

"Beatrice / Unique Towels"

Nicholas Katsafanas

Stratos said, 'Did you see her?'

'See her what?' I said, 'Who? Beatrice?'

'Beatrice. The girl you're allegedly trying to pork man! No. Some random person. But no. Seriously. Did you just see here? Stick her feet in. Into those boots? With no socks? Bare foot and shit.'

'Ugh. Are you fucking serious Stratos? She's going commando in the black boots she's in right now?'

'Swear to god man. I literally just saw it happen. Right in front of my eyes bro.'

'Ugh. Fuckin kidding me? She's the type to do shoes with no socks? No socks?'

'Not just shoes with no socks. We're talking boots. No socks.'

'That just. I don't want to say it ruins it for me outright. But.'

'I knew you'd want to know. See. Because I know you feel the same way I do about that.'

‘About what? About feet? I wouldn’t go. I don’t know if I would go that far. I actually appreciate a good foot Stratos. But I’m just. I mean maybe her sweat glands are fuckin nonexistent. She’s one of these girls that like never sweats. Whose skin is preternaturally dry and whatnot.’

‘But still there’s no barrier. Sweat aside. There’s still no prophylactic separating foot from boot.’

‘And I get that,’ I said, ‘But that in theory doesn’t offend my taste as much as the increased probability of her foot stinking later. Which would obviously be sweat-induced. No?’

‘You zmail her yet?’

‘Nah. Nah. Not yet. I wanna make sure I’m saying the right thing. The exact correct phrasing. You know. That first zmail. It has to really hit. Otherwise I’m fucked. Then again. If she’s going sockless already? Maybe I shouldn’t even bother. Maybe it’s already a lost cause. Save myself some time.’

‘Well. I mean. Big picture? It's not gonna make much of a difference soon anyway.’

‘What do you mean big picture? Not gonna make much difference soon?’

‘Well. I mean. You know. With the whole legislation thing that passed. Pretty soon I don't know how much we're gonna be using our cocks anymore anyway. So like I said. Maybe it's a moot point regardless.’

‘What the fuck are you talking about Stratos? I'm not gonna be using my cock soon? The fuck? You know I don't watch the damn news. Why in the hell would I cease using my penis in the near future?’

‘You know who Hunter Carlson is right?’

‘The prick with the bowtie? The one who smokes crack with hookers right?’

‘The Assistant Vice President to the Acting Chairman of The Greater Galactic Bureau. Yes. Him. Well he just motioned forward this new legislation. Now of course nobody actually thought this thing was gonna pass. And of course not! There's plenty of nonsensical legislation every year that gets motioned forward and is of course

dead on arrival. In fact. People are still a little mystified as to how it passed.'

'Okay,' I said, 'But what did it propose? The actual legislation.'

'Well the main gist of the legislation is a single requirement. That all male-identifying citizens of inner saturn. Under the age of forty. Are to be strictly required to use their genitals. Their cock and balls more or less. To clean all public surfaces as deemed necessary by the state.'

'Our cocks and balls Stratos? Being used to clean public surfaces? That's what you're saying? Like dick sponges? No. I don't like the sound of this at all. It strikes me as less than ideal. And to your previous point. How the fuck would something like this.'

'Even pass? I don't know. In a sense. When you think about it? It makes perfect sense. They've been trying to pass population control legislation for like a decade now for Inner Saturn. Probably more than that.'

'But that never fuckin passes. Even I know that.'

‘Exactly. And then you just take a look at the derelict condition of all three of our major cities? The municipalities are overwhelmed from a sanitation perspective. Which is obviously being driven at least in part by the unrepentant increase in population.’

‘So you mandate that the most fertile males are required to essentially mangle their dicks cleaning up the cities that are being sullied precisely by overpopulation?’

‘Exactly.’

‘That's bullshit.’

‘Oh it's total bullshit! But it's gonna be our reality extremely soon!’

‘Can't they like fuckin filibuster or some shit? Delay it in perpetuity or some shit. Call a special public hearing or some shit? So it like passes but is never actually enacted. Because. I mean. Even if it passed? It would just lead to a mass emigration?’

‘Sure. If anybody can actually get a Visa-Z. Sure. Good luck with that though!’

‘You know,’ I said, ‘now that I'm thinking. Maybe I will shoot Beatrice a text.’

I'm not gonna. like. Fuck her feet anyway. Right? A footjob the first night? That seems preposterous anyway.'

'Our cocks are gonna be in way worse condition than her feet soon enough!'

'That's total. I can't believe that. What a cunt that Hunter Carlson guy is huh? Like of all the cunt-y things to suggest. He goes and suggests possibly the cuntiest.'

'It's cunt-y yet subtly brilliant as well. There's a muted cunt-like brilliance to it all. Like I said. You more or less have to respect it. Nobody has any idea how this guy actually got the legislation to pass. Hardly anything passes these days! You can't get a motion to increase the meal tax on death row. Yet somehow this Carlson fuck manages to get legislation for a mass movement of literal dick towels through both the State Senate and the Congressional Republic?'

'It's odd. It's anti-male discrimination Stratos. It's pure war on the penis. That's what it is. It's the age-old jealousy of the phallus. Phallic jealousy of the first order!

You know the Congressional Republic has skewed female for some time now.'

'But it's not like they're all dykes either. I mean. Sure. There's certainly a feminine antagonism. But I don't know if there's a real market for actually extinguishing the phallus of inner saturn in aggregate within the Congressional Republic.'

'That's actually not a terrible point. And then the State Senate. That's like ninety percent chicks with dicks now right?'

'But again. Not the demographic that's going to vote against the phallus.'

'Because without the dick they're just chicks.'

'Exactly. Chicks with dicks are on average the most pro-penis demographic of Inner Saturn. So again. The question remains.'

'How the fuck did Carlson get this shit to actually pass. If I have to start wiping down Burger King counters with my scrotum I'm gonna be pissed Stratos!'

'And like I said. Good fucking luck getting a Visa-Z. I've heard the waitlist has

already quadrupled since this news broke overnight. It could be three fucking years before you get out of here!’

‘And by that time my entire penile faculty would probably be in such a state of disrepair. Ugh. This is bad Stratos. This is a real concern. I’m zmailing Beatrice right now. I need to go on a fuck spree ASAP now. This is. No. This is very concerning.’

‘She might be more amenable too now. That's the only real silver lining here.’

‘That these girls. Realizing they could be dealing with exclusively dirty dicks in like a week. That they’re gonna wanna get in on their own fuckfests in the meantime?’

‘One would think that's a possibility.’

‘Please don’t say one would think Stratos. One? It’s a little pretentious. No? But either way. Hear me out then. Hear me out.’

‘I’m listening.’

‘What if Carlson. What if Carlson is colluding with the Congressional Republic and the State Senate and the Interior Ministry on this? What if this is an elaborate

psy-op. What if actually it's just a psy-op of the highest order.'

'How so?'

'You threaten people with this potential loss of aggregate penis. Right?'

'Right.'

'Which moves them to engage in weeks of unencumbered fuckfests. Which makes the aggregate STI rates jump through the roof?'

'So you're not going to zmail Beatrice then? Is what you're saying?'

'I'm not saying I'm not going to. I'm just saying.'

'That this could be a low-key euthanization psy-op as opposed to a low-key population control campaign?'

'It's possible. It's something I'm strongly considering now. With that said? I just zmailed Beatrice. I can already see she's typing me back! The little dots.'

'There's only one issue with that theory though. This euthanization theory.'

'What is it?'

‘STIs haven't been generally fatal for like three decades now. Not since the whole bronchial herpes outbreak of the late 2190s.’

‘So? Maybe the State Senate. Maybe they already have some insight into a potential second wave of bronchial herpes. Or a intestinal AIDS or some shit. Or. Um. Something equivalent you know? And that's factoring into the equation here as well?’

‘See. Now? Now we're going just a little too deep into pure speculation. A little too far down the rabbit hole in my opinion.’

‘Go ahead and say it Stratos. You think the theory. That it's conspiratorial now.’

‘Well. I mean. Kind of by definition? But that's not necessarily a bad thing. That doesn't ipso facto disqualify it in my mind.’

‘I don't know. To me it's really not that crazy. When you really think about it. Like you said. This entire conversation you've basically been adamant that the idea that Carlson somehow got this legislation passed. Through both the State Senate and the Congressional Republic bodies. That it's basically absurd. That it makes no general

sense. So clearly there almost must. By definition. Be something of a conspiratorial nature that's going on here.'

'Perhaps. Perhaps. But at the same time strange things do happen. Strange events do occur. Without rational explanation. I just wouldn't necessarily go to the whole an STI of deadly capabilities is on the precipice of entering the social fabric of Inner Saturn. And our own governmental bodies are intentionally passing legislation to promote its rapid spreading through the populace to kill off large swathes of people. That's all.'

'She just replied.'

'What'd she say?'

'She's asking me off rip if I have a foot fetish?'

'That's. Somewhat forward.'

'She said she thinks she knows me from some Big Toe Group Chat from a few years ago,' I said, 'I just zmailed her saying I don't think I was in that. But that I'm not necessarily averse to toes.'

'That's not exactly a ringing endorsement.'

‘It’s the furthest I’m willing to go. I’m not going to outright lie. And I’m not gonna sign myself up for some shit I’ll end up regretting by midnight. Be on some Let Me See Them Toes Type Shit. Then get over there and just try and pull my joint out. You know?’

‘That’s actually. Pretty upstanding of you. There’s a modicum of respect to it.’

‘I figure if this legislation thing is real then there should be ample other opportunities for me anyway.’

‘Right.’

‘But what about you?’

‘What about me?’

‘I mean if she’s gonna go hard on the whole foot fetish thing? I’ll give you Beatrice’s number? That can happen. If you want?’

‘Eh.’

‘Aren’t you gonna try and at least get laid then? If all of this is true. Isn’t that a motivating force here?’

‘Probably.’

‘No interest in Beatrice?’

‘Eh.’

‘She not attractive to you?’

‘She's fine.’

‘Fine? Would you not try and fornicate? I thought we both agreed.’

‘I’m not saying I wouldn't. That’s not it. I’m just saying.’

‘What is it you’re saying Stratos? I don't know. It kind of seems like you are. Trying to say you wouldn't? I just asked you if you wanted her number and you said eh.’

‘Let me marinate on it. Maybe. Anyway. You still might be interested right? I don’t wanna be like all over it and then you're trying to hang out with her. You know?’

‘No I get it.’

‘Yeah. It’s not a big deal. We’ll figure it out.’

‘You were probably just really turned off by. You know. The whole bare feet in the boots thing. Right?’

‘Have you applied for a Visa-Z yet?’

‘As of maybe half an hour ago I had no notion of this Phallic Wash Cloth Legislation. I had no notion it even existed.

Never mind that it apparently passed. So I haven't.'

'You probably should.'

'Why? Have you?'

'Oh yeah. I've had a Visa-Z for a few months now.'

'Really? You applied.'

'Oh yeah. Way back. When um. This whole Hunter Carlson thing has been rumored for a few months now. I figured just in case. I'd go ahead and try and get a Visa-Z ahead of it. You know. Cover my bases.'

'Oh,' I said.

'What?'

'Nothing. I just. I don't know. You didn't think to maybe give me a heads up at all?'

'It seemed like a low probability thing. I didn't want to. You know. Bother you and shit. Over something that was in all likelihood going to end up dissipating into the ether.'

'In all likelihood dissipating into the ether. Yet. You still went to the trouble of applying for the Visa-Z yourself?'

‘Just to cover my bases. Yeah.’

‘I don't know. In the abstract I suppose I get it. Maybe it makes sense in the abstract. But I'm just struggling here Stratos. Just a little. Marrying up this legislation being something that was at once super low probability. Yet also something you went to the trouble of applying for a Visa-Z over. Yet also something you felt like was of no concern to tell me. To give me even a minimal heads up on.’

‘Is that my responsibility now? To watch the news for you?’

‘I'm not saying it's your responsibility. Obviously I'm my own person. You're your own person. I don't watch the news. You're somewhat of a political junkie.’

‘I don't know if I would say I'm.’

‘But you know what I'm saying. We're obviously our own people. I'm just saying. That if I was planning to potentially flee Inner Saturn because of some apocalyptic draconian legislation? I don't know. I might be saying something to you. Bring it up in conversation. Broach the topic if you will? I

might just say like hey Stratos are you planning on leaving Inner Saturn. You know. Because we might be forced to pull our cocks out and wipe down dirty dish pans with them in perpetuity because of our deeply corrupt government?’

‘In retrospect. Sure. Yeah I guess maybe I should have made a point to mention something about it to you. Perhaps that’s a fair assessment. Perhaps I should have made more of an effort to broach the topic during one of our routine conversations.’

‘She just zmailed me back. Beatrice. Now she's asking if I want to come over. Over zmail mind you.’

‘Are you? Or do you?’

‘She's saying she just got back. Saying she walked all the way from Garden View back to her apartment.’

‘Ugh.’

‘You’re not. Well of course you’re not interested.’

‘I think she’s cute. There’s nothing wrong with her. If she. Did she mention anything about taking a shower at all?’

‘Eh.’

‘Oh. Now you’re eh.’

‘No. I mean eh. As in eh I wasn't technically lying when I said I wasn't necessarily averse to toes?’