy bit of things to make him look younger." Stacey explained.

"We decided against his eyebrows, other than a few spare hairs here and there." Amy continued.

"There were a few tears." Stacey said, moving Michael's hair out of the way to show Abigail the sparkly daisy in each of his earlobes.

"You pierced his ears?"

"Borrowed it from work," Stacey explained. "And you don't need to feel bad, Mikey. You're not the first little girl to cry when she gets her ears pierced for the first time."

"There's definitely no going back now, Mikey!" Abigail said with a grin. "Did you thank Amy and Stacey for all the work they did? I mean, look at how pretty you are! Everyone's gotta admit you should've been flower girl all along, right?"

"I'm not a girl!" Michael snarled.

"Oh, oops." Amy leaned over and tapped Mikey's nose. "You're now officially a girl."

"Just be sure to come find us to reverse the spell before bed tonight or you'll permanently be a girl." Stacey teased.

"Please!" Michael said, ignoring the snickering teenagers. "Abigail, you can't seriously expect me to do this!" Abigail looked away. She hated when he got those pleading eyes.

How could she resist giving in?

"Even if we had time to get you undressed" Stacey interjected. "And have Abby – sorry, Abigail – put it on and do her makeup, you'd still have the hair and earrings. Face it, you're the flower girl."

"These shoes are killing me."

"Spoken like a born girl." Amy purred approvingly.

"They never get any better." Stacey said. "Just wait until you have heels to deal with."

"Mary Janes are almost worse." Amy murmured to her sister.

"We better get going." Abigail said, eager to show her feminized brother off to everyone. This was really working! He was the flower girl and she got to relax, free of humiliation. "Let's go, little sis! They can't start without their flower girl."

"The wedding's not for hours!" Michael objected.

"You're part of the wedding now." Amy explained. "That means photos." Michael could never have imagined such a simple word could strike such fear into him.

"Ooh, can we get a quick photo of me and my sister?" Abigail asked. She grabbed Michael and put her arm around him.

"Smile!" Stacey said, even though Michael continued to grimace.

"At least you're still in your own boy panties." Abigail whispered.

"They're-

"Under your dress, so they are one hundred percent panties." She said triumphantly. "Don't make me pull them out and send you down the aisle with a wedgie." With the way his tights were already riding up, Michael was all but certain that was going to happen even without Abigail's help. "What did you do to his lashes?" Michael's hand shook as he covered his eyes.

"Very little." Stacey said. "Mikey naturally has lashes fit for a flower girl. I'm almost jealous."

"Stacey!" Mikey whined. Abigail smirked, but before she could dig in further, Amy got them back on track.

"We'd better get downstairs." She said. "Isn't the ceremony on the other side of this place?"

"I think so." Stacey agreed. "Ready, Abigail? How about our little flower girl?"

"You can't make me do this!"

"You're all dressed for it." Stacey explained gently. "Besides, who's the youngest one in this room?"

"Dunno."

"Sure you do. Me and Amy are teenagers, Abigail's your older sister, so... it's you, right?" He only grunted. "Well, it

only makes sense for the youngest one to be flower girl, right?"

"Right." Amy and Abigail both said.

"But I'm a boy. It was s'posed to be Abby."

"Look how cute it looks when he pouts." Amy whispered to Abigail. "They're gonna eat him up."

"Well" Stacey said, kneeling down to his level. "Once they get a look at you, they won't even think it should've been Abigail. You're gonna be the best flower girl ever."

"A rock star of a flower girl!" Amy agreed. "So let's go show them just how good of a flower girl you can be!"

As Amy took Michael by the hand and they began to leave the hotel room, Abigail could not help but feel impressed. Not only had they gotten Michael so very dolled up, they had even given him a pep talk. Sure, he was still whimpering, but they had gotten him out in the hall and were almost to the elevator! She had realized when she had stood next to him that he smelled lightly of cotton candy. They had even perfumed him!

They crowded into the elevator, Michael staring down at his feet to avoid the mirrored interior. Abigail drank it in, marveling at how different he looked from the bleary eyed boy in pajamas from that morning. Now he looked like he probably started the morning dancing around the room in a nightgown and kissed all his dolls and plushies good morning as he merrily made his bed.

The voices grew louder the closer they got to the venue. Michael whimpered and whined, sounding more and more like a little girl as they got closer. He's just getting into character.

"You can't make me do this." He exclaimed, slamming his feet into the tiled floor and refusing to take even a step more.

"You've just got the jitters." Amy said.

"We got you this far. Do you really think we'll let you run back to the hotel room and undo all our work?"

"Uh..." Michael said.

"And do you have a room key anyway?"

"Or even pockets?" Abigail interjected with a snort. Michael glared at her.

"Those are my pockets."

"Well, I'm the one wearing the suit." She replied. "And what are you wearing, little sister?" She looked him over and pointed it all out. "A dress, tights, little girl shoes, and so, so much makeup!" She grinned.

"Abigail." She knew he was desperate if he was not brattily calling her Abby.

"Sorry, but we're literally a door away and you're the one dressed for it."

"The girl for the job." Stacey said.

"But I am not a girl!"

"You saw yourself, Mikey." Amy said. "And once we step through that door, everyone's gonna see you and you know what they'll think? Same thing you did. You look like a girl and you must be the flower girl!"

"It's just a few hours." Abigail said.

"Then why'd you want out of it?"

"Cuz I'm too old." She replied matter-of-factly. "Let's go." She pushed past him, grinning as her hand brushed his petticoat. I almost might owe him one for taking this for me, she thought as she pushed the door open and grandly led her brother to what she creatively named his frilly fate. Flowery fate? Mikey the Flower Girl's Frilly Fate. There! That sounds good. Perfect even!

Even though, as Michael had said, the wedding was still hours away, there were a lot of people milling around. Abigail could hear Michael whimper as it truly sunk in how stuck he was, but things became worse in an instant.

"There she is!" A loud voice exclaimed. A woman in smart pants and a blazer came through the crowd that parted for her, her speed making it clear she expected nothing less. "Our flower girl! Thank you so much, ladies!" Suddenly, she had Michael's hand. "I'll take her from here." She immediately hurried away, dragging Michael along, his Mary Janes clip-clopping rapidly. The look of fear on Michael's face as she led him away by the hand brought a smile to Abigail's face. It

wasn't like he was in any real danger. He was just in for a day of photos and being told what a pretty little girl he was. Pretty little girl! That was literally what Aunt Melinda had said in a text! Better him than me, she thought. The coordinator seemed completely unaware of Mikey's expression, talking nonstop as he tried to keep up. "Your dress is just gorgeous! The last wedding I was at, the poor dear had a floor length gown that she could hardly walk in, but this is just adorable! And look how pretty you are! You're going to look just wonderful-" She did not seem to take even a single breath by the time she and Michael had disappeared.

"Well. That was something." Stacey said.

"A success." Abigail said.

"Did you see the way those petticoats bounced?" Stacey patted her shoulder. "You dodged a bullet, Abigail!"

"Mom mentioned that that coordinator lady was intense." Amy said. "Auntie Melinda swears by her though."

"Oh, right! Wasn't she at the bridal shower for a bit?"

"We're gonna go get ourselves ready, Abigail." Amy said. "Gonna hang out down here?"

"Sure." Abigail suddenly grinned. "I suddenly have a lot of free time, don't I?"

Abigail watched Stacey and Amy walk back out of sight, smiling to herself as she celebrated everything that had gone oh so right today. I really gotta thank them somehow. She

thought. Then again, we all get to enjoy Mikey walking down the aisle. She squirmed with excitement before straightening her jacket. What to do now?

She refused to allow herself to feel bored. After all, she had done all this to get out of photos and the hundred other little things required of a flower girl. She milled around, chatting with relatives, dodging the implied questions that came with "I heard you were the flower girl", and generally just enjoying herself. She was feeling so good, her confidence only slipped a little when she heard her name in a very familiar voice.

"Abigail." Mom said, walking over to her. "There-" she paused as she realized something was amiss. "What are you wearing? Shouldn't you be in your dress by now? I told you to find me if you needed help."

"Oh, I forgot. Turns out, they didn't need me."

"Didn't need you?" Mom sighed, a sure sign she was about to slip into lecturing mode.

"They found someone else who was perfect and who am I to stand in the way of it?"

"Hm." Mom eyed her. "Have you seen your brother?"

"Isn't that his suit?" Dad asked.

"Abigail. Why are you wearing your brother's suit?" Mom asked. Abigail's confidence was gone. This was getting out of hand fast. When Mom and Dad started feeding off of each

other's mood... it was best to derail them sooner rather than later. If she did not think of something and fast, she might find herself dragged by the ear out to the wedding photos. Though that would expose Mikey... No, she had to come up with something better.

"I think he went to the bathroom." She said, fully aware of how flimsy of an excuse it was. "Uh, up in the room."

"Abigail, did you lock your brother in the bathroom in his underwear?" Mom asked.

"Again?" Dad added so sternly, she had to fight the urge to laugh.

"No, I promise." It was a struggle to keep her voice level. "He is dressed" in more ways than one. "And I'm sure you'll see him soon." She felt relieved when one of her great aunts chose that moment to come over and distract Mom and Dad long enough for her to slip away. Her only choice was to come up with a better reason for his absence. "Or avoid Mom and Dad until the ceremony." Her good mood returned as she remembered that she had Mikey walking down the aisle as the flower girl to look forward to. "Wish I could sneak out to where they're taking photos." She murmured.

A short while later, Stacey and Amy returned, their hair and makeup now done, though she still felt like Mikey had had far more done to him than they had done to themselves. Abigail nearly pounced on them, desperate for something to tell Mom and Dad.

"Easy." Amy said. "You just tell him you just saw him a minute ago and he was whining about being bored."

"Or how itchy his shirt is."

"Yeah, but they noticed I'm wearing his suit."

"Ooh, tell them the truth!" Stacey said. Amy and Abigail stared in disbelief. "It's so unbelievable, they'll forget all about you."

They all had a good laugh about that, but Abigail was not sure if she liked the idea of it. Sure, Mom and Dad would find out at the ceremony, if not sooner, but she could not decide if it would be better for them to hear it from her or not. She mulled it over and, in the meantime, did everything she could to avoid them.

Milling through the crowd, she overheard someone mention that the wedding party had come inside for photos. A blend of curiosity and temptation washed over her and she went off to see if she could catch a glimpse of Mikey. Since no one had mentioned that a boy had been caught masquerading as the flower girl, she assumed he had not been caught yet. Or, I guess, he hasn't told anyone. She liked that it seemed more likely for him to be caught than for him to actually confess. Then again, he made a pretty convincing girl...

The virtue of being a kid is that a lot of adults pay you no mind and Abigail was able to use that to get closer and closer to a group of voices that just had to be the bridesmaids. Sure enough, she found an open door and, sneaking a peek inside,

she saw a group of women in green dresses. Mikey should have stuck out like a sore thumb, but she could not see him anywhere. She racked her brain for any excuse to go in there. Maybe she could tell someone that she needed her little sister for a moment. That might work...

"Not like that, Abigail!" She heard from a door further down the hall. She almost ran over to it and peeked in to see the wavy haired little girl who had been her brother just that morning. "You need to step, not drag your feet." Abigail felt like she was glowing as she watched Mikey take a few steps. "Step, step, petals." The bridesmaid instructed. He was getting flower girl training!

"And what do you keep on your face?" Another bridesmaid that Abigail could not see asked.

"A nice big smile." She heard Michael say in a tone that made it clear this was nowhere near the first time today he had said that.

"Nice and big and pretty, like you had for photos.

"Pretty girl, pretty smile. It's your big moment."

"I really think we should have her try skipping again."

"It was a little chaotic."

"Aww, I missed him skipping?" Abigail sighed. Maybe she could make him demonstrate. Later, she thought. Later.

"We'd better get back over there." That was the last thing Abigail heard. She quickly scampered away, almost certain

that Michael would point out the real Abigail if he saw her.

Returning out to the crowd, she immediately tracked down Stacey and Amy. Nearly bouncing with delight, she excitedly told them everything she overheard.

"Ooh, maybe they'll change their minds and get him to skip." Amy said, grinning.

"You know this means he's passed as a little girl for hours!" Stacey said.

"And hours still to go." Abigail said.

"You think so?"

"Well, yeah. There's the reception after, right?" Amy and Stacey exchanged a look.

"Sure, but what'll your parents say?"

"Sure." Abigail conceded. "But the flower girl can't really disappear after the ceremony, right? And it's not like they'll disrupt everything to tell the truth."

"I guess you're right." Amy shrugged.

"But still. I don't think we should get our hopes up." Stacey said.

The moment finally arrived for the ceremony. Abigail headed for the doors, only to run right into her parents. Stay calm, she told herself. Just one more little dodge of the truth and then they'll find out soon enough. The anticipation was enough to help her heart stop pounding in her chest.

"Have you seen Mikey?" Dad asked. Abigail tugged down at her suit jacket.

"He said he was gonna pee and then we'll see him in there."

"You promise?" Mom asked, giving her that look that made Abigail feel like she was reading her mind. Can't wait until I'm a mom and I'm psychic.

"Absolutely." She said, nodding. By some miracle, Mom and Dad bought it and they sat down, though they took turns looking over their shoulders at the door. Abigail ran her hands along her legs as the music began. The crowd all turned to face the door and the moment finally arrived: the entrance of the flower girl.

The crowd ahhed as Michael made his appearance. Michael looked every bit as pretty as he had that morning, though now he wore a crown of daisies atop his head. The other change was the big smile plastered across his face. Sure, his eyes still showed a hint of worry, but they were mostly filled with focus as he stepped, stepped, spread some petals on the floor. Abigail knew her parents were whispering to each other, but all she cared about in that moment was her brother's trip down the aisle. Step, step, petals. Step, step, petals. She knew for him, the trip felt like it took an hour, but before she knew it, he had reached the front of the room where Melinda's fiancé stood. He smiled down at Mikey and held his hand up for a high five, but Michael must have been told that was coming. Abigail gasped as he curtsied. How did they get him to do that? The groom chuckled and whispered something to

Michael, whose cheeks looked a little pinker than before as he turned to face the door. His smile faltered for just half a second as he saw his parents and Abigail, but it returned to his face as the groomsmen and bridesmaids began to enter in pairs. Michael remained in position as the bridesmaids all passed by him and Abigail found herself a little disappointed he did not have to curtsy to all of them as they arrived. Still, she loved the way he stuck out against their mature dresses.

As “The Wedding March” played, Aunt Melinda came down the aisle. She had a smile almost as beautiful as Mikey's and her eyes glistened with tears of happiness. Abigail was sharp-eyed enough to notice a little prod from the Maid of Honor to Mikey's back and he dropped into a curtsy as the bride walked past. Glad I didn't have to do that! Abigail thought as the wedding party turned for the ceremony to begin. But how did they get him to agree to it?

Since they were close to Aunt Melinda, as well as the family of the flower girl, they had sat near the front, which gave Abigail a perfect view of Mikey standing there, holding his basket in both hands, his long wavy hair making him look every bit like a girl from the back. He looks like one from the front too, she thought, relishing the memory of his smile. How, how, how! did they get him to smile like a girl? She wondered. She knew her brother well enough to know the smile was anything but genuine, but it had been pretty and would surely fool anyone not so in the know. And it seemed so natural! They must have made him smile like that all morning!

Abigail could not be sure if the ceremony was just very short or if she was just that distracted by Mikey standing such a short distance in front of her in all his feminine glory. That dress really isn't any better on him than it would be on me, she thought.

"You may kiss the bride." Abigail blinked and clapped with everyone else as she watched Aunt Melinda kiss her husband, Abigail's new uncle. She smiled as the entire wedding party turned as one, loving how precious it looked to see Michael's dress bounce a bit. He must be absolutely dying in that. I can't believe I was supposed to wear that thing!

"Hold it." The photographer said. "Big smiles, everyone!" Mikey's already got his smile, Abigail thought. "And perfect."

"May I present for the first time, mister and" Abigail clapped with everyone else even though she hardly heard what the officiant said. She could not be more thrilled. The wedding's over, so that makes Mikey like an official, bonafide flower girl, right? Maybe I can print him a little certificate to hang on his wall.

As the bride and groom passed by, Abigail hid behind her mom and dad, wondering for the first time how Aunt Melinda felt about all this. She emerged from behind Dad as Mikey came by. He hesitated for a moment, the smile still on his face, but fading slightly as he seemed to be about to say something. He must have thought he was done now, but the bridesmaid behind him gestured for him to keep going. The smile remained on his face, but Abigail knew he was

miserably coming to terms with the fact he was still stuck as a little girl.

Abigail was about to face her own tribulation. Dad took her by the shoulder as they made their way down the aisle. To anyone else, it looked like he was just keeping track of his daughter. Abigail, though, knew it to mean 'you're under arrest'.

"We're going up to the room" was all Mom said, at least until they were in the elevator.

Abigail got a lecture in the elevator about inappropriate, cruel pranks. Abigail got a lecture in the hotel room about making a commitment and following it through. By the time they had finished, it was time for dinner, the whole truth had come out, and her sentence was set: grounded the moment they got home for a month and she had to write letters of apology – good ones, Mom had specified – both to Aunt Melinda and her husband and to Michael.

"Now, we're going to go downstairs to dinner and the reception, but you are on thin ice, young lady." Dad said.

"If we see any more funny business, you are going to pay." Mom added. "Behave!"

Arriving at the reception, Abigail suddenly remembered that Aunt Melinda had mentioned a 'special surprise' for her. Mom and Dad found the table and Abigail noticed place cards for them, for Mikey, but not one for her!

"Just sit at Mikey's." Mom said.

"You're wearing his suit, after all." Dad added.

"Not helping." Mom scolded.

"But where is my spot?"

"Well, you were going to sit at the head table." Mom said. That made sense to Abigail and she felt a twinge of disappointment, which she was very careful to hide, that she would miss out on feeling important.

"Ladies and gentlemen, friends and family of the bride and groom, we would like to welcome you to Melinda and Daniel's reception." The DJ said as if he was hosting a game show. "If everyone's found their seats, it is my honor to introduce the wedding party!"

"Celebrate" began to play as the bridesmaids and groomsmen came in in pairs, dancing their way up to the head table.

"Where's Mikey? He came in first at the wedding."

"I'm sure he'll-"

"And now, put your hands together for our adorable flower girl, Abigail!" The DJ announced. Abigail felt her face light up as the song changed to "Isn't She Lovely?" as Mikey hurried in. He still had that smile on his face, but his eyes and clenched fists made it clear he was getting this over as quickly as he could. She wondered if he realized that rushing like that only made his petticoat look fluffier and the smile only made him seem like he liked it. She smiled and took a sip of her water. Sure, she was grounded, but these memories

would not fade after only a month.

The bride and groom came in, but Abigail only had eyes for her brother. He sat among the bridesmaids, all but a prisoner. She noticed her parents whispering to each other as they looked up at their son.

"At least he looks nice" she thought she overheard. Great, Mikey's their favorite now. She was starting to feel like this was all a bad idea. She glanced back up at her brother and felt her good mood return. He was sitting there with a daisy crown, that dress, those tights! She could be grounded for a year and it would not change the fact that Mikey was a flower girl! She entertained herself with thoughts of bringing it up at his wedding until dinner arrived.

Dinner passed without incident and then something magical happened. Mom went up to the head table and, after chatting with the bridesmaids for a moment, returned with Mikey in tow. For a moment, Abigail was certain the fun was over, but Mom grabbed her phone.

"Alright, kids." She began. "Mouths shut. Don't speak to each other. We're a happy, harmonious family. I want you both against the wall for a nice photo. Abigail, get your jacket back on." Abigail eagerly complied. More photos? Sounds good to me! "Smile!" The pair smiled, Abigail not even having to try as she felt her brother's skirt brush her knee.

"Love how you did your flower girl smile there too." She murmured as they returned to the table.

"Do you want to stay here or go back up?" Mom asked.

"Back up?" Mikey asked hopefully.

"To the head table."

"Oh. Uh, I'll sit here." He mumbled bashfully, Mom picking at a bit of fluff on his petticoat. He sat between his parents, Dad placing a hand on his shoulder and whispering something to him. Mikey nodded, but avoided Abigail's gaze. He looked so pitiful, but so pretty even as he pouted.

"What did they even do to you?" Mom asked, examining his face. "I'm going to go find Stacey and Amy." She marched off.

"Did you at least have fun?" Dad asked. Mikey sniffled.

"There were so many photos!" He moaned. "And the photographer kept saying I have darling dimples and... and..."

"Shh, it's ok. We can talk more tomorrow. It's over and your sister is" Dad's eyes lost their warmth as he looked at his delinquent daughter. "Very sorry."

"Yeah." She said. Mom returned.

"Well, the worst thing they did was pierce his ears." She pushed his hair back to see. "But we'll get you cleaned up before bed."

"Can't we go right now?" Mikey whispered.

"Not yet." Mom replied. Abigail smiled down at her lap. Melinda had given her a complete rundown of her flower girl duties. Mikey was not done yet.

Cake was served and Mikey seemed to cheer up a bit. He even talked to Mom and Dad, though he still seemed to be pretending like Abigail was not there. Suits me fine, she thought. He's better to look at than to talk to anyway.

"Now that we're all fed, it's time for the bride and groom's first dance." The DJ announced. "If we could please get the flower girl to the dance floor please?"

"What? Why?" Mikey moaned.

"Off you go." Dad said. "Do you want one of us to go with you?" Abigail watched as Dad and Mikey made their way over. Wonder if they'll do a daddy-daughter dance. She got up from her seat and ambled over, trying to seem uninterested, but knowing she did not want to miss a second of this.

Mikey came out onto the dance floor and one of the bridesmaids handed him a basket of flower petals. The smile was back on his face, but everyone had to be able to tell he was disappointed as his next task was explained to him. A spotlight came on and followed him as he stepped, stepped, spread petals all the way around the dance floor. When the basket was finally empty, he fled to Dad, who knelt down and hugged him to the delight of the crowd and the photographer.

Abigail found herself getting a little teary eyed from the first dance, as well as Aunt Melinda and grandpa Tim's daddy-daughter dance. She was a little disappointed Dad didn't pull Mikey out there, but she knew he had a dance all his own coming up.

"And now, let's get our flower girl back."

"Again?" Michael exclaimed in disbelief. The crowd laughed.

"You'll like this one." The DJ said, scooping Michael up and putting him on a little box. "Let's get all the kids out on the dance floor for Abigail to lead us in the Chicken Dance." He grinned at the assembled crowd. "And yes, kids at heart as well."

The single redeeming virtue of the little stage for Mikey was that he did not have to participate in the do-si-dos of the Chicken Dance, though the DJ tried to get him to turn in a circle on the box. All the same, everyone faced him to watch him flap his wings and shake his butt. As far as Abigail was concerned, it would have been absolutely humiliating for a girl – more a young woman – her age to do that, but for a little girl like Mikey, it seemed right.

With the Chicken Dance complete, Mikey retreated back to the family's table. Mom, Dad, and a few of the bridesmaids managed to coax him back to the dance floor once or twice, but it soon became clear the flower girl was closed for business. All the same, Abigail and her parents had fun, so Mikey was stuck for a couple hours. Just to be safe, even when Abigail abandoned her suit jacket, she made sure the room key was not in it to keep Mikey from sneaking off on his own.

"Alright, Abigail, let's get upstairs." Dad said.

"Can't I stay a little longer?"

"You're grounded, young lady." Mom said. "Come on." They collected Mikey, who shivered slightly as Mom straightened out his dress.

"It's cold."

"Well, you haven't been dancing or moving." Mom said. Abigail paused for a moment. Did she dare? Well, I'm in this deep, she thought before slipping the suit jacket over Mikey's shoulders. He took it before realizing how it must look.

"It's warm." She said. Mikey only grunted, but he did not take it off even when a few people cooed at him as they left.

"Here's the deal." Mom said in the privacy of the elevator. "Abigail, grab your pajamas and go to the other room with Dad. Mikey and I will sleep in his room so I can get him looking" she smiled in spite of the severity of the situation. "Looking like himself again." Abigail nodded, but it felt a little unfair. It's not like I was gonna do anything else! I forgot my old nightie at home.

All the same, she was the picture of good behavior as she said good night to Mom and Mikey, noticing how much it looked like the boys were going to one room and the girls to the other. They could ground her until college. Nothing could change how great today had been.