**The Dancer**

by Lady Lucia\*

**PART ONE**

“Hey, Bella?” a vaguely familiar voice was on the other line, but I couldn’t quite place it. Especially being hungover from a super late Christmas party the previous night. I sat up a little bit in my bed, adjusting my nightgown and brushing the hair out of my face.

“This is she,” I answered, after clearing my throat, “Who is this?”

“It’s Ashley!” the girl’s chipper voice gave me a slight headache in itself, and I held the phone away for a moment, “Don’t you remember me?”

“From high school…?” I asked, racking my brain for any Ashleys that I currently knew. We had both graduated last summer, but we had both gone to very different colleges. That, and the two of us barely knew each other anyway.

“Yeah, Ashley Greene,” she said, just as cheerfully, “I got your number from Victoria. You’re still dancing, right?”

“Of course,” I replied, rolling my eyes. The phrase “still dancing” is an iteration of things I hear all the time from relatives. It’s the most ridiculous understatement. I’m halfway through my freshman year at Oklahoma City University, working on a dance performance degree. I worked my ass off to get into the program, but I never try to brag about it. All I want is for people to understand that it’s an amazing opportunity, and that dancing IS a career - not just a hobby.

“Oh, perfect! Victoria was telling me you might do parties? She said one of her dancing friends in college did something like that to make some extra money around Christmas,” Ashley explained, as I woke up a little more. Victoria and I were in theatre together in high school, but I also hadn’t really heard from her in forever.

“Like a Dance Host?” I asked. One or two of my upperclassman friends at Oklahoma told me about being “dance hosts,” where they’d show up and dance at different clubs and parties. Everyone thinks they’re just another guest, but they’re secretly getting paid. Essentially, they would dance all night without taking a break. It kept bodies on the floor, and made the place look more popular. Personally, I didn’t really like the idea - using my body and my skills to dance with strangers seemed a little inappropriate.

“Yeah, our dancer totally bailed. I just got the call this morning,” Ashley explained further, before I could tell her I might not be the right girl for this, “So we’re a little desperate. Everyone at the party chipped in, so we can offer you $500.”

“Wait, $500?” I gasped, quickly grabbing a notepad off the side of my desk. Even the best hosting jobs generally offered $150 at most per night, or so I had heard. Though, once I stopped to think about it, Ashley did have pretty rich friends, and parents for that matter. Grabbing a pen, I tried to ask calmly, “What are the details, Ashley?”

“It’s a New Year’s Eve party,” she told me, which I wrote down, to my displeasure. I already had a party I was excited to go to, but this sounded be too good to pass up. I wouldn’t have to scrounge as much next semester with that padding my bank account. “It’s about what you’d expect. You have to dance, give dances to whoever asks, and a lucky boy might get a midnight kiss!”

“Wait, what?” I asked, pausing from quickly jotting things down.

“Bella, relax,” she giggled, “Loosen up. It’s a New Year’s party! You know how to flaunt your body, right?”

“I mean…” I hesitated, not quite knowing what to say. I had done advanced jazz and modern dance, so I’m much more fluid than I was in high school. I knew how to MOVE my body. But ‘flaunt’ isn’t the word I’d personally use.

“Look, if you can’t flaunt it, I’ll have to find someone else. Any recommendations?”

“No, I can flaunt it!” I said, feeling my cheeks heat up as I said the ridiculous phrase. Saying it out loud was so much worse than hearing it. But the money sounded way too tempting. It was just a night of casual dancing. I could survive a few hours of that.

“Good!” she exclaimed, “You can show up at 11 PM. And make sure you wear something sexy, okay? None of those outfits you used to wear in high school.”

“Wait, can’t I just-“

“Parties at my house are FUN,” she said. I’m a little annoyed that she was cutting me off, and more annoyed that she was implying that I’m not fun. But it was hard to argue when she was the one offering the job, “Look, if you don’t want to, it’s not too late to say no.”

“No, it’s fine!” I told her, already decided. Most of my dancing friends did it. It would be a good experience. And, of course, it paid really well. “Dress sexy, dance sexy. Got it. 11 PM?”

“You got it, Bella. See you there!” she said. I heard a light giggle, but she hung up before I could say anything else. I got out of bed, dropping the notebook back on the desk. Thankfully, I still had two days to practice my “club dancing,” something I rarely do. After calling through the house to make sure I was home alone, I changed into a more revealing outfit and put on some dance music. Even if it was a casual night of dancing, there would be a lot of old classmates there, and I didn’t want to seem awkward to them. Much like a recital or choreography, I started to practice for the weekend.

**PART TWO**

After a whole afternoon of deliberation and trying on countless outfits, I ended up wearing a short gray skirt and a black halter top, feeling as prepared as I would ever be. As one of my instructors always tells me, you have to fully commit to every dance opportunity. That includes outfits. Against my better judgment, I wore my long red hair down. I always, always, always wear it up when I dance, since it tends to get in the way. But wearing it up didn’t seem totally appropriate for a party, so I just lightly curled it instead.

One of my friends dropped me off at the party, and I could tell that it was already in full swing by the time I got there. I walked up the driveway, ignoring the two people I saw making out against a car at the other end of the driveway. I walked to the front door and knocked. Then rang. Then rang again. After a minute or so of waiting, I just open the unlocked door, heading inside.

I was greeted by loud music and a packed house, with dim, flashing lights from different rooms of the Greenes’ mansion-like home. I carefully made my way through the various rooms, almost getting trampled by several drunk people running down the halls. I finally found Ashley in the kitchen, pouring shots for herself and a few of her friends.

“Oh, there she is!” Ashley exclaimed. The blonde girl smiled, pointing me out to the other three girls. I thought my outfit was revealing, but Ashley was literally wearing black short shorts and an emerald green bra, leaving nothing to the imagination, “Wow, Bella! I almost didn’t even recognize you!”

“Hey, Ashley,” I said, feeling a little bit out of place. Ashley seemed fine for the most part, but her friends were definitely past tipsy at this point, “You really need a dance host at a party like this?”

“What’s a dance host?” one of Ashley’s friends asked. Half of them giggled at the word, and the other half looked confused, “Is that the prudish word for stripper…?”

“I am NOT a stripper!” I exclaimed. Even though I didn’t know her at all, it was still offensive that she would call me that, even when drunk, “I’m just here to dance, like Ashley told me.”

“But-“

“Riley, relax,” Ashley told her. She walked over to me, taking my hand before I could object, “Bella, come with me.”

“Ashley, I-” I start to protest, but it was pointless. She gave a sharp tug on my hand, walking me through the house. Reluctantly, I let her guide me. I could hear her friends laughing about something, but I chose to ignore them. I followed her through another room with two different couples making out (such a classy party), and then I was walked upstairs, presumably to Ashley’s room.

“Paige, out. Now,” Ashley harshly said. A brunette girl I vaguely know from high school was sitting on the bed, not so subtly flirting with two different guys. She didn’t look too happy about it, but reluctantly took the two boys and left the room. Once Paige was gone, Ashley closed the door, “Bella…you can call it whatever you want, but you do know you’re stripping tonight, right?”

“Ashley, what are you talking about??” I looked at her in shock. I half hoped she was trying to pull a crappy joke, but the look on her face said otherwise.

“Oh my God, are you serious? Were you listening when we talked on the phone…?” Ashley rolled her eyes, crossing her arms as she stood across from me.

“I said dance host!” I said, still feeling a little offended she’d consider me a viable choice to call if she needed a stripper.

“Bella, you said you were fine flaunting your body, and you said you were fine giving dances to anyone who asked,” she started explaining it, almost like I’m a child. Technically I DID say those things, but in a completely different context, “Everyone here was promised a stripper, and they all paid for it already. I could have found somebody else if you said no, but now it’s too late. Way too late, Bella.”

“Yeah, but I-” I started to object, but Ashley just kept talking as if she didn’t even hear me.

“Aren’t you a PROFESSIONAL dancer?” Ashley put her hands on her hips, looking annoyed, “Because bailing the night of is pretty unprofessional. And shitty, for that matter. Not only does it make you look bad, it makes me look bad as a host. Are you really going to leave me without a dancer tonight?”

“I…” I hesitated, my head spinning. For years, I had always shown up early to every practice and recital, and never once left any of my coaches or partners hanging. But did this even count? Stripping was degrading and, personally, it would be embarrassing to dance in front of others in a setting like this, even clothed. But…I technically gave a commitment. It was hard to think clearly when Ashley was staring daggers at me. “How far…how far would I have to strip…?” I asked, feeling the heat rush to my face.

“Have you really never been to a strip club?” Ashley asked. But she at least seemed a little relieved that I was considering it, “Your bra and underwear, Bella. And, like you agreed to, you have to dance alone AND give lap dances.”

Again, NOT what I said. I thought I was dancing with people, not /giving/ people dances. “For how long?” I reluctantly asked, swallowing my pride. I would treat this professionally. I had danced in sheer clothes before, so this would be fine. Incredibly awkward, due to so many old classmates being around, and a bit degrading, but fine. Totally fine.

“Thank God. ” Ashley told me, smiling. She dropped her hands back down to her sides, “You need to dance from 11:15 until midnight. Then you can go home. Okay?”

45 minutes. That was a lot of time to be dancing solo. Or giving lap dances...I almost changed my mind, but couldn't ignore Ashley's stare that was somehow both hopeful and judgmental all at the same time. I let out an exhale, giving in, “Alright, fine,” I said, still uncertain about all of this. I was not 100% okay with it, but Ashley made a point I couldn’t ignore. I would never leave anyone hanging, even for something as awful as this, “But no videos, okay?”

“You’ll be our stripper?” Ashley asked. She gave me a serious look.

“I just said I would, Ashley.”

“I need to hear you say it.” She rolled her eyes, “I don't want to get people's hopes up. Are you committed, Bella?”

“I…” I hesitated. Ugh, it felt so gross to say out loud! But after an uncomfortably long period of silence, I mumbled, “I’ll be your stripper.”

**PART THREE**

It was almost time.

My hands were practically shaking as I stood just outside the room I was supposed to be dancing in. I didn’t like being the center of attention in general, but this was worse in every way. What was I thinking??

Part of me wanted to bolt out the door, but another part of me seemed frozen in place. I had now told Ashley TWICE that I’d do this for her. I couldn’t bail now, could I?

It would be fine. I would be dancing for classmates that I never talked to any more. Strangers I’d never see again. It would be fine. I would leave at midnight with whatever dignity I had left, and $500 in my pocket. And a good life lesson to always get the details for future gigs.

Ashley’s instructions echoed in my head as I waited for the impending ‘show.’

“Money can go in your bra or thong.”

“Give dances to anyone who asks.”

A myriad of other instructions that included how I needed to balance stripping and lap dances, and how I needed to dance the full 45 minutes, as instructed. It was exhausting, and I hadn’t even started yet. When the blonde girl bounded off to take care of whatever other hosting business she had to attend to, I let out a sigh of relief.

A few minutes later, the blaring music in the other room was abruptly cut off mid-song, causing a chorus of “aww’s” and “boo’s” from everyone nearby.

“Attention, everyone!” Ashley’s familiar voice filled the room over the speakers. “For those that haven’t heard, we have a stripper to help us count down to midnight.” Oh my God, she was making it sound like it was my job or something! But before I could even consider fruitlessly calling out to correct her, Ashley called my name out. “Bella Ryan, everybody!”

I was a dancer. I could do this.

Allowing myself a second to take a breath, I forced myself to don a faint smirk. Then I strutted out into the living room before I lost my nerve and before I could talk myself out of this.

My stomach sunk the moment I crossed the threshold into the room. There were A LOT of people. Some crammed onto couches, other sitting on folding chairs or the floor, and even more standing on the outskirts of the room. The coffee table was conspicuously clean compared to all the other surfaces in the house littered with bottles and red solo cups. Oh God, it was supposed to be my stage…

I wanted to run. I wanted so badly to run. But I didn’t have a choice. I was already here, I had already committed myself to Ashley. So I carefully stepped up onto the coffee table, forcing myself to keep the smirk that was normally reserved for the rare dance number. I could feel the dozens of eyes looking me all over. A feeling that would certainly only get worse once I removed a layer or two.

“How many of you remember Bella from high school?” Ashley asked over the speakers. My face flushed as a good fifteen or twenty hands shot up. I had been able to blur out the faces before, but now I recognized a good number of girls and guys that I vaguely knew in high school I wasn’t necessarily a prude, but I never wore anything nearly as revealing as I was wearing right now. I could see a good number of the girls whispering and giggling, while the guys looked both intrigued and excited.

“And how many of you are ready for Bella to strip?” Rather than raise hands, the whole room cheered and applauded this time. ‘Smirk. Keep the smirk. Everything is fine.’ I told myself as I looked over the sea of faces. Just for good measure, I put a hand on my hip so they both weren’t awkwardly resting by my sides.

“Ready, Bella?” Ashley smiled over at me. The question clearly wasn’t meant for answering, as Ashley snapped and pointed at the guy beside her. Apparently the DJ, as he turned to the laptop beside him and started up the music again. “Have fun!” The blonde's chipper voice sounded out over the music and cheers of the crowd.

And, before I could allow myself one more thought of fleeing, I began to dance.

I wasn’t sure which was louder - my heartbeat, or the thumping bass from the vague club music the DJ turned back up for my ‘performance.’

I began to nervously move my body to the music. Despite my years of experience dancing, my dance moves all felt a little bit rigid and awkward as I tried to match the pounding club music. I could hear a few laughs, no doubt from old classmates in disbelief that I would be doing something like this, but Ashley was quick to grab the microphone and tell them I was just warming up. The relief didn’t last long, as Ashley added on, “Just give her a minute. Bella is a stripper. She knows what she’s doing!”

The reminder of my ‘profession’ made the heat rise to my cheeks, but that paled in comparison to the pressure the last sentence added. I’m supposed to know what I’m doing. They’re paying me all this money, and I did practice for two full days before this. Somehow, I needed to push past the doubt and awkwardness.

Little by little, I allowed my movements to get more fluid, though the self-conscious thoughts persisted. By the end of the first song, things were starting to feel more natural. I finally managed to tune the crowd out and start feeling the music in my body. I was also a good dancer. Sure, I didn’t like being the center of attention, but at least I was doing something I excelled at.

“When’s she going to strip?” A girl in the front row asked loudly. Her question set off a chain reaction of voices that were quickly directed more towards me than to each other. Cries of “Strip!” and “Take your clothes off!” came from a number of horny boys and amused girls in the crowd.

As the next song started, I reluctantly obeyed. I ever so slowly began to lift my gray halter top, revealing the smooth skin just above my waist. What was I doing? But it felt like I had no choice. I was a stripper, at least for the night. I was annoyed that Ashley hadn’t been more specific on the phone, but I also partially blamed myself for not calling back to ask about those specifics.

What could I do now? Every little motion was a mental battle with myself, though my body somehow knew to keep dancing throughout the whole experience. Thankfully, the crowd was on my side. They were cheering me on, though I could tell from some of the faces that the ones that knew me were relishing this surprising side of me. Even so, they all seemed to appreciate what was coming.

Keeping a shaky grip on the hem of my top, I finally willed myself to pull it past my breasts. Realizing I was about to lose my nerve, I quickly yanked the thin fabric over my head and completely off my body before I could stop myself. Not the most smooth motion, but no one seemed to care. The crowd grew ecstatic as my black bra came into view. Glancing down, I realized just how much cleavage the undergarment was showing off as it held my full C cups together. Oh my God, and everyone was going to see how they moved once I started dancing again!

“Keep your skirt on, Bella. For now!” Ashley’s voice boomed out over the music again. I glanced back to see the blonde still confidently standing next to her DJ friend. It wasn’t lost on me that she and I were dressed the same now. Black bottom layer and a bra, the rest of our skin available for everyone to see. “We still have plenty of time until midnight. Who wants the first lap dance??”

Once again, cheers filled the room, and a number of hands shot up into the air. The beginning of the dance and the act of stripping my top almost made me forget the rest of the things that I agreed to. It wasn’t just 45 minutes of dancing. It was giving dances to people.

“Looks like Ryan is the only one who knows how this works!” Ashley exclaimed. I turned in horror to see a guy from high school who had asked me out at least ten times before graduation. Cocky, annoying, and incredibly persistent. I was 100% sure he only wanted me because he took my ‘prudish’ nature to be a challenge. Excuse me if I wanted to be with guys who I actually had a connection with. But now, the dark haired college freshman was sitting there with a grin and a green bill held up in his hand. “For those of you who don’t know how this works,” Ashley continued, “You don’t ever hand the money to her. You find a more…creative way to give it to her.” It felt like the blonde was partially saying it for my benefit as well, considering I wasn’t a real stripper.

I wanted to run, but I felt trapped. Topless, committed to the ‘job,’ and really wanting that $500 for next semester. It was just a dance. It didn’t mean anything. At least, those were a number of things I told myself to justify it. Stepping down from the table, I sauntered over towards the cocky boy in the leather chair.

As I lightly let my legs straddle him to close the distance, I gave him as much of a smirk as I could handle. “Hi, Ryan.” I said it in the most seductive tone I could manage, trying to suppress the vomit at the same time.

“Bella,” he gave me a knowing smile back. Obviously not much had changed. But this time, I couldn’t refuse his flirting. He held up the green bill, and I was a little surprised to see it was literally just a $1 bill. “This is about how much you’re worth to me,” he said. Nice and quiet, so no one else could hear. And then, before I could think of a reply, he reached forward and stuffed the money in my bra.

Oh. My. God.

For a moment, I actually felt Ryan’s fingers graze my bare breasts as he roughly shoved the dollar bill into my bra. Yet somehow, it wasn’t the momentary violation or the arrogant smirk that made me cringe. It was the fact that I felt the scratchy paper against my skin, and the peripheral vision of a green bill sticking out of my bra. The mortifying visual must have crushed any doubts about me being a proper stripper, and I knew right then that it would be the first bill of many. Yet I didn’t have time to think about that.

I had to figure out how to give a lap dance.

I had practiced a lot of things after Ashley’s call, but this was not one of them. And I had to figure it out on Ryan, of all people. “Well?” The dark haired asshole finally broke away from his blatant staring at my breasts to look me in the eyes. Of course, I knew what I had to do. And I didn’t need him to demean me in such a patronizing way.

Not saying a word, I just smirked right back at him. I had never been so grateful for my teachers forcing me to practice expressions in front of a mirror for dancing. It wasn’t my favorite assignment, but I had gotten to the point where I knew how to show what I wanted with my face, and could hold it and manipulate it for a full dance routine. Swallowing my pride, I leaned forward and placed my hand on his chest, shifting my hips to further straddle him. “If you touch me again, you don’t get a dance.”

Honestly, most of my lap dance ‘knowledge’ came from shows and movies. I had seen guys groping the girls’ asses, but had also seen clubs enforce the ‘no touching’ rule. Of the two, I quickly decided in the moment to go with the latter. If I let Ryan get away with it, it would set the tone for the rest of the night.

And then, hoping it wasn’t too awkward, I gave him a short dance. As I faced him, I reluctantly ran my hands along his face and chest, letting my hips and thighs constantly shift as I straddled him and moved to the music. To me, his attitude and the $1 payment was insulting enough that I leaned forward as if I was going to rub my breasts on his chest or his face, and then promptly stood up to turn around without giving him any satisfaction. Not knowing what Ashley had promised her guests, I then lowered myself back onto Ryan, this time straddling him with my skirt covered ass facing him. Only halfway through the next few series of motions did I realize that leaning over in such a way showed off a ton of cleavage to those watching from across the room.

At that realization, I felt my cheeks flush. Deciding that I was done with Ryan, and done with how my black bra didn’t cover nearly enough of my breasts in that position, I swiftly stepped away from the boy, hoping the dim room hid my light blush. Only then did I realize just how many eyes were on me as the music pounded away. Somehow, I convinced myself that the best way to keep my dignity was to keep dancing as if none of this bothered me. After all, Ashley and half her friends were showing off just as much skin. Hell, Ashley herself was just wearing a bra like me.

Still, I decided to continue satisfying the excited crowd. I was in too deep, the money was too good, and Ashley would kill me if I bailed on her now. Letting the false smirk rest on my face, I pushed back my loose red hair and strutted over to another raised hand holding a green bill.

I gave dance after dance. Save for the hands stuffing bills into my bra, everyone at least adhered to the no touching rule. The stares were actually worse than the dancing itself. I had long gotten over close contact with dance partners, and that somewhat bled over into the mortifying task of giving lap dances. But seeing the way that each guy shamelessly stared at my bra-covered breasts made me constantly aware of just how exposed I was without my top on. And, while I couldn’t see it myself, I’m sure my ass got plenty of stares each time I did the second half of the ‘routine’ I was starting to develop.

Ten dances in, I concluded that straddling old classmates was WAY worse than straddling strangers. I tried my hardest not to focus on the girls who looked somewhat appalled at my behavior, or the onlooking guys who were loving every moment of my exposure. Thankfully, the music was loud enough that I couldn’t hear any of the conversations around the room. My bra was slowly getting more and more full of paper bills, all of which stuck out in the most damning and humiliating way. And, as I got up from yet another lustful boy’s lap, Ashley got my attention by calling out my name and raising a green bill of her own.

I cringed internally, but managed to keep my performance up. Strutting over to the scantily clad blonde, I slowly lowered myself onto her as she generously slid a $20 bill into my bra. If the boys were lustful before, I could only imagine their excitement as two girls were face to face in nothing but bras. Her short shorts were technically more revealing than my skirt, but I could feel the gray fabric riding up on me every time I straddled somebody, Ashley included.

“Just thought you’d want an update,” Ashley softly smiled, as I carefully placed my hand on her upper chest. Unlike the guys before her, the blonde below me had boobs, and I had to be careful not to land too close to them.

“What update?” I asked, blushing again as the crowd cheered when I began naturally moving to the music and ‘teasing’ Ashley with my body, the same way I had with the other boys.

Unlike everyone else, Ashley pulled out another bill, being a little more rough this time as she shoved it into the opposite bra cup from the first. “You have 25 minutes left,” she said, leaning forward to whisper in my ear, “And it’s time to lose the skirt.”

**PART FIVE**

That’s right.

The earlier conversation with Ashley had explained as much. Her words from the bedroom echoed in my head. She had answered my question simply and to the point, but it didn’t change how daunting or embarrassing the answer was: “Your bra and underwear, Bella.”

Just when I had found my ‘stride’ giving lap dances with my cleavage constantly shown off to the whole party, I was reminded that there was more to do. And, considering I was currently straddling Ashley in said bra and with my skirt riding up, I was well past the point of calling this whole thing off.

“Bella.” Ashley poked the bare part of my breast to bring me back to reality. The surprise of being prodded that way kept me from snapping at her like I may have done to one of the guys, and I realized I had also been subtly dancing on her thighs even when I momentarily got lost in my thoughts. Damn dancer instincts. I wasn’t even sure if I was impressed or appalled with myself for doing so. “That’s two twenties. You should really mix your routine up. More money means a better dance,” she smirked, no doubt loving all the attention from all the onlookers. Our faces were still rather close, and her words were meant just for me, especially with the pounding music that filled the room and the rest of the house. “Let’s put on a good show, okay?”

“O-okay…” I muttered, meeting her eyes. Despite the trepidation in my voice, I managed to maintain the smirk I had plastered on my own face from the moment I walked in the room. And, taking a moment to collect myself, I got to work.

Guessing all the things I had already done to her and the boys before her weren’t quite enough, I started to improvise. My hands ran up and down her bare upper half, though I made a point to barely hover away from her chest each time, rather than actually touch her bra-covered boobs. And I got way closer with my face than I did with any of the guys. Inwardly cringing, I lowered myself to her chest, then shifted to her neck, and then to her lips, teasing her like I’m sure I had seen in some video at some point in my life. I was keenly aware of our bare legs constantly pressing against each others’ as well, but that paled in comparison to all the lewd motions I made to her upper half.

Shit.

It took me way too long to realize it, but HER hands were on MY body too. Mostly holding my bare sides as I did all the work, but it still broke the ‘no touching’ rule I had enforced earlier. Maybe it wasn’t too late. “No touching,” I narrowed my eyes as I voiced my first and only personal stripper rule, and briefly took my hands off her body to pull her hands away. It didn’t matter if this was the most uncomfortable thing I had ever done. I may have been topless, but I was still a little in control.

Ashley just subtly rolled her eyes, as if to say ‘fine.’

Guessing it was as good a time as any, I shifted back and stood up for a moment to turn around, then lowered myself down again to begin the second half of her dance. It was only once my skirt covered ass was in the blonde’s face that I realized the DJ was playing some club remix of “I Kissed A Girl.”

Face lightly flushing, I ‘flaunted my body’ for everyone; my ass for Ashley, my boobs for anyone watching. Somehow, I kept a confidence expression, but it somehow felt even more wrong to be doing this with a girl. It’s not that I’m against any kind of sexuality, but I’m just not into girls myself. Yet there I was, giving Ashley a lap dance as if I did it all the time.

Remembering her point about how much she paid compared to everyone else, I even went the extra mile. When I had done about as much as I could creatively do with my body while straddling someone else, I got up and turned back around, leaning down as if I actually was going to make out with her. God, what was wrong with me? Half of me was playing the part, and the other half was thinking about the $500 I needed to ‘earn.’ But, instead of kissing her, I just gently took her blonde locks and walked away, letting her hair trail off in my fingers until she was out of reach.

Then it was time.

Ashley was my ‘boss’ for the evening, and she wouldn’t want me giving another dance without doing what she said first. So I tossed my own hair back and strutted back to the coffee table, stepping up onto the makeshift stage. I couldn’t believe I was about to do this, but I was already in WAY too deep. Halfway done with my commitment. I only needed to last another 20 minutes or so, and I could go home and take multiple showers to get rid of the gross feeling that straddling Ryan and a few other pervy boys gave me.

And, as I took the ‘stage,’ I also realized I could kill a little more time up there to avoid future lap dances. So I let my body move with the music, making a few sharp movements with my head and hips. The cheers were somehow both mortifying and mildly helpful at the same time. Doing something like this to a dead room would have been 100 times worse.

But I couldn’t delay the inevitable forever. Allowing my smirk to grow into a confident grin, I hooked my fingers underneath the waistband of the short gray skirt, eternally grateful that it didn’t have a zipper. Ugh, bending over was going to show off my cleavage again, but it wasn’t like everyone hadn’t seen plenty already. Resigning myself to my self-imposed exposure, I sloooowly lowered the skirt to the cheers of the crowd. Partly because my perfectionist self wanted to put on a good show, but also because the proper side of me was still faintly resisting.

Regardless, I made it. As gravity took it the rest of the way, my gray skirt pooled around my ankles as I reluctantly stood back up.

There I was, standing on the makeshift stage and baring my matching black bra and thong to the crowd.

And there was still more to come.

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