

The More Things Change...

By Morpheus

Noreen McCormick confidently stepped into the mall, keeping an eye out for the special store that her friend at work had told her about. Noreen was 25 years old, with shoulder length reddish brown hair. She was slender and fairly well endowed, but certainly not voluptuous or gorgeous. In fact, she was a little petite, standing at 5 foot 2. Overall though, she was a very attractive person to look at. However, she had to wear the long sleeves on her blouse to hide the bruises on her arms.

Carefully she walked through the mall, careful scanning each store, to see if it was the one she sought. Her husband Rick had a bad temper and had hit her several times, and when she told her friend Janice, Janice suggested she go to this store. Noreen wasn't sure she believed what Janice had told her about the store and the strange old man that ran it, but anything was worth a try.

Finally she saw it. Right next to the book shop sat a small store with a sign proudly proclaiming Spells R Us above the door. She hesitated for only a few seconds, not sure if she was ready to go through with this, then she entered.

It was just like Janice described it. Shelves everywhere with all sorts of odds and ends, and behind the counter, was an old man wearing a bath robe, hunched over staring at some paper.

"Come in Noreen. You're late," he said to her, without looking up from his paper.

Noreen remembered that Janice said the old man who ran the shop knew everyone's name, so he must be real, unless Janice was playing some prank on her and warned the old man about her coming here.

"You came here for a reason," the Old Man said, finally looking up, "so let's get to business."

Noreen walked to the counter, and saw the paper the old man had been looking at was covered with all sorts of strange symbols and marks, that she assumed was writing of some sort. It sort of looked like that Chinese writing, in a way.

Noticing her looking at the paper, the old man harumphed and put it behind the counter, saying "This one isn't for you." He pulled a small box out from behind the counter at the same time, and set it in front of him. Slowly he opened the lid and pulled out a small green bottle. He closed the lid back up, letting Noreen see only a glimpse of several other colored bottles inside. He held the green bottle up to the light and squinted at it, saying "Yep, this is the one," then he carefully set it down on the counter.

"The one what?" Noreen asked, curious to see if this grumpy old man was really able to work magic.

The Old Man glared at her for a second as if trying to decide if she were stupid, then said "Of course I can work real magic. You don't think I'd name my store Spells R Us if I sold stupid card tricks do you?"

Noreen was stunned. This old guy had read her mind.

The Old Man continued on "You're tired of getting injured when you fight with your husband, and wish that you were bigger and stronger than him. This," the Old Man said gesturing to the bottle, "can grant your wish."

"How can this change things?" Noreen said picking up the bottle.

The Old Man snatched the bottle out of her hands, and grinned at her. "There's enough in here for one dose. Pour it all into a drink. It doesn't really matter what you put it in, though I wouldn't suggest putting it any those horrible soft drinks," the Old Man grimaced. "Tea or Coffee would probably be best. It has to be all in one cup. You have to drink half of it, and your husband has to drink the other half of it. If you don't drink it from the same cup, it won't work."

"What exactly is it going to do?" Noreen asked, curious.

The Old Man chuckled. "It'll grant your desire." Putting the bottle back on the counter, he said "Normally this would be more expensive, but it's part of my older stock that I'm clearing out. I'll let you have it for \$30."

Noreen thought about it. It sounded a little expensive for such a small bottle, that she wasn't even sure would do anything, but she decided it would be well worth it if it did work. She agreed and paid the Old Man the money and walked out of the store. After she left, she turned around to look at the store again, but saw that it wasn't there anymore. It was gone. Instead, a shoe store was there instead. She just shook her head and went home, thinking about how things would change.

Rick sat down on the couch, opening up a beer. He was a fairly large man, with strong muscles and a tan from working all day in the sun. He'd had a long, hard day at work, paving the road. Three hours of overtime, nearly being hit by some idiot speeding by, and that jerk off boss making constant demands. He sighed in relief, hoping that Noreen didn't spend his entire pay check again.

He worked so hard to pay the bills, and she would go off and blow all the money on a whim. A pair of shoes she'd only wear once, a new piece of jewelry they couldn't afford or on a fancy restaurant for lunch. He could barely pay the bills as it was, and she certainly wasn't helping. She wouldn't get a job and help out, she'd only spend the money.

And two months ago, he'd left her a check to pay the car payment, but then the car got repossessed in the middle of the night. She hadn't bothered to send the payment in, deciding to spend the money on that new dress she absolutely had to have. She even once hawked their wedding rings at a pawn shop, and he'd had to go get them back out.

Their marriage hadn't been going well the last year. They constantly argued. She'd start yelling and screaming at him, and even hit him. He couldn't help it, but she got him so mad that he'd hit her right back. He knew he shouldn't hit her, but she made him so mad he saw red and couldn't stop himself. Usually he'd catch and stop himself after a second, but the damage was already done. Staring at his beer, Rick thought again about a divorce. God knows, he thought, I still love her, but she drives me crazy. Sometimes she could be nice and sweet, then the next thing, she's acting so crazy or throwing her tantrums when she couldn't get her way.

Rick heard the door open and Noreen walk into the kitchen. Several minutes later she came out smiling. At least she's in a good mood today, he thought. She walked past him humming to herself and leaned over and gave him a kiss on the cheek. Rick bent over and kissed her back, forgetting about his bad day for awhile.

Several minutes later, Noreen went into the kitchen again and came back out with a large cup of tea that she held out to him.

"It's a special blend that I bought at the mall today," she proudly announced. She winked at him, saying "It's supposed to be an aphrodisiac."

He noticed there was only one cup, but before he could question this, she took a long deep drink from the cup and handed it to him. He noticed that she'd just drank about half the cup, and he took the hint and followed her lead, drinking the rest of the cup down himself. It tasted sweet and herbal. Not bad, but with something slightly odd about the taste.

Laying the empty cup on the coffee table, he stood up and kissed Noreen. He didn't know if it was really an aphrodisiac, but it certainly was nice at the moment.

Suddenly he felt a little weak and dizzy. He noticed that Noreen was feeling it too, and could barely stand up. She smiled dreamily at him and sat down on the couch, falling asleep. Rick stumbled against the side of the couch, trying to hold himself up. What did she do, he wondered, trying to get enough anger behind the thought to keep himself awake. "She must have drugged the tea," he mumbled to himself. Things twisted in his vision and he lost consciousness, falling to the floor.

He woke up feeling odd. He didn't want to open his eyes yet. What did that BITCH put into the tea. He got angry and opened his eyes and sat up, only to see some large guy with a smug grin on his face looking down at him. "What the?" Rick said, and stopped, shocked at his voice. He looked down to see two rather prominent lumps pushing out of his chest. He noticed that wasn't all that was wrong. It suddenly dawned on him that the face looking down on him with that grin was the same one he saw in the mirror.

Jumping to his feet, Rick still had to look up a bit to see his face. He looked down at himself, seeing the green shirt and blue jeans on himself that Noreen had been wearing. He noticed immediately that her clothes weren't all of hers that he had on. He put his hands to his new breasts, and was shocked to feel them. They were real. He had a horrible suspicion.

"Noreen?" he asked his old face, cautiously.

"Not anymore," he heard his voice say to him smugly. "You're Noreen now honey."

Rick couldn't believe this. "What did you do to me?" he demanded, angrily.

"This isn't what I intended, but I'm certainly not complaining," Noreen told him.

"Change us back. NOW!!" Rick demanded again. His old face just looked at him as if he were stupid, then started laughing.

"I ain't doing anything. I don't think I could, even if I wanted to. And I don't. I'm having too much fun. I can do anything I want now, and you can't do anything about it."

Rick was shocked. He couldn't believe what he was hearing. He couldn't believe what was happening to him. How could he and Noreen trade bodies. HOW?

"I'm the man now, and you're the woman. YOU are Noreen. I'm Rick," she grinned at him not very nicely, then grabbed ahold of his right breast, rubbing. She was squeezing too hard, and it hurt. Rick tried pulling himself away, but Noreen was holding his arm too tight. She slapped him on his butt, saying "Now go into the kitchen and cook my dinner Noreen."

Rick couldn't believe this. First his whole day at work, then Noreen pulling this stunt on him, and now treating him like this. Rick felt enraged. He clenched his hands into fists, feeling his now longer nails digging into his palms, drawing blood. That only served to fuel his anger. His skin felt hot, and the blood dripped between his fingers, though he barely noticed it. Everything in sight turned a dark red, and he felt the raging fire of anger burning inside him. Suddenly he snapped.

He punched into his old face, with all the rage and anger he had pent up inside of him. Smashing for all he was worth. He hit again, and again, seeing his much larger and more muscular body cringe backwards and hold hands in front of his face. Rick didn't care, he just kept lashing out, for all he was worth. He didn't feel the bruises beginning to form on his new, smaller knuckles, and wouldn't have cared even if he did.

Grabbing at the nearest object, the lamp set on the table, he started bashing down with that, as the body in front of him fell to the ground and curled up into the fetal position. He didn't stop till the rage had finally washed away.

As the paramedics hauled the badly beaten man to the ambulance, cataloging his several broken bones, concussion and severe bruising, the police led the fairly petite woman with the green shirt and blue jeans out of the house in handcuffs, her head hung low and tears streaming down her cheeks. They couldn't believe that this little woman could do so much damage to a guy that large.

The police didn't think that she'd spend much time in jail, if she'd even be charged for the assault, since the neighbors admitted that she'd had a history of being beaten by her husband. Apparently this time she'd had too much, and fought back. Who knew she'd be such a hell cat. Certainly not the husband it seemed. A case of self defense the police decided, feeling sorry for the woman.

Several miles away, an Old Man sat curled up in his recliner, sadly shaking his head as he spoke to the large dog lying on the floor next to him, "The more things change, the more they stay the same."

The End