

# Potion Number 6

## By Bill Hart

SRU: Potion Number 6 by Bill Hart

"What do mean you want me to meet you at your place, Traci? Your dad will be there. And you know he doesn't like me." whined Alex. "He'll kill me if I show up and you're not around."

"No he won't, Alex." replied Traci. "Daddy might actually hate you enough to think about killing you, but he isn't going to do anything to you. He knows that *I* control all of my mother's money. Just as he knows if he pisses me off, then he's history."

"But..."

"Don't give me any buts, Alex. And would you quit whining for a while. You can survive an hour alone in the house with my father. There's positively no way he would do anything that would either alienate me or jeopardize his continued presence here."

"Well, I suppose. If you're sure..."

"I'm absolutely certain, Alex."

"I guess its okay then."

"Damn right its okay." replied Traci. "Just get your ass over to the house, and I'll see you there in about an hour." Traci hung up the phone.

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Arriving at Traci's house, Alex nervously knocked on the front door. It was his fervent hope that no one was home. It was perfectly clear to anyone who had eyes with which to see, that Traci's father, Broderick Malteen scared Alex totally shitless.

But the door swung open.

"Hello, Mr. Malteen." said Alex anxiously.

"Good afternoon, Alex." he replied matter-of-factly. "Traci Ann isn't home right now."

"I know, Mr. Malteen. But she told me to come here and wait for her."

"Did she now?" smiled Broderick Malteen. "Very well then, come in."

Frightened by Malteen's enigmatic smile, Alex nervously entered the house. In the den, he found a small chair and quietly sat down.

"Would you like something to drink Alex?"

"That would be very nice, Mr. Malteen. I think a glass of water would really hit the spot right now. Thank you."

When Broderick Malteen returned to his guest, he carried a large crystalline glass filled to the brim with water. He held out the glass to Alex.

Taking the glass, Alex sips at its contents before suddenly chugging its contents. "You know something, Mr. Malteen. This water tastes incredibly sweet." A sudden wave of dizziness swept over Alex, who, quite fortunately, hadn't risen from the chair where he was sitting. "What's happening?" asked Alex trying to shake the dizziness accosting his senses. "What did you put in that water, Mr. Malteen? Oh shit, you've poisoned me. Haven't you?"

"Of course I haven't poisoned you, Alex. And I'm genuinely hurt by your accusation that I would. You and I both know that my daughter would never forgive me if I killed you. And murder is just far too messy, especially when the police get involved and start asking questions I wouldn't want to answer.

"You know, Alex, it's truly amazing what fate has in store for us. When I spoke with that old man in the mall this afternoon about you and my daughter, I never really expected that I'd ever get the time alone with you I needed to do this. And now, here you are. I have all the time I'll need to make you a far more palatable friend for my daughter."

"What?"

"And here I thought I was being perfectly clear, Alex. I don't like you, Alex. And I never have. But I think you realized that long ago. Its extremely likely that I might never have liked you at all, except for effects of the potion in the water you've just swallowed."

"But Traci said you wouldn't do anything to me that would jeopardize your relationship with her or your position here."

"And I haven't jeopardized anything, dear Alex. Nothing at all, sweet Alex. When Traci arrives, *you* will be here exactly as she expects *you* to be. According to the old man, that particular side-effect is one of the real beauties of this potion. Traci won't notice anything amiss."

"What? How..." Alex's voice trailed off as a feeling of sluggishness took control of his body. All he could do was stare off into space.

"Stand up." ordered Broderick.

Without hesitation Alex stood, but he was totally incapable of doing anything else.

"Where do you live?" asked Broderick.

"I live in a small apartment on Barker Avenue, near Clive Street." replied Alex in a monotone voice. "Its on the other side of town from here."

"You know that's not true." replied Broderick. "You live next door."

For a moment, a look of total surprise appeared on Alex's face. But his surprise quickly faded, when he remembered he actually did live next door to the Broderick Malteen and his daughter Traci.

"Where do you live?" re-asked Broderick.

"I live next door, Mr. Malteen."

"Very good. Who are your parents?"

"My father is George Samuels. He's a construction worker. My mother is Betsy Samuels. She's a seamstress at the dress shop on King Way."

"I'm sorry, but you're mistaken again." stated Broderick. "Your parents are my good friends and neighbors Marshall and Inga Taldstrom."

At Broderick's words, ripples of change passed through Alex. His short dark hair turned blond and grew out over his ears. His brown eyes changed to blue. The muscles and bones of his face re-shaped as the Anglo-Saxon parental heritage of the Samuels gave way and conformed to his new Scandinavian ethnic heritage. He thinned slightly, while he grew taller.

As the changes ended, Broderick asked once again "Who are your parents?"

"My father is Marshall Taldstrom. He's a highly successful corporate attorney. My mother is Inga Taldstrom. She's a housewife now, but when she first met my father she was Miss Sweden. She doesn't need to work any more because we're very rich."

Broderick Malteen smiled. Things were going just as the old man had said they would. "Do you have any brothers or sisters?" he asked.

"Yes, Mr. Malteen." came the somnolent reply. I have three brothers and two sisters. I'm the youngest child."

"But that's incorrect." stated Broderick. "Marshall and Inga only have a single child."

Once again, surprise spread across Alex's face. But, as before, the look doesn't last very long. Memories of brothers and sisters faded away until all he could remember of family was his parents and being their only child.

"Do you have any brothers or sisters?" he asked again.

"No, sir. I'm an only child." replied Alex.

"What sex are you?" asked a smiling Broderick.

"I'm a boy." came the reply.

"I'm sorry. But once again, you've made a mistake." grinned Broderick. "My neighbors have a daughter."

Once again, ripples of change passed through Alex. Sleek and silky blond hair fell about her shoulders. Her facial bones and muscles re-molded to become those of a beautiful young woman. Her breasts swelled even as her waist thinned. Her body took on luscious curves in every place a beautiful young woman should have such curves. Her hands smoothed, while the nails on her narrowing fingers grew longer. And she now wore a short skirt and a form-fitting tank top with her midriff bared.

Broderick smiled as he re-asked the question "Which sex are you?"

"I'm a girl, sir." she answered in a voice an octave higher than before.

"What is your name, young lady?"

"My name is Alexander Albert Samuels."

"How can that be?" asked Broderick. "That isn't even a girl's name. My neighbors named their daughter Ashley Allison Taldstrom."

She stared in total disbelief at Broderick for a couple of moments. But then, disbelief faded as recognition settled in. Broderick could tell that the girl knew exactly who she was.

"What is your name, young lady?" queried Broderick again.

"My name is Ashley Allison Taldstrom."

"Who remembers you as Ashley Allison Taldstrom?"

"Just my parents and you Mr. Malteen. For some totally inexplicable reason, everybody else in the whole world thinks of me as some boy named Alexander Albert Samuels. Do I look like a boy to you?"

"Once again, that's the wrong answer, Ashley." responded Broderick. "Everyone in the entire world remembers you solely as Ashley Allison Taldstrom. Nobody remembers anybody, male or female, named Alexander Albert Samuels. In fact, Ashley, nobody named Alexander Albert Samuels has ever existed."

Confused for the moment, Ashley stared at Broderick. Until suddenly all was as it should be.

He asked again "Who remembers you as Ashley Allison Taldstrom?"

"Everyone, sir." she replied without hesitation. "But then, why shouldn't they remember me as Ashley. It's the only name I've ever had and it was given to me by my parents on the day I was born."

Excellent, thought Broderick Malteen. It worked exactly as the old man said it would. Ashley will be a far superior friend to Traci, then Alex could ever hope to be. Besides, *she* is far better looking than *he* was, and I won't have to worry about *him* marrying Traci any more.

Turning toward Ashley, he told her. "Why don't you wait in here for Traci. She should be home soon. Make yourself at home. Right now, I'm very tired and I'm going to my room to lie down." Seemingly very pleased with himself, he left Ashley alone in the den.

A few minutes later, the front door opened and was almost immediately slammed shut. Traci was home.

On entering the den, Traci spotted Ashley sitting in one of the reclining chairs watching television. Her father was no where to be seen. She could only smile as she remembered her earlier phone conversation with Ashley.

"What did I tell you, Ashley? I told you that you could survive my father for just an hour. Didn't I? And you certainly don't look any worse for the wear."

"He was just a perfect gentleman, Traci." replied Ashley. "I don't know whatever made me think he hated me, Traci. Actually, I think he sort of likes me."

"Haven't I been trying to tell you exactly that for the past several months? You have absolutely nothing to fear from my father. Are you ready for the double date I called you about earlier? Do you want Dean Pratchett or Terry Koontz tonight?"

"I've been looking forward to it all day." replied Ashley. "Either one will be fine with me. But my father doesn't like either of them. He doesn't think either one is good enough for his daughter. That probably means your father isn't going to like them either."

"So what." replied Traci. "I don't give a shit whether my father likes the boys I date or not. Besides, there's absolutely nothing he can do about my liking them anyway."

But while both girls laughed about the apparent impotence of Traci's father in this situation, Broderick Malteen stared silently at the little vial he held in his hand. Is there enough, he wondered? And would Ashley mind terribly having *two* new sisters?

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