**The Halloween Party**

by \*Lady Lucia\*

**PROLOGUE**

Marie couldn’t believe it.

Could. Not. Believe. It.

How could this happen to her?

Her parents’ horrifying words still echoed in her head. At Lakewood High, Marie was one of the most popular girls at school for her age. While only sixteen, nearly everyone knew her name. She was incredibly attractive, and the life of the party, and one of those girls that other girls couldn’t help but seek approval from. Or lust after, in terms of guys. Sometimes, Marie still couldn’t believe how far she had come. The ‘perfect’ blonde hadn’t earned her popularity by joining the cheer squad like some did, or by being well loved since childhood and riding that role through life, or through any one catalyst.

No, Marie had carefully worked her way to the top. From a freckled, frizzy haired, unfashionable nerdy 6th grade girl in glasses, all the way to a confident, sexy, and practically unrecognizable version of herself just four years later. Whether nerdy or popular, Marie always had two underlying qualities: she was smart, and she was patient.

Mere weeks after starting middle school, she began to see a social hierarchy form that made her elementary school cliques pale in comparison. And she resolved right then and there to not get herself stuck at the bottom of the totem pole. Rather than make a desperate grasp at popularity, Marie went home one day and spent an entire afternoon with a notebook, the internet, and her clever mind. Planning every step of the way. By the end of the school year, she would be at the top.

Totally transforming her look would be jarring to her friends and classmates that had known her for years. And plopping herself down at the popular table was tantamount to social suicide due to the gossip and ridicule that would follow. She didn’t belong there. Not yet.

To start, Marie merely tamed her hair a little bit, and slightly altered her outfits. A little allowance money at Goodwill, a little sewing and tailoring, and she managed to make herself appear more cute than nerdy. Small differences, but not enough to turn heads or draw too much attention to herself. And then she found subtle ways to insert herself into a conversation here and there. Once or twice in gym class, once or twice at lunch. Not to the popular girls and guys, but to those she observed to be somewhere between her current friend group and those out of reach.

Before long, she had slowly distanced herself from her unpopular friends and began spending more time with the ones she had been pursuing. Side comments turned into full conversations, conversations turned into lunches, and lunches turned into hangouts after school and on the weekends. At the same time, Marie continued to adjust her look. Her outfits got more pretty, and a bit girly, and she learned how make-up could be used to make her freckles look more attractive rather than childish. She convinced her parents to get her contacts rather than glasses and, every morning, she suffered through the effort to straighten her hair.

By the time sixth grade was over, Marie was beginning to have some interactions with the more popular crowd. By the time seventh grade was over, Marie was invited to nearly every party, and had worked her way into the most popular clique at school. And by the time eighth grade was over, Marie had developed some curves that turned out to be the final step in securing the attention she so desperately craved. That last part wasn’t part of her ‘master plan,’ but she had become an expert at creating outfits at that point, and it was easy to work her developing body into an already working system. A few quick trips to the mall ensured that those curves were flaunted in the perfect combination of reserved and teasing that would make guys look, but wouldn't make girls judge too much.

Once she started high school, all the pieces were already in place. Despite being a lowly freshman, Marie was one of the most popular girls in her class. She had honed her social skills, had already carefully planned out which social clubs would get her noticed by the older grades, and had filled her private, and very hidden notebook with more and more ideas. Plotting had become an almost obsessive habit that filled her mind whenever she wasn’t busy acting on those things. Now that she had come so far, it was impossible to stop herself from wanting more.

The summer before sophomore year, she worked harder than ever. Marie didn’t just attend parties, she hosted them. Her parents were busy with a handful of business trips in June, and Marie jumped on the chance to capitalize on the empty house. Ever the intelligent girl, she went so far as to stash away the breakable things, and pre-bought a ton of cleaning supplies should anything happen. Marie easily got away with it each time, and her parents were never the wiser. When not hosting a party, she was attending one. Or rocking a bikini at a friend’s private pool. Or shopping for the autumn school days, all while gossiping with her girlfriends. She always jumped at the chance to make an appearance to any event that would bolster her popularity.

Marie had it all.

Before even starting 10th grade, she was on a first name basis with a number of popular upperclassmen. She was invited to everything, and often asked when her next party would be. And, thanks to the way she strutted around in a bikini and casually flirted with a guy or two at the pool, she had a date planned with a hot junior on the soccer team. She absolutely made him work for it, but eventually said yes. Truthfully, she had little interest in dating, but she knew that having her arm around a cute boy was just another way to earn attention at school.

But then, everything changed for the budding young sociopath. Unbeknownst to her, there was a reason her parents were taking so many trips in the early summer. When Marie was asked to sit down with her parents, she had braced herself for a lecture about her most recent party. Maybe a neighbor had mentioned it and given her away? Maybe they heard about it from one of her friends’ parents? Lord knows some people were annoyingly honest with their family. But what came next was so much worse than that.

The good news was, Marie’s father had accepted a promotion that came with an enormous raise. The bad news was, that job was halfway across the country. It took a few seconds for the words to truly sink in. And even then, she couldn’t believe it, couldn’t fully process it.

After everything she had worked for. After she had come so far. Marie was so stunned by the news and so lost in her thoughts that she couldn’t find the words to argue. Like it would matter. As she sat in the living room with her parents, and her parents further explained, it was clear that the decision had already been made.

They were moving.

**PART ONE**

Popularity.

For the past few years, it was all Marie Stevens cared about.

So much so, that everything else was a dull blur in comparison. First, she was focused on clawing her way out of her ‘nerdy nobody’ status, and then she was focused on maintaining it. Building on it. Freshman year, she was on the homecoming court, but that only encouraged her to aim higher. Homecoming Queen. Prom Queen. Three more years of careful plotting, and she would be at the very top.

So when her parents told her that they were moving, all those lofty dreams came crumbling down. As she packed up her things, watched the house go on the market, and said her goodbyes, all Marie could think about was how much more work this was all going to be at a new school. She put on a good show before leaving, of course, already devising ways to use Facebook and Insta to capitalize on her old friendships a little bit once she was gone.

If Marie was being honest with herself, she wouldn’t really miss her friends. A lot of them were shallow, especially the girls, and she was jaded enough to know that apathy would go both ways at the end of the day. When Marie started high school, another girl in her inner circle moved out of state, and she was basically forgotten within weeks. Sure, there were still group messages, Snaps, and likes/comments on social media, but it was easy to see how each of those things became more and more scarce as the days passed. Life moved on. As it would when Marie was gone.

She didn’t allow herself to wallow in her misery for long. There was a lot of work to do.

The good news was, Marie already had the looks. And, if she played her cards right, the attention of being the ‘new girl’ could be beneficial to her. Marie dedicated the entire road trip to research. The name of her new school was all she needed to get started. Maple Park High. Not the most attractive name, but she’d get used to it. For now, the current students mattered more than anything else. With Facebook and Google at her fingertips, Marie began the obsessive process of learning anything and everything she could. Last year’s and this year’s homecoming court, parties and events that were publicly visible on Facebook, and which girls and boys seemed to host and attend things the most frequently. Names of the most popular people in every grade, particularly the sophomores she would have classes with.

By the time she stepped through the front doors on an autumn Monday, Marie had a skeleton of a plan in place. Seasonally appropriate outfit combos hung ready in her closet for two full weeks of school, with a few bonus ones set aside in case she could succeed in getting a weekend invite within the first few days. She had memorized her talking points that had been carefully crafted to make her seem like the kind of girl that should be welcome at the popular table, making sure eliminate any ones that made her seem braggy. The first few days at Maple Park were crucial. Marie would have to find the delicate balance of seeking attention, but in a nonchalant way. After all, it couldn’t look like she was trying too hard. Only unpopular girls did that in a hopeless attempt to get attention.

Surprisingly, after the obsessive planning and nervous steps up to her new school, Marie found things a little less challenging than she expected. Maybe it was her appearance, or how comfortable she had become at speaking to just about anyone, but she managed to earn herself an enormous leap up the ladder on day one. A refreshing comparison to the delicate, patient process middle school was. Marie was invited to lunch by a few girls she deemed popular enough, and then everything just snowballed. Obviously, she was still the odd girl out when it came to some inside jokes and long-term friendships, but being the new girl ended up having all kinds of perks Marie hadn’t even thought about. Like the fact that she didn’t know the town at all, which resulted in plenty of “Oh, we HAVE to take you there!” exclamations. Just like that, lunches turned into after school and weekend hangouts.

And then, less than two weeks after arriving at Maple Park, she was personally invited to a Halloween party Brooke was hosting. Brooke! The girl was basically the Marie of Maple Park. Most popular sophomore, on the homecoming court both freshman and sophomore year, and a name that everyone brought up in regards to parties and football games. Unlike Marie, Brooke had gone the cheerleader route, and it sounded like she was in the running for Captain after the current one graduated. Brooke’s long blonde hair contrasted Marie’s dark brown, but their hair styles were almost exactly identical. Mid-back and straight, with a hint of a curl at the end. Compared to Marie, Brooke wore more revealing outfits, but they definitely worked for her. The bare legs, midriff, and cleavage certainly got her plenty of not so subtle glances and stares. Ever the studious girl, Marie had stolen plenty of her own observant looks at the blonde, but her only desire was the popular status Brooke had. Marie was already deliberating about whether or not she should adjust her outfits for the new school. Not to copy Brooke, necessarily, but to maybe at least show a little more skin if that’s what worked for the popular crowd at Maple Grove.

But before Marie could slowly phase in a new look, or work her way up the social ladder to Brooke and her friends, the popular blonde took the lead and approached Marie in the school halls. The bad news was, Brooke called her ‘Mary.’ Marie had always thought of ‘Mary’ as an old lady kind of name, and was quick to correct Brooke. With a friendly smile, of course; one that wasn’t too much or too little. Thankfully, the girl took the mistake in stride, as anyone outgoing would. The good news was, despite not knowing her well enough to even know her name, Brooke didn’t just want Marie to attend the party. She wanted to include Marie in a group costume with her and her friends.

Marie managed to play it cool, and held back the question of “Why?” Ever the opportunist, she wasn’t about to ruin her chance to jump straight to the top of the totem pole this early on. Maybe Brooke had done a curious Google search of her own of the new girl, and saw Marie as a perfect fit for her group. Regardless, Marie didn’t have too much time to think on it. The bell rang before she got to really talk with the girl beyond her invitation, and that was that. Brooke just gave Marie her number, told her to text her name and measurements ASAP, and that she’d send the party details in response.

To her credit, Marie managed to keep cool the whole time. After Brooke strutted off, Marie casually walked down the hallway, in case anyone nearby happened to be watching their interaction. But when she got to a more secluded area, Marie finally let herself smile more widely than before.

At the other end of the school, Brooke was doing the same, but for a completely different reason. Because Marie didn’t suspect a thing, and had absolutely no idea what was in store for her.

**PART TWO**

Today was the day. Halloween.

Marie felt her face flush as she knocked on Brooke’s door. Normally, she wouldn’t be nervous, not even when it came to dealing with a girl more popular than her, but her current appearance made her inwardly squirm as she waited for Brooke to answer the door. Marie still hadn’t been told what her costume was, as it would ‘ruin the surprise,’ but apparently it required both glasses and curled hair.

She had been straightening her hair since before high school, and had strictly worn contacts much longer than that. Even when home alone, Marie made sure her hair was straight, in case something last minute came up that wouldn’t give her time to fix the natural mess. But, in Brooke’s words, her hair was ‘too perfect' for her costume. The text made Marie smile, and gave her the courage to wear her hair a bit more naturally for her future popularity's sake. Of course, Brooke didn’t have to know that Marie already had a pair of wide brimmed glasses lying around as a backup to her contacts, just in case. If there was ever a short lapse between prescriptions, which was rare, Marie would choose to risk no contacts in public, but still kept the glasses as a last resort for things like driving. Glasses made her feel less attractive, especially due to the connection they had with her younger self.

“Hey!” Brooke swung open the door, completely catching Marie off guard. The curvy blonde stood there in just a light blue thong and matching bra, her breasts threatening to spill out of the push-up design. “You’re here early! What time is it?”

Marie hesitated, completely thrown off guard by so much visible skin and cleavage, but then she shook herself out of it. “Oh hey, Brooke!” she smiled back, acting like this was a completely normal thing, “It’s just before five. That’s when you said to be here, right?” Marie didn’t know if early or late was fashionable in Brooke’s book, so she erred on the side of early.

“Oh, that’s right! I forgot, we still have to get you in costume and all set up for the party. Sorry, there’s a million things to do when hosting a party. It’s hard to keep track sometimes!”

“Tell me about it! I had a few parties at my place back at my old school, and it can be a lot sometimes. The food, the drinks-”

“The decorations, the music-”

“Cleaning the next day!” Both girls said in unison, then giggled together.

This was perfect. She and Brooke seemed to have enough in common, and the first conversation opened the door for Marie to mention that she hosted parties of her own. Finally, the blonde seemed to realize her state of undress. “Oh! Come in, come in, before little Luke gets the view of his life.”

Marie lightly laughed at her comment, using the ‘reaction’ that was actually well practiced. Not too subtle, but not too obnoxious. Once the front door was closed behind them, Marie decided to take the initiative, and maybe satiate her own curiosity while seeming interested in Brooke’s plan at the same time. “So, what’s this mysterious group costume?”

“Patience, Marie!” For what seemed like the first time, Brooke gave her a studious look. “Hmm, your hair still isn’t quite right.” Without asking permission, she reached forward and roughly tussled Marie’s hair for a few seconds. If it were any other girl, Marie may have been tempted to slap the hand away, but she decided to ‘suffer’ in this instance. “Much better!” Brooke beamed, “Okay, follow me.”

Brooke pivoted and strutted down the hall, leaving Marie to come to her senses and hurry along after her. Marie could only guess that her carefully curled hair now must have a slightly frizzier appearance reminiscent of her middle school days, but she didn’t have time to dwell on it. The scantily clad girl hastily led the way to the basement, making it impossible to stare at much besides her mostly bare backside. The fact that they were going to the basement was a bit odd in itself, until Marie reached the base of the stairs and saw that it was carpeted and furnished, rather than some dingy basement used for storage.

“Okay, all your things are set out here!” Brooke smiled, gesturing to one of the sofas. “You can get changed down here, if you want. I’ll give you some privacy. Besides, I still need to set out all the appetizers!” With that, she bounded out of the basement just as quickly as she had led Marie down there.

Marie took a moment to gauge the costume, and to give Brooke enough time to leave. It looked like some nerdy or geeky costume from the 90s, but she couldn’t quite place what show or movie it might be from, especially without the other costumes beside it. The light pink checkered blouse clashed with the plaid skirt, and the light orange cardigan clashed with everything. To round out the hideous outfit, there were long red socks set aside for her as well.

If it were any day but Halloween, Marie might have vomited at the sight of such an outfit. Then again, nerdy-cute was a thing, so maybe that was Brooke’s angle. Either way, she couldn’t dally. Brooke might be coming to check on her any minute, and Marie was a little less keen about strutting around in her underwear. She hastily stripped off her cute casual clothes and put on the geeky outfit in its place. The socks were even more ridiculous than they looked when Marie saw that they almost reached her mid-thigh.

Just as she was looking herself over without a mirror nearby, the basement door opened again and Marie felt instantly validated in her decision to change as quickly as possible. “Oh, it’s perfect!” Brooke clasped her hands together, “You really pull it off, Marie.” Unfortunately, the blonde was still in her underwear, giving no further hints as to what the group costume might be.

“What’s the costume from?” Marie asked, feeling a little self conscious about the clothes despite the fact that she was actually wearing something compared to Brooke. Just for good measure, she added a touch of self deprecating humor. “Sorry, I must be totally clueless!”

“You don’t recognize it? You’re Nancy, from Stranger Things! I mean, your hair’s a little long, but it will have to do.”

“Oh! Yeah, I guess I can see it,” Marie lied. Shit. She hadn’t seen the show in a while, and definitely couldn’t remember some of the visual details. The outfit somewhat fit her memory, though Marie somewhat remembered Nancy wearing prettier outfits most of the time. But the style of the outfit vaguely reminded her of the show, as Brooke planned. Enough so that Marie didn’t question it. “Who are you going as? Eleven?”

“Robin, actually,” Brooke said, “I know my hair’s a little too blonde, but it will have to do. Plus I’ll look super cute in the sailor outfit!”

Well, at least the light blue undergarments made sense.

Before Marie could comment on how cute Brooke might look in costume, the blonde’s expression turned a little more serious. “Can I ask you something, Marie? Are you scared of fun being had at your expense?”

“Umm…” Marie trailed off. Normally, she was pretty quick on her feet when it came to conversation, but the bluntness of Brooke’s question caught her off guard. Still, just like the unexpected lack of clothes, Marie managed to recover without too much awkwardness. “I mean, I’m not scared. If it’s lighthearted fun, I can take it as well as I can dish it out!” she said, going with a safe, but confident answer.

“Well, there’s just this little tradition my friends and I have when we’re thinking about welcoming someone into our group,” Brooke said. She paused for dramatic effect, then walked over and picked up a pair of handcuffs off a nearby table that Marie hadn’t noticed at all until then, “It’s actually another reason why I asked you here early.”

“Oh! Umm, what exactly is the tradition?” Marie let out the habitual ‘oh’ just like before, using the nearly reflexive reaction as a way to give her an extra second to plan out her response. She didn’t know how else to reply. Handcuffs? The jangling of the metal cuffs instantly made her hesitant, and even a little bit nervous, though she didn’t outwardly show it.

Brooke just giggled. “Well, it ruins the fun if you know ahead of time!” Of course, she had accounted for Marie’s trepidation. That would be easy enough to push aside. “I know, it’s definitely not for everyone.” Brooke tossed the handcuffs back on the table with a shrug. “There are other ways to prove yourself, I suppose. Do you want to help me with the drinks upstairs?”

“Hey, I never said ‘no!’” Marie exclaimed, her heart dropping when Brooke turned away just like that. Marie managed to catch herself and, not wanting to seem too desperate, added a bit of playful confidence to her exclamation. “I can handle anything, Brooke.”

“Oh?” Brooke smirked for a moment, but let the wicked expression fade as she turned back around. Too easy. It was too easy! Marie was already dressed for her role in the night’s festivities, and was about to seal her own fate by allowing this. “Well, Marie,” Brooke said, putting on a playful smile to match Marie’s tone, “Let’s see just how much you can handle!”

**PART THREE**

For the first time in a long time, Marie had butterflies in her stomach.

Before she taught herself confidence and social skills, those first few conversations in 6th grade were absolutely nerve wracking. She managed to keep herself composure on the outside, but was practically shaking on the inside as she prayed her detailed, long term popularity plan would work. Eventually, however, she stopped faking it, and confidence became more natural. Each little tactic in her notebook worked time and time again, and at some point, the nervousness disappeared completely and confidence became second nature.

Preparation was key. Marie trusted herself. She trusted the obsessive notes in both her mind and in her notebook, she trusted her developed social skills, and she trusted her general expertise at climbing the social ladder. Until now.

The problem was, she hadn’t prepared for this. The hair and glasses had been one thing, as Marie at least had time to begrudgingly accept the look before leaving the house. But then Brooke gave her the outdated outfit. And then Brooke HANDCUFFED her. Not just so her hands were bound together, but so the chains of the cuffs rested on a pipe above her, leaving her arms extended above her. Marie had to stand on a short stool that Brooke found for her so she wouldn’t be dangling above the floor. Marie heard about hazing on some sports teams, cheerleading included, but she had never been a victim/participant of anything like that. Her image of herself had been everything, so she purposely chose clubs and events that would ensure she always had a pristine appearance. No hazing. No subservient internship-like roles. Only things she could excel at; things that would give her a leg up from day one.

But if this were the price to pay, she would pay it. New school, new hierarchy, new rules.

So she waited.

And waited.

And waited.

Ten minutes passed. Then thirty. Then an hour. Marie had a perfect view of the basement clock, a view that made time almost seem slower when there was nothing else interesting to look at. She could hear the doorbell ring every few minutes, the sound of footsteps above her, and a growing number of voices on the main floor. Just before the hour mark hit, music began playing on the main floor. The muffled music and voices made Marie’s isolation all the more confusing. Had Brooke forgotten about her? Was this part of the hazing/tradition?

Marie lasted another thirty minutes, and then she had enough. It had been an hour and a half, and no one had come down to the basement. Her legs were a little sore from standing in the same place for so long, her arms were sore from being elevated, and the handcuffs were getting a little tight.

“Brooke!!” Marie yelled. She gazed at the stairs across the room, hoping that the door at the top was thin enough for someone to hear her. “Hey!!” Another few minutes passed, and it became pretty clear that the music and raised voices upstairs were probably drowning her out. She called out a few more times, then let out a dejected sigh, deciding not to hurt her throat with more yelling. The handcuffs and empty basement actually didn’t scare her at all. The years of being stuck in her own head with plotting and thinking ideas through whenever alone gave her a distinct advantage in a situation like this, awkward and stuck as she was. Plus, she was an only child. Being alone was pretty common for her when she was home. If anything, this was just a general impatience, and some annoyance at herself for seeking popularity through Brooke, rather than doing things on her own terms.

Finally, after nearly two long hours, Marie heard the basement door creak open and the sounds of voices became more clear without the layer between her and the floor above. Or so she thought. It wasn’t just the voices of a party in full swing, but was instead the sound of voices as they began filing down the stairs. The girl leading the way had to be Brooke, but the long blonde hair and familiar skin tone was really the only clue. Rather than Robin’s sailor costume, the most popular sophomore at Maple Park High was dressed to the nines. An elegant sapphire dress clung to her body, accentuating her curves in all the right ways. It was the kind of outfit Marie would wear to Homecoming or any other event that gave an excuse to dress classy with a hint of slutty. But the reason Marie wasn’t 100% sure it was Brooke was because of the masquerade mask covering half the girl's face, nearly identical in color to the fancy dress.

Marie felt a knot begin forming in her stomach, but she tried to shake the feeling. Especially when everyone following the blonde was dressed similarly. Classy dresses or skirt/top combos for the girls, full suits or slack/vest combos for the guys. And every single person descending the stairs wore a mask that matched his or her costume. If there were any doubts about whether it was Brooke or not, her voice gave it away. Brooke began giving instructions to those following her, offering up the couches, love seats, and recliners strewn about the spacious basement. Each piece of furniture must have been in its normal spot to keep Marie from suspecting anything, but now everything was being dragged into a wide semi-circle to face her in her handcuffed position.

This was fine.

Everything was fine.

Brooke had made the point about fun being made at Marie’s expense. And she had been straightforward about the hazing tradition. This was something that all of Brooke’s friends must have done in the past, so it couldn’t be that terrible. And…and Brooke had taken Marie’s sizes! So she must have a lovely dress and mask stashed away for Marie to wear once this part of the night was over. The little justifications calmed Marie in her bound position, despite the whispered gossip and excited and somewhat confused eyes that were filling the room as everyone took their seats.

“You don’t have to be scared of the floor,” Brooke said, when all the furniture had been moved and filled. “Oh, and turn that down a bit, Dane.” As the last of the guests made their way downstairs to find their seats, a guy near the end of the line had a bluetooth speaker with him to keep the music going from the main floor. As everyone got settled, Brooke finally turned towards Marie and took a few steps her way.

“So are you going to fill me in now, Brooke?” Marie faked a small smile. She pushed down her nervousness at being the center of attention in a way that she hadn’t orchestrated herself, realizing that even the costume must have been part of Brooke’s little game.

“Soon, Marie," Brooke smirked, "I hope you haven’t been waiting too long,”

The knot in Marie’s stomach tightened at such an expression. Maybe confidence wasn’t the right move. Maybe bailing was the best play. She could still get out of here, laugh it off towards anyone currently watching if they brought it up later, and she could go back to seeking popularity on her own terms instead. “Brooke-”

“Hush. No talking right now, okay?” To emphasize her point, Brooke stepped forward and held up an item Marie hadn’t noticed in her hand amidst the well dressed crowd that had distracted her. Despite Marie’s lack of experience with boys, she also wasn’t naive. It was pretty obvious the ball and strap in Brooke’s hand was a gag.

Before Marie could protest, Brooke pressed the black ball against Marie’s lips. “Wait-mmph!” With no regard for Marie’s comfort, Brooke roughly shoved the ball gag into her mouth. Marie’s eyes widened at the unwelcome invasion as her lips couldn’t help but part against the pressure. The silicone ball was designed in such a way that it wasn’t necessarily painful against her lips or teeth, but the sensation of her mouth being forced open in such a way was both awkward and uncomfortable. “Mmm!” she looked at Brooke with a pleading gesture, her inability to speak suddenly making her care less about how she carried herself in front of a crowd.

“I said ‘hush.’” Brooke met Marie’s eyes. The popular blonde clearly didn’t need to watch her own hands in order to expertly fasten the leather strap around Marie’s head.

Ignoring the voices of the crowd, Brooke gazed at her handcuffed and now gagged target, relishing the helpless and confused look in her eyes. Marie had no clue just how many humiliating things Brooke had in store for her. The gag would definitely pale in comparison, starting now. She kept her eyes trained on Marie, speaking softly and calmly. “If you don’t hush, you will be punished. Like so.” And, with no warning at all, Brooke grabbed Marie’s prudish skirt and yanked it down to her ankles.

**PART FOUR**

“MMM!!” Marie squealed as the entirety of her legs were bared to everyone watching. The dark blue thong did little to hide anything but her most private area, and her pale thighs were displayed just as much as the rest of her smooth legs. If the crowd was excited before, they were definitely more eager now.

However, the gasps and little side conversations were merely a backdrop to the elegantly dressed blonde before her. Brooke was in charge, and held Marie’s fate in her hands. Despite the mortifying position she was in, Marie somehow managed to find a tiny bit of control. It was like wearing a bikini bottom. She strutted around in those all the time, and never minded showing off her legs at the pool. Obviously, this was a VERY different situation, but she at least tried to subdue her internal embarrassment. Instead, she focused on the masked blonde.

“Mmm…” Marie pleaded, looking through the sapphire mask’s eyeholes to Brooke’s stern hazel eyes. With the gag so firmly attached, there wasn’t much else she could do but look at Brooke in desperation.

“Alice?” Brooke calmly replied. She held out her hand to the side, never taking her eyes off Marie. Within a few seconds, a slightly shorter blonde in a black dress and mask bounded over to Brooke and placed a pair of scissors in her hand. Then she scurried back into the crowd to claim her good seat. “I told you to ‘hush,’ Mary. It’s not that hard,” Brooke rolled her eyes, “Now you will be punished. Again.”

Brooke closed the distance again. She pulled at the unattractive orange cardigan, making a decisive \*snip\* with the scissors just below Marie’s armpit. Marie's eyes widened at both Brooke’s proximity and the act of destroying part of her outfit. If it were Marie’s own clothes, maybe her reaction would have been more extreme, but she somehow managed to stay quiet. “Good,” Brooke smiled, “You learned how to hush. Another sound, and you’ll be naked. Nod if I can keep stripping you, okay?”

Marie’s voice caught in her throat. As if she could have spoken if she wanted to. The idea of being naked in front of so many people was horrifying. Ever the obsessed girl when it came to popularity, it wasn’t even shame about her body for Marie. It was how this would ruin her reputation at her new school just as she was starting to build herself up. The ‘nerdy girl that was stripped at the Halloween party.’ That’s all she would be. Compared to the elegantly dressed guests surrounding her, Marie’s outfit looked absolutely ridiculous in comparison. Not that she would be wearing it for much longer.

The way Brooke phrased the question was horrible as well. It wasn’t about nodding in agreement to staying quiet. It was about giving Brooke permission to cut off all her clothes. But Marie found herself nodding ‘yes’ anyway. Because it wasn’t really a question. The cruel blonde would do so either way, and Marie was wishfully hoping that her cooperation would somehow make things better. Brooke’s smirk earlier should have been enough to tell Marie that this wasn’t a typical hazing ritual. If Marie hadn’t been sure then, she was damn sure now.

“You want this? You’re a nerdy little slut, aren’t you, Mary?”

Marie’s cheeks flushed as the cardigan was cut into pieces and unceremoniously dropped onto the basement floor. She had definitely noticed Brooke’s incorrect name for her, but being called a ‘nerd’ was somehow worse. Yet Brooke’s words were just for her. Strangely enough, the crowd hadn’t really been addressed save for being told to sit. Brooke had stayed close to Marie and kept her voice down, and the unusual tactic worked well in keeping Marie confused and nervous. Brooke was stripping her in the way it would happen if the two of them were alone, but still decided to do it in front of an audience.

With the ball gag in her mouth, with Brooke’s instructions to stay quiet, and with the scissors so close to her body, Marie just stayed quiet and still. Even as Brooke got to the worse part. Rather than undo the buttons on the blouse, the blonde kept working with the scissors. As quickly as the cardigan was removed, Marie’s cut and tattered blouse quickly joined the ruined cardigan on the floor. Once or twice, Brooke let the cold scissors press into Marie’s skin, giving her goosebumps from both the temperature and the touch of what she knew might accidentally hurt her if she moved an inch.

Just like that, Marie’s matching bra was on display. The lace dark blue bra matched her thong, and pressed her breasts together for a decent amount of cleavage. Marie’s B cups weren’t nearly as impressive as a number of other girls she knew, so most of her bras were picked to help her out in that department. However, she normally paired them with the proper outfit. Alone, the bra just enhanced her slightly slutty appearance.

Brooke stepped back to admire her handiwork. The handcuffs kept Marie’s arms securely bound and raised above her, and the underwear combo might normally be sexy under normal (albeit a bit kinky) circumstances. But the black ball gag clashed with the blue, as did the long red socks. Not to mention the pink checkered skirt pooled around the girl’s ankles on the stool below her feet. That part was planned as well. With Marie’s ankles caught in the fabric, she wouldn’t be able to kick too well for the coming parts. And if she did, she would risk losing the only article of clothing left aside from her underwear. The nerdy glasses and curly, frizzy hair was just icing on the cake.

“Alright, now we can begin,” Brooke smiled, turning to the large semi-circle watching with anticipation. No matter what she had planned, it was obvious that everyone present was enjoying the sight of such an exposed girl. The girls, because Brooke knew the ones that she invited loved a good show. The guys, because they were guys. “Everyone, this is Mary. She just moved here, and thought she could just show up to my party without a costume or an invitation.”

Marie could only watch in horror as Brooke lied to everyone. The unattractive name. The implication that this was how she normally dressed. And with the handcuffs and gag, there was absolutely nothing she could do about it.

After the giggling subsided, Brooke continued. “Well, I said she wasn’t welcome, but the nerdy girl said she would do anything to stay. Turns out, she’s a wannabe slut. You know, a virgin who pretends to be all kinky for attention. So I decided to give her the attention she wanted.” Brooke paused for effect, then held up the scissors. “Now then. Who wants to see Mary’s boobs?”

Everyone cheered in unison at Brooke’s question, while Marie felt the knot in her stomach tighten. No. Please God, no, she thought.

Of course, Brooke wouldn’t show that kind of mercy. “The people have spoken!” she grinned, the mask making the expression look more dramatic. With no hesitation, she turned back to Marie and opened the scissors around the bridge between the two bra cups. The cool metal on her skin made Marie shiver more than the first time, and she could only look on in horror as Brooke prepared to ruin the expensive bra.

Please don’t. Marie tried to show the words with her eyes, still somewhat worried that making another muffled sound through the gag might annoy Brooke even more. Though it was getting difficult to tell if it was real annoyance, or just part of the show that Brooke seemed to be separating between Marie and her audience.

“I bet they’re smaller without that push-up bra,” Brooke smirked. Considering how she was flaunting her own body earlier to fluster Marie, the masked blonde was plenty familiar with when cleavage was real or fake. Like before, Brooke’s voice was quiet. Meant just for Marie. “Let’s find out, shall we?”

And, just like that, Brooke snapped the scissor blades together.

**PART FIVE**

Marie winced as she felt her breasts drop to their natural positions as the ruined bra loosened around her chest. Her B cups weren’t necessarily small, but they definitely shrunk in appearance when no longer helped by the push-up bra.

Brooke made short work of cutting the lace bra to shreds, dropping the tattered straps and each individual cup to the ground. Being a girl with expensive underwear taste herself, Brooke knew that ruining such a nice bra would just be adding insult to injury. The image of Marie’s pale, unfettered breasts was just too good, and her little pink nipples already seemed to stiffen a bit from the cold of losing all her clothes so quickly.

“Aren’t they cute?” Brooke sneered, this time addressing the crowd. Now that her ‘work’ on Marie’s bra was done, the cruel blonde stepped aside and handed the scissors back to Alice. “The virgin Mary, everyone.” Moving to the side made it easily possible for every single person to have a perfect view of Marie.

Fully topless. Only wearing a blue thong and ridiculously long red socks. Still handcuffed and gagged, standing on a small stool like a tiny, makeshift stage.

It didn’t take long for the chorus of giggles and comments to turn into requests for Brooke to do more. But ever one for showmanship, Brooke merely held up her hand, waiting for the whole room to quiet down the way a teacher might do when trying to silence a classroom. “Patience, everyone,” she finally said, the edges of her lips curling up, “We have plenty of time. Why rush the fun?”

The best part was, Marie’s nudity wasn’t even all she had planned. Brooke was fully determined to ruin Marie’s reputation beyond repair. So far, it seemed like the bound girl didn’t even know why Brooke had targeted her so hard. But she was about to find out.

The masked blonde strutted back over to Marie, slipping one hand around her neck in a weirdly intimate manner. The feeling drastically contrasted the helplessness and humiliation Marie felt at her chest being exposed, and there was nothing she could do about her topless nature or Brooke’s touch. Every single important person in her new school was seeing her boobs! How would she ever come back from this?

“This will be no fun if you’re gagged the whole time,” Brooke said. Once again, she spoke softly so there was no way her voice would be heard over the music, even if the room had quieted down for the most part. “Here, Mary. How’s this?” In an expertly practiced motion, Brooke loosened the leather strap with just one hand, but only enough for the ball gag to not be forced in place. With her other hand, Brooke slipped two of her fingers under the waistband of Marie’s thong.

“Mmm!” Marie immediately squirmed at the thought of losing her last shred of clothing, and awkwardly used her tongue to remove the gag as quickly as possible. She felt the damp silicone hit the front of her neck as the strap held it in place, but she had more important things to worry about right now. “Brooke, please! Please stop. Please let me go!” Marie could feel the water forming in her eyes, but forced the tears back. She was long past the point of trying to play it cool, but she still didn’t want to be seen as naked AND weak. The begging in itself made her inwardly cringe, but she didn’t know what else to do.

Why would any girl do this to another girl? Surely Brooke knew how mortifying it would be to be so exposed. In front of so many people. Marie heard rumors of some girls earning their popularity by being cruel, but, until now, she always thought they were just rumors. Marie’s tactics had always been practiced and planned out, but never at anyone’s else expense.

“You really are a self-centered bitch, you know that?” Brooke muttered. She gave a teasing tug to Marie’s thong, and kept her voice low so it couldn’t be heard by the excited, masked crowd. “Honestly, I’m not surprised. It’s why I talked to you face to face. Something told me you’d be too oblivious to figure it out.”

“No, don’t!” Marie’s gasped when she felt the waistband of her thong being lowered. “I-I don’t understand…” She froze, realizing that any further squirming might give Brooke an excuse to make this worse. While she was helplessly cuffed and still partially dangling, there was really no way to free herself. She was totally at Brooke’s mercy.

Brooke placed a finger to Marie’s lips. “Hush, Marie.” While her other hand hadn’t given another tug, her fingers were playfully rubbing and twisting at the thin fabric, constantly reminding Marie how easy it would be to lower the dark blue thong even more. “Since you’re too dense, I’ll spell it out for you. Brooke is my middle name. My first name is Eleanor. Eleanor Brooke Anderson. Some people used to call me-”

“Ellie!” Marie said the name in unison with her tormentor, her eyes widening in realization. Even with the blue mask blocking most of the girl’s facial features, Marie vaguely recognized the hazel eyes through the eye slits, and the long blonde flowing over her shoulders. Now that Brooke gave her a not so subtle hint, of course. How had Marie not seen it until now? Brooke’s invitation, their conversation when she arrived. There were plenty of opportunities for her to see the girl’s features in broad daylight, rather than behind a mask, but Marie still hadn’t recognized her.

“Ah, ah, ah.” Brooke pressed her finger a little more firmly against Marie’s lips. “I said hush.” She waited until it was clear that Marie was going to comply, then continued in the quiet conversation just meant for the two of them. “You know, I barely recognized you when you showed up at school. I might not have been able to place it all by myself. But thankfully, my parents mentioned how you and your family were moving here.”

Shit. That’s right. This wasn’t some crazy coincidence. Ellie’s parents worked at the same company that Marie's dad did. That’s how Marie met her in the first place, back in elementary school. Yet another detail that was long forgotten until now. And, unlike Ellie’s parents, Brooke’s parents hadn’t mentioned anything about the Andersons. Or maybe they had, and Marie had been too lost in her shock at the move to have paid attention.

“Yeah, you’re not the only one who can give herself a makeover. You know, you dropped me and Lucy like it was nothing. I bet you didn’t even know that I moved at the end of 7th grade. You were too busy with your new and improved friends. Well, it turns out reinventing yourself is pretty easy when you move. For me, at least. I think it’s going to be MUCH harder for you.”

“Ellie, please-” The words were a little muffled from trying to say them through her old friend’s finger, and Marie immediately regretted saying anything at all.

“I. Said. Hush.” Brooke emphasized each word with a downward tug of her lower hand. This time, Marie felt the waistband of her thong actually dip below her hip bones. “One more word, and you’re naked. And if that word is ‘Ellie,’ it’ll be worse than that. Trust me, I can make it worse.”

“Mm!” Marie felt herself stiffen, blushing hard at the little squeak she made in response to feeling just how close was to being exposed. But she did as she was told. Slightly shivering from her bare body being exposed to not just the masked eyes, but also the chilly basement air, Marie managed to clamp her lips shut, obediently staying quiet.

“Better.” Brooke said. It had been long enough that a few of the people in the restless crowd were starting to demand for more action again. Cries of “Strip her!” and “Take it off!” Brooke smirked right at Marie, enjoying the cheers that came from such inappropriate demands.

After what felt like an eternity of suspense, Brooke tapped Marie’s lips twice, reminding her to hush, then turned to face the crowd. “Patience, remember?” the elegantly dressed blonde gave a calm smile, content to take her time. She even went so far as to take a few steps away from Marie, so her nearly naked body was fully on display to everyone. “That means you, Nathan. Yeah, I know that was you.” The audience laughed a bit at the boy being called out, but the masks made it impossible to tell where Nathan was. Not that Marie knew many of the people there by name yet anyway. Brooke didn’t seem to care, and was happy to continue running her show without lingering on the masked boy’s remark. “I think the little nerd deserves a chance to earn her modesty. Fair’s fair, right?” A chorus of groaning and boo-ing followed her question, but Brooke just held her hand up for silence, giving a wry smile to the crowd. “Don’t worry, we’ll still have some fun with dear Mary in the process.”

Marie dangled in mortified suspense, not knowing what her old friend had planned. She still couldn’t believe her eyes. This was Ellie. The short, quiet girl she knew in middle school had transformed into a tall, confident bombshell that could control a room with a mere hand gesture. Considering Marie’s own transformation, it wasn’t outside the realm of possibility for another girl to do the same, but Ellie was the last girl she would have expected to change so much. And now Ellie wasn’t just a popular girl. She was a popular girl with a vendetta.

“For starters, it’s Halloween! And Mary hasn’t had any candy yet,” Brooke grinned. She extended her arm in a dramatic fashion, and another masked girl strutted over and placed a single lollipop in Brooke’s hand. “Remember, Mary. Hush, or I’ll drop your thong.” Brooke came back over to the handcuffed girl, slowly unwrapping the round sucker. The plastic wrapper had the familiar Dum Dum text, but it wasn’t one of the tiny ones Marie remembered having as a kid. It was a mega sized one, and a matching blue to Brooke’s mask. Marie couldn’t help but wonder if that was intentional or not. “Now, I’m not going to show them,” Brooke quietly said, going back to a volume only she and Marie would hear. She gently took the front of Marie’s thong, giving a threatening tug, “But you don’t mind if I take a look for myself, do you?”

Marie’s light blush turned into a full on crimson when she felt the draft between her legs. It took everything in her not to protest as Brooke slowly pulled the waistband away from Marie’s skin. She could only helplessly watch as Brooke stared down at her little slit that was no longer protected by the thong. “Hey, she’s a natural brunette!” Brooke exclaimed, this time loudly enough for everyone to hear. Marie awkwardly squirmed when she saw those off to the sides trying to get a look, but Brooke had been careful to only pull the thong far enough away that she alone could see Marie’s most private area. Brooke ignored the begging from the crowd, instead directing her attention back to Marie. She told Marie to stay still, and the bound girl reluctantly obeyed, more stiffening than relaxing until she was perfectly still. It was even worse than being gagged. She was perfectly capable of talking, but Brooke still set it up in a way that making a sound would cause more trouble than it was worth.

“Trimmed like a proper girl, I see,” Brooke smirked, “I prefer to stay smooth, but hey, you do you,” she said. The masked girl cared little about Marie’s sexuality, but figured a visual like that would at least make the girl a little uncomfortable regardless. Brooke popped the blue lollipop in her mouth, rolling it around with her tongue for a few seconds as she licked and sucked, then pulled it out again. All the while, she kept Marie’s thong pulled out to keep her nervous and embarrassed. “Hmm, it’s a little bland. I don’t think you’d like this, Mary. But maybe if it had a little more flavor?”

The edges of Brooke’s lips curled up as she once again cast her eyes down to Marie’s exposed slit. Then, without hesitation, she lowered the blue sucker down, earning excited whispers from the onlooking crowd. Marie understood. She instantly knew what Brooke was getting at, but couldn’t find her voice or the will to unfreeze herself. She found herself too torn between wanting to keep her modesty and wanting to keep her dignity. And then it was too late. The sticky lollipop, still partially wet from Brooke’s mouth, was pressed up against her lower lips.

Marie opened her mouth to say something, anything, but Brooke was ready for her. “Tell me to strip you, and I’ll stop.” Brooke whispered. She slowly, VERY slowly rubbed the red sucker against Marie’s outer lips, at least being ‘kind’ enough not to say anything when the girl twitched a little at the contact.

After a few seconds of Marie staying silent, Brooke took that as permission to continue. Turning to the crowd, she finally raised her voice again. “This is the problem with virgins. Their innocent little pussies can be so stubborn!”

At those crude words, Marie’s cheeks felt hotter than before. She knew that Ellie was just trying to play up the nerd reputation, but her ex-friend was right. Sex had never really been a priority for Marie amidst her popularity system. But her virgin status wasn’t even the reason Brooke hadn’t made any ‘progress.’ Her subtle movements with the lollipop only gave small rubs, rather than any kind of pressure. Yet only she and Brooke knew that. The oblivious guys watching would assume that Marie was a tight little virgin due to those words, even though that wasn’t how vaginas worked.

Under normal circumstances, being a virgin wouldn’t be so bad. Popularity and virginity could easily go hand in hand, as Marie had balanced back home. It was actually weirdly effective on a lot of boys when used in the proper way. The popular girl who kept her virginity was alluring, rather than anything to be ashamed of. But pairing nerdiness with virginity? It was an obvious assumption that the two went hand in hand, and plenty embarrassing to Marie, considering that she wasn’t really a nerd.

She was a popular girl.

Emphasis on WAS.

The thoughts raced through Marie’s head, until she was unexpectedly shocked out of it. With absolutely no warning, Brooke shoved the lollipop against her slit. The movement elicited a gasp that Marie couldn’t hold back, and then she felt it.

The lollipop was inside her.

**PART SIX**

“Ah!” Marie gasped. Her tormentor had only sucked on the lollipop for a few seconds. Not nearly long enough to smooth out the rough bits of the sticky sphere. And once the Dum Dum was inside her, Brooke wasted no time in slowly spinning it around to add to the mortifying discomfort. It pressed and scraped against her in all the wrong ways, and Marie couldn’t help but gasp and wince at the awful sensations.

“Shh…” With her other hand, Brooke went right back to pressing her index finger against Marie’s upper lips. “You don’t want everyone to think this excites you, do you?”

Marie blushed deeply. It wasn’t just the unwanted, awkward penetration. Ellie’s voice was a strange combination of patronizing and seductive. It was all too much. Her old friend doing such things to her, and making such valid points at the same time. The whole room would think such a weird act was exciting her. Gasping and wincing could easily be mistaken for pleasure from such a distance. Only Ellie was close enough to see the obvious discomfort.

She thought the lollipop being spun inside her was bad, but it only got worse from there. When Brooke got bored of that, she shifted the makeshift toy up, then over, then down, then over. Marie realized what she doing only after the fourth movement. Her masked ex-friend was drawing a square with the sucker, and repeating the motion again and again. No girl would ever touch herself this way, nor would even the most inexperienced sexual partner. Brooke went to each ‘corner,’ pushing and pressing just enough for Marie to make a face, then moved to the next one.

To make it worse, Marie had to look at Ellie’s amused smirk the whole time. Closing her eyes was NOT an option. Though nearly every movement made her want to do so, out of discomfort and awkwardness rather than pleasure, she knew that was the quickest way to make everyone think she was enjoying Ellie’s fun.

When it was clear Marie wasn’t going to attempt any more protests, Brooke finally removed her index finger from the bound girl’s lips. “Nod if you want me to stop,” she said. For good measure, she punctuated the words with a little spin of the lollipop before pressing a little harder against one of Marie’s walls. “But no speaking, Mary.”

Marie blushed, but did as she was told. Hoping Brooke was being serious about stopping, Marie nodded and kept eye contact with the masked girl. Trying her hardest to ask for mercy in her bound position.

“Here’s the deal, Mary.” Brooke said. She stared back at Marie’s hopeful eyes with a cold expression. No longer sounding amused, Brooke spoke bluntly, “You have two choices. I take off your thong and let everyone see you, all of you…” she paused, letting those words fully sink in, then continued, “Or you can taste yourself.” With that, Brooke popped the Dum Dum out way more roughly than she had inserted it, causing Marie to wince all over again as the rough edges rubbed against her outer lips.

Brooke expertly maneuvered Marie’s thong away from her most private area and removed the blue sucker without it rubbing against the fabric at all, then held it right between their faces. The threat of being fully naked in front of the whole party was enough to keep Marie quiet, though the gasps and whispers from the crowd realizing what was about to happen made her blush more deeply than before.

“Open wide, Mary.”

Unlike before, Brooke didn’t press the Dum Dum to these lips. She didn’t need to push the sullied candy forward to make Marie obey. Between being naked and being humiliated, it was clear which option the bound girl was leaning towards.

Marie gave one last helpless look to her old friend, but found no mercy waiting for her. Half her new school was already getting an eyeful of her bare boobs, bare thighs, bare everything, and this was the only way to preserve the final bits of her modesty. Marie wasn’t an idiot. She knew that Brooke could always pull down the thong anyway afterwards, but Marie had to try. Refusing was the only sure way to be stripped fully naked.

Cringing internally, and taking a deep breath through her nose to try and calm herself, Marie did as she was told.

She opened her mouth.

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