

## The Padded Palace Act III: Chapter 7

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\*DING!\*

Arriving on the hotel's sixth floor, Latasha's heart began to race as she gazed upon the long stretches of plastic-covered floors and walls, ensuring no stains would be left behind after the convention. Before long, this hallway, along with the rest of the hotel and convention center, would be swarming with Littles, Bigs, and diaper lovers alike. There was truly nothing else quite like it within the greater ABDL community; a chance for those with diaper fetishes to relax and be themselves around thousands of other people just like them away from judgemental eyes.

"Watch your step, Skye. The plastic wrap can be a bit grabby," said Latasha, guiding Skye through the maze of hallways until they arrived at the door to room 616. Waving her key card over the card reader, her grin grew wider upon hearing the internal mechanisms of the door unlocking, accompanied by a small green light blinking next to the handle. Excited to dive into the day's festivities, she threw the door open to their new digs for the next three days, "Home sweet home!"

The hotel suite was simple with all the basics that one might expect to find while traveling. There was a king bed, a tv, a mini-fridge, and, because Latasha had sprung for the deluxe suite, her room also came with a couch and a coffee table. "Not bad. Certainly better than the motel we got stuck in last time," said Latasha, snickering at her past failure to secure a hotel room on-site.

Throwing herself onto the bed, Skye let the hours of sitting in a car seat sink into her weary back. She may have been a baby but she was still an adult so a stiff back was nothing out of the ordinary. If anything, the aches and pains she felt from daily life often pushed her to act even more babyish around Latasha.

\*BZZZ! BZZZ!\*

Rotating her head and resting her cheek on the bed, Skye's attention was pulled to the buzzing sound in Latasha's pocket. She watched curiously as her Mommy took out her phone and chuckled before tapping away while subconsciously mouthing the words of her message. Having seen Mommy's texting face before, she easily connected the dots of what Latasha was up to. "Who chus texin?" she asked, rolling over onto her side and squelching her moist padding between her legs.

"An old gal pal from back in college. She's actually the one who got me into the Mommy business in the first place. She wants to meet up for a little bit today," said Latasha, looking up from her phone screen at the sound of Skye's shifting diaper, "Alright, soggy butt, what do you say we head downstairs and get you changed into a fresh diaper?"

Groaning, Skye flopped onto her back, gripping the comforter and swaddling herself up in the process. "Buh I wansa naaaaaap! Cans chus jus change me into one of dose?" she said, pointing to the bags filled with unopened AB supplies.

Gritting her teeth and glancing back at her phone, Latasha wasn't sure what to do. They'd just got to the hotel and she was eager to get downstairs to the convention hall. She briefly considered the idea of putting Skye down for a nap before running down to take a quick peek at the convention space. However, the idea of Skye waking up and getting scared before she got back made that idea a non-starter. "How about this? I'll get your stroller ready to go. That way you can catch some Z's while I tour CrissCon a little. Is that okay with you?" she said, hoping to coerce her Little into doing what she wants, "I promise to buy you something special from the vendor's hall.

Scrunching up her face, Skye didn't want to be stuck trying to nap in such a noisy location. If the main convention space was anything like the check-in area, it was going to be an endless cacophony of voices invading her personal space. Though, as she looked into Latasha's pleading eyes, she felt guilty over the idea that she would be forcing her Mommy to stay cooped up with her for an hour or so. Reluctantly relenting, she responded, "O-Okie, Mommy."

Clapping her hands together, Latasha immediately got to work unpacking the folded-up stroller and getting it set up. "We're gonna have so much fun together. Just you wait," she said, unaware of the grimace that Skye was wearing.

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"...3, 2, 1! Ready or not, here I come!" shouted Connor, sighing with relief after finishing one hundred straight seconds of counting as demanded by Stacy, Riri, and Ellie. Looking around the nursery, he made sure none of Little's were trying to pull a fast one by hiding in spawn. Thankfully, the nursery didn't have too many places to hide behind, with the biggest hiding spot being the pile of stuffed animals, "Oh, dear! I do hope no one is hiding in such an inescapable position." He wasted no time tearing into the pile, finding no signs of human life anywhere.

\*CREEEEEEEK!\*

Connor may have struck out with the stuffies but his luck was already changing as the distant sound of a door squeaking entered his ears. He couldn't tell if the door was opening or closing from inside the nursery but he was able to deduce that it came from somewhere over by the laundry room and kitchen. Tossing the plushie in his hand to the wayside, he slinked out of the nursery and tiptoed around the corner, peeking inside the living room briefly before moving through the hallway to the kitchen.

"Alright, nowhere to go, you little munchkins!" said Connor, unaware of how effortlessly it was for him to fall into a playful state of mind. In truth, growing up an only child had limited the number of chances he had to play group games like this. As such, his desire to throw himself into a game like hide and seek wholeheartedly was impossible to overcome.

Leaping in front of the door to the laundry room, Connor stomped hard with both feet, making a thunderous boom. "Fe-fi-fo-fum! I smell the...diaper of a Little one!" he said, stopping himself short of saying "blood" as the old fairytale quote did. Entering the laundry room, he quickly deduced where someone might be hiding as the door to the garage was left slightly ajar, "Shoot. Probably should've made the garage off-limits."

Not wanting to end the game prematurely, Connor decided to push forward into the garage, making a mental note to set this boundary before the start of the next round. Nudging open the garage door, the same, terrible creek emitted from the aging hinges, letting him know he was definitely on the right track. As he stepped down onto the cement floor of the empty garage, it didn't take him long to spot a green hood with a pair of lopsided eyes sticking out from behind the pair of trash cans. "Oh, dear, maybe I was wrong...I don't see how anyone could find a place to hide in here," he said sarcastically, inching closer and closer to Ellie's hiding spot with every word.

Unfortunately, as Connor moved within striking range, his foot came in contact with a lone candy wrapper that had fallen short of making it into the garbage can. This gave Ellie just enough of an advance to leap backward just as Connor was reaching across the bins to touch her head. "Eeeek!" she shouted before sprinting to the garage door. Connor tried to grab her but she was just fast enough to outflank him, rushing past him just in time, "I nod it yet!"

"What are you talking about? It's hide and seek and you've been seeked!" said Connor, throwing his hands up without giving chase. In his mind, Ellie was already caught so he shouldn't have to waste his breath re-capturing her.

Ellie, however, had a set of far different rules in mind. "Nuh-uh! Ish hide an seek tag!" she shouted, sticking her tongue out before running toward the greater part of the house.

"We never established this!" yelled Connor, sighing as he knew his words fell on deaf ears. Pushing the trash cans back into their proper spots, he casually walked toward the garage door, knowing that Ellie was too far away at this point to race after. Not like it mattered. If her next hiding spot was as bad as her first, she'd stick out like a sore thumb.

"They're tricking you."

"Gah!" shouted Connor, leaping back and nearly losing his footing as Riri, who was standing in front of the laundry machine with a solemn look on her face, "Riri! You startled me. D-Did you get bored of the game?" he said, too busy catching his breath after getting jump-scared by a short girl in a purple nightie to process what she had just told him.

Looking down at the floor, Riri repeated what she'd previously said without the faintest hint of LittleSpeak, "They're tricking you. Ellie's supposed to run around and keep you occupied downstairs." She pursed her lips at the end of her sentence and grabbed the front of her nightie, her anxiety over ratting out her friends on obvious display, "I overheard them...before we started the game."

Taken aback by this new piece of information, Connor furrowed his brow line as he looked up from Riri toward the rest of the house. "Tell me where Stacy is," he said, his voice devoid of the playful energy he'd started their little game with.

TO BE CONTINUED...