Just Admit It, Mikey!

by andlat

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Chapter 1

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"I do not!" Mikey insisted with a whine.

"You totally do." His cousin Mandy said with a wicked grin.

"But she's a girl."

"So? It's just in the face, really." She held up the DVD case. "Yeah, you two could be twins. Mikey and Shirley Temple, the twin darling princesses of old Hollywood." Mikey looked at the sweetly smiling girl on the DVD case and shook his head. There was no way.

"Just drop it. Let's go do something else."

"What else is there to do? It's raining and our moms are cleaning grandma's basement."

"I dunno, something other than this."

"Let's watch this." Mandy said. "I bet she even sounds just like you."

"No way! She's like six and a girl!"

"This was her last movie as a child star. She was like ten or eleven." Mandy replied authoritatively. "There's only one way to find out though."

"I'm not watching it!" Mikey insisted. If he had left it at that, everything would have been fine, but he had to open his mouth to add a coda. "I'll do anything else."

"Anything?" Mandy grinned. "Come on then." Grabbing the bewildered boy by the hand, she dragged him out of the family room. "I think it was in one of these guest rooms."

"What was?" Mikey tried to pull away, but her grip was iron tight and she was far stronger than he had expected.

"Grandma used to enter our moms in Shirley Temple lookalike contests or something. I think your mom won more of them than my mom." Mandy seemed to talk a mile a minute. "Probably why you look so much like Shirley Temple."

"Do not"

"The point is," Mandy said. "Grandma kept all of their costumes, so I'm going to prove to you that you're like the spitting image of her."

"How?"

"I think you know how, cuz." Mandy said with a grin as she opened the closet, revealing many dresses.

It took nearly an hour of cajoling, begging, promises not to tell anyone, and even a few physical threats, but Mikey eventually found himself in tights, a dress, and a pair of uncomfortably small Mary Janes, grimacing as Mandy adjusted a wig on his head.

"This is so ridiculous."

"If you'd just humored me and said you saw the resemblance, you wouldn't be in this." Mandy remarked philosophically.

Their grandma had thought of everything and the bag in which the outfit had been stored even contained a photo, though neither of them were positive if it was Shirley Temple herself or Mikey's mom in the outfit. Either way, Mikey realized he was rapidly becoming the girl in the photo, whether he was willing to admit it or not.

"Almost done."

"Why are you going through all this work if I'm just going to take it off?" Mikey felt deeply unnerved as Mandy laughed.

"We're gonna have to show our moms and grandma, don't you think?"

"What?"

"Trust me, it'll be funny. You can even say you thought it'd be a fun joke or whatever you want to not have to admit I forced you into this." Mandy shrugged. "Here, hold your doll."

"But"

"What are you so worried about? I bet they'll think it's cute. It's not like they're going to freak out and punish you just for playing dress-up." Mikey knew that that was true, but he still did not want anyone to see him like this! "C'mon."

Once again, Mikey found himself dragged through grandma's house, but the trip was quite different from when he had gone through in his t-shirt and jeans. The dress against the tights, the click-clack of his shoes on the floor, the feeling of the panties Mandy had insisted he wear shifting against his

bottom, the bounce of the curly wig on his head, it was all so unfamiliar!

"I've got something to show you!" Mandy said in sing-song as they neared the adults. All three of them, looking quite tired from cleaning all morning turned and gasped in unison as they saw Mikey. A moment later, realization struck as they worked out that, if Mandy was there holding this girl's hand, that meant…

"Oh, I remember that outfit." Grandma said with a smile.

"So do we." The moms said in unison, exchanging a look.

"I can't believe you kept it all these years!"

"I have all of them around." Grandma said. "Didn't really expect Mikey to be wearing one."

"And looking so good, right?" Mandy said with a grin as the women surrounded Mikey, checking the fit.

"It's like it was made for him."

"It's like she stepped right out of the screen!"

"Are you wearing panties?"

"He sure is!" Mandy said as Mikey's face grew redder and redder.

"How'd you ever convince him?" Mandy looked to Mikey, curious to see what explanation he had. His mouth opened and closed, but he could not bring himself to form words.

"It doesn't matter." Grandma said. "Back upstairs. I want a photo of you by the newel just like in the movie." Mikey led the way, listening to his mom and aunt reminisce about how they hated getting all dolled up for the contests. He wondered why they did not think it was even worse for a boy to be dressed like this, at the mercy of not just his cousin now, but all of them?

"At least," Mandy whispered to him. "You don't need to smile. Remember the photo? She looks almost as sad and miserable as you do right now." She snickered, loving his predicament. "If you had only just admitted it..." she reminded him.

"It's a shame we didn't think of this when he was smaller." Mandy's mom remarked as Mikey reluctantly took his position by the newel post. "There are some absolutely darling dresses in some of these closets."

"You wore that dress when you were eight" Grandma reminded her. "And Mikey's fitting in it at twelve, so who knows?"

"Maybe he can do a whole fashion show for us." Mandy teased. Mikey, finding a bit of nerve, glared at her.

"I think one dress is enough for him." His mom said.

"Alright, Mikey, let's get a photo." Grandma said. Mikey stood there, hoping that he would be allowed to put his own clothes back on. How had this spiraled so out of control so quickly? He resolved to march right to the guest room the

moment grandma lowered her phone. "There we are. Oh, how precious." The adults and Mandy all surrounded the phone as if they did not have the real boy right there in front of them. Mikey took this to mean he was free and headed toward the guest room. "Oh, no you don't." Grandma said.

"Huh?" The click-clack stopped as Mikey turned and looked at her.

"I have a fun idea." Grandma's smile could not be good. Mikey felt his heart leap into his throat. Oh, no. "My friend Gloria invited us all over for a late lunch and, well" a smile played at her lips. "Wouldn't it be fun if we brought Mikey over just like this and see how long it takes for Gloria and the rest of the girls to work it out?"

"No, no way." Mikey stammered, but his nervous protests were easily drowned out by the others' enthusiasm.

"It'll be fine, Mikey." Grandma reassured him. "You just stay quiet and we'll see how long it takes before anyone knows you're a boy." She smiled at him. "It'll be a lot of fun, I promise."

"I'll even grab your clothes so that you can change once your secret's out." Mandy said, heading toward the guest room.

"You could probably even say a few things as a sort of hint." His grandma said. "Your voice is high, but not really girly, so it might help, not that I think anyone will suspect a boy is willingly showing up to lunch dressed like Shirley Temple."

"But"

"Mikey, it's just a little game." His mom said. "You'll be fine." Mikey gulped, but he knew that with everyone's minds made up, he had no choice. He nodded glumly, hoping against hope that they would know immediately. Which was worse? If they knew at a glance that he was a boy or if it took them all of lunch to work it out?