

Pilot

It's said that a single, seemingly insignificant event can alter the course of person's life. A ripple in a pond leads to a tidal wave; a butterfly flapping its wings makes a hurricane half a world away. For Carla Garcia, struggling actress, it was something as simple as what underwear the director wanted her to wear.

"Nick?" Carla's voice echoed off the pickle green bricks of the studio hallway. "What the hell is this?" Carla's manager and agent looked up from his phone, giving a passing glance to the soft plastic-backed bundle she held in one outstretched hand. From the way she held the thing, one might think it was a hungry piranha wriggling around and trying to bite her fingers off.

"That," Nick stated plainly, "would be a diaper." He gave Carla a little smirk like he thought he was being cute or something. Of course it was a diaper. What else could it have been, with its white plastic backing and nauseatingly pink and purple flowers and butterflies? Even from arm's length, the scent of its lavender perfume wafted into Carla's nose. This was either a diaper meant for a particularly large baby or a maxi-pad for an amazon.

"I know it's a diaper, Nick," Carla growled, "but what the hell is it doing in my dressing room?!"

Nick slicked back his chestnut hair. "I'm not an expert, but I'm betting that's part of your costume. Just guessing."

"I know it's part of my wardrobe," Carla hissed, "but why?!" Nick furrowed his eyebrows in concentration and confusion. For a brief moment he was a dog that had been asked to pedal a unicycle. He wanted to make her happy; he just didn't know how.

Her gaze followed his as he looked conspiratorially over his shoulder. "I snooped around and saw some other packages in Wardrobe," Nick whispered like he was a spy in one of those cheesy prison break movies they'd watch together. "They've got diapers with teddy bears on 'em, and owls; even ones with clouds and balloons and stuff. Say the word, and I make a call. We'll get you the right kind of dia-"

"I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT WEARING DIAPERS IN THE HALLWAY WHERE EVERYONE CAN LISTEN IN!" Carla's shouts rattled the door to the dressing room behind her. She was suddenly acutely aware of exactly how loud she had just been. Several stage hands and technicians had stopped dead in their tracks and stared in horror and disgust at her. Her first acting gig in months, and they likely already thought she was being a diva. All that was missing for them was the popcorn.

"Dressing room!" she scolded him as quietly as she could. "Now!" With her free hand, Carla grabbed Nick by his tie and dragged him into the dressing room the studio had provided; any harder and the tie would have unclipped from his shirt.

“I get that you’re upset about something,” Nick said after the door to Carla’s dressing room was closed and Carla had released his tie, “but I just don’t get what it is or why.” Carla puffed out her breath in frustration. Now it was her turn to be perplexed. What was so hard to understand?

“Why do I have to wear a diaper in the first place?”

“Uh...because you’re playing a baby...?” Nick offered sarcastically. “Says it there right in the casting call: ‘Big Baby Bella’.”

Nick had gotten Carla a part for a T.V. pilot. It was some kind of kid’s show, targeted for late bloomers and immature types who didn’t want to grow up, or something. Nick had described the show as a variation on Lazy Town, only for children that didn’t want to move up to “big kid” status instead of ones who didn’t want to exercise.

And just like Lazy Town, all the characters for Little Land were being played by adults. Only one part was available: “Big Baby Bella”. The downside was that Carla didn’t know anything else about the part. It had been a last minute gig, with the original actress dropping out suddenly and Nick managing to get Carla’s headshots into some casting director’s lap.

Carla had yet to meet any of the other actors, or do a table read, or anything other than make it to the studio. She’d managed to get a glimpse of the director- Max Hammerschmidt, a local legend in children’s programming- before a few stage hands shuffled her into a dressing room while Nick walked behind them playing on his phone.

Worse yet, she wasn’t going to get the chance to properly prepare for the role, it seemed. Max Hammerschmidt had a reputation for being particularly demanding when it came to keeping on schedule, and today was the first day of filming. No rehearsal, no nothing. Carla was going to have to read the script moments before the cameras started rolling, hope that she could memorize the lines, and let her natural talent carry her through today.

That had been the plan, at least, until Carla had seen her wardrobe: a lavender colored dress with puffy sleeves, a matching wig with its artificial hair in pigtails, some baby bootie socks with grips on the soles so that she could walk around without slipping, and a diaper big enough that it could actually fit her. It wasn’t even an adult style diaper like something found in the “embarrassing personal products aisle” at the grocery store. It was, for all intents and purposes, a baby diaper that had been blown up to scale. The moment she found the dreadful thing

waiting for her in the dressing room, Carla had gotten a pretty good idea why her predecessor had suddenly quit.

“This is ridiculous, Nick,” Carla whined, shaking the diaper in her hand for emphasis. “Why do I have to wear a diaper?”

Nick glanced at his phone, like he had somewhere better to be. More than likely, he had one of his games on pause and was itching to play. “It’s for the part. You’re ‘Big Baby Bella’. You wear diapers. It’s kind of in the name.”

“Yeah,” Carla allowed, “but I didn’t expect to have to wear a real diaper for the part. I figured that they’d just give me some kind of puffy pants, or maybe the old white-cloth-and-giant-safety-pin bit. Y’know? Like in the cartoons?”

Nick sighed. Why was he the one acting exasperated? He wasn’t the one expected to trade in his undies for Pampers Size 26. “This isn’t a cartoon, and it’s supposed to be educational,” he told her. “How are the little two and three year olds of the world going to know that being in diapers is a bad thing if your diaper doesn’t look like something they’d wear? How many kids wear diapers without some kind of cartoon on them? How many kids wear safety-pinned diapers?”

“If it’s supposed to be realistic, then why is this diaper plastic?” Carla countered. “I’ve got a little niece, and all of her Pampers are that fake cloth-like shit.”

There was a pause. Nick’s eyes searched the room for an answer. “It’s part of the aesthetic, I guess. Your other stuff seems kinda plastic to me.” Nick levied a finger at the dress and wig laying on the countertop. Gingerly, Carla picked up the dress and rubbed the material between her fingers. It didn’t crinkle like a raincoat, or a...well, Carla didn’t even want to think the word if she didn’t have to...but there was definitely a kind of shimmer and sheen to it. Maybe Nick did have a point there. Still, she wasn’t about to admit defeat.

“That’s not the point,” she moaned. “This is degrading and embarrassing.”

“That’s showbiz,” Nick replied flatly. There was another ten full seconds of tense uninterrupted, unblinking silence between the two.

Nick let out a long sigh and rubbed his temples. "Look, babe; you've basically got two choices: either put on the diaper, or give up on being an actress." Carla's heart was in her stomach in an instant. "I have busted my ass trying to get you good, speaking parts, and for some reason, this is the only one that's panned out. And...and...and..." he seemed to search for words and came up wanting.

The young actress felt like she was going to throw up in her mouth. Even Nick was close to giving up on her. Nick never gave up on anyone. Anyone. He had a mime as a client for God's sakes! She was about to be brought lower than a mime all because she wouldn't wear a diaper.

"Other than this," Nick broke into her train of thought, "best I can do is get you a gig as an extra in a herpes medication commercial." An extra? In a herpes commercial? She wouldn't even be the one talking to the camera about how she had herpes. Best case scenario, she'd be bike rider number four in a crowd of bike riders to demonstrate that yes, even people with herpes could ride bikes. She wouldn't even get to say "...But not anymore."

"Do you want the part, Carla? Do you want to at least get your foot in the door? Or do you wanna go back to waiting tables at the shit bar where we met?" Nick was right. This might be her last chance.

That's when the fight went out of her. "Fine," she conceded. "I'll put the damn thing on. Now get out. I need to get..." she paused. "Changed" would have been a poor choice of words on her part. "I need to get dressed."

"Atta girl," Nick grinned, stifling a laugh as he went for the doorknob. "That's very mature of you. I'm proud of you." Carla gave him a look and Nick slapped his hand over his mouth. This is why they hadn't worked out as a couple. Never one to restrain himself too much, Nick waited until he was almost completely out the door, leaned back in and said, "Now you just let your Nick-Nick know if you need any help getting your diapee on," before fluttering his eyes coyly. Son of a bitch managed to get out and slam the door right as the diaper came flying at his head.

The young actress turned to face the dressing room mirror and took a deep breath in through her nose before letting it out quickly through her mouth. "Nick..." she whispered to herself. Sometimes that man's own name could be used as a curse word. But as infuriating as he could be, Carla still liked him, at least as a friend and agent. He had gotten her plenty of auditions over the past few years and it wasn't his fault that she was never "quite what the director was looking for."

An old Mitch Hedberg joke came to mind just then: “You know what keeps me from acting? Fucking auditions.” It had been funny when Mitch had said it. It wasn’t nearly as funny when Carla was living it. The irony that she hadn’t auditioned to get this part wasn’t lost on her, either.

Regardless, she had gotten a speaking role, and something about her was what at least one person had been looking for, even if it had been as a last minute replacement. What did it matter if they had also been looking for someone desperate enough to wear a diaper on camera? She could do this. She could totally do this.

With a last look at herself in the mirror and a huff, Carla pulled her midnight black tank-top over her head; folding it neatly, almost ceremonially, before setting it down on the counter in front of her. She pondered leaving on her matching sports bra for a moment before double checking the dress she was supposed to wear. Twisting her lips to the side, she frowned slightly as she examined the childish costume. Her bra would definitely show if she left it on; not camera appropriate in the least. It was a stupid mistake on her part. Should’ve brought something strapless, just in case, she thought.

But, she reminded herself, babies don’t wear bras, so it made sense to go without. It wasn’t a mistake, it was a character choice. Further inspection of the front of the dress revealed that it had a little bit of padding up top, too, so it was likely meant to be worn without any additional support. The actress sighed in relief, and the bra soon joined the sacrificial altar of her dignity. Her sneakers, socks, and jeans were added shortly after.

Carla was about to take off her panties when she remembered that their replacement was still lying on the floor. Shimmying her panties down her hips while she tiptoed to the door, Carla picked up the tacky, padded, plastic, monstrosity and turned it over in her hands. Once again, the faint smell of lavender wafted up into her nostrils, bringing with it memories of babysitting her niece and perhaps even long buried memories of being babysat herself. It did smell nice, if you didn’t think about what its intended purpose was. Not that she’d be using it, of course. This was a costume piece; a prop and nothing more.

For the first time since discovering it, she completely unfolded the adult baby diaper in her hands. Opening up the sides revealed even more purple plastic around the waistline and leg gathers; God, but this thing looked gaudy! Still, if meant getting the job, then...

Carla froze. She didn’t actually know how to put a diaper on herself. She knew how to put a diaper on someone else, but she quickly realized that she didn’t have the slightest inkling of how to be both the adult and the baby at the same time.

Perplexed, she looked at the thing in her hands and studied it like it was some sort of puzzle. She could tell where the back was by the tapes, but didn't get much further than that. How to put this thing on? What secrets did it hold?!

At first, she tried to pull it up between her legs and fasten it standing, but whenever she reached for a tape in the back, the front drooped down like a wet noodle. Likewise, when she pulled the front up to her waist for a nice snug fit, the backside inevitably fell before she could fasten it properly. Carla considered squeezing the middle between her thighs so she might hold the damn thing in place long enough to fasten it together, but that might wrinkle it up and make it unappealing to the camera. Did diapers wrinkle that much? She'd never thought about it before.

This wasn't working. Carla was Sisyphus pushing a boulder up a hill. "Wish there was a spare," She whispered quietly enough so that she was sure Rick wouldn't hear her. "That way I could worry less if I made a mistake." The irony that she was now wishing for more diapers wasn't lost on her. Defeated once more by this simple task, Carla decided to go at it from another angle. She lowered herself down to the floor; the carpet tickling her spine while the padding cushioned her backside like an overstuffed pillow.

Better. Much better. Carla reached between her legs and pulled the undergarment up past her belly button. So far, so good. But as she twisted around to try and grab at the tapes, she felt the underside of the diaper tickling at her thighs. How the hell had that happened?! She was doing it wrong, again!

Well past the point of frustration, Carla sat up only so she could throw herself back onto the carpet with a thud; her forearms brushing into the carpet in a miniature tantrum that resembled making a snow angel. Damnit! Damnit! Damnit! She might lose this job just because she couldn't diaper herself! How was she supposed to play Big Baby Bella if she couldn't get a damn diaper on? That was the rub though: babies didn't diaper themselves.

Carla picked herself off the floor and went to the door of the dressing room; opening the door just enough so that she could see Nick leaning against the wall, playing on his phone.

"Nick," she whimpered through the crack in the doorway. "Heeeeelp meeee." Nick looked up from his phone.

Her agent did a double take. "Seriously?" he asked. Her throat dry from embarrassment, Carla nodded. In the space of a heartbeat, Nick was a through the door and in the dressing room. Carla didn't even have time to blink before Nick was picking the repulsive padding up off the floor and walking towards the counter where the rest of her costume laid.

“Right,” he nodded, more to himself than to her. “Let’s do this.” Nick placed the rest of the costume on a nearby stool while still managing to knock some strips of lavender plastic and a bottle of spirit gum to the floor. “Over here”, he patted the countertop. “Come lay down.” Carla looked at him indignantly. “What?” Nick scoffed. “You asked for my help, now come lay down.”

The countertop was cold as she hoisted herself up onto it. Carla shivered a bit as she laid her head down using the pile of her adult clothes as a makeshift pillow, and closed her eyes. “The things I do for my clients,” Nick muttered loud enough for her to hear.

His hand gently moved hers away from her pelvis; she had already started to cover herself in a kind of second nature to preserve her own modesty. “Relax, you literally don’t have anything I haven’t seen before,” Nick reminded. “Or have you forgotten those couple of months when we tried being more than actress and agent?”

Sadly, Nick had a point. However in her current state of vulnerability, his words made Carla feel less like an ex-lover and more like a little girl at the doctor’s office. She shut her eyes all the harder when she felt her agent slip an arm under the back of her knees and push her legs up over her head. Just relax. Let him do his job. Carla heard just as much as she felt when Nick used his free hand to slide the diaper under Carla’s rump. She let out the slightest breath of relief as her naked skin touched the soft inside of the diaper and cringed a bit when she heard the accompanying rustling of the soft plastic.

“Just a second,” she heard Nick say. Carla didn’t even have time to respond before her senses were overwhelmed. The sickly sweet lavender scent from the diaper multiplied tenfold in her nostrils and her skin was assaulted with the sensation of cool flakes pelting her backside. Baby powder?

Carla opened her eyes to see Nick sprinkling baby powder on her, coating caramel skin with a layer of powdered sugar. “Hey,” she coughed, “what gives? I already smell like a baby.” Her nose twitched as she suppressed a sneeze.

“You’ll thank me at the end of shooting when you haven’t been chafing all day,” Nick told her. “Besides,” he continued talking after he lowered her legs and began sprinkling the stuff on her crotch. “I really think it’ll help you get into character.”

There was a knock on the door. “Miss Garcia?” A muffled voice from the hallway interrupted their banter. “Five minutes till they need you on set!”

“Thank you, five!” Carla called back, using theater lingo as a matter of habit. Her entire body tingled with embarrassment as Nick pulled the diaper up between her legs and pulled the tapes

taught over the front. She was acutely aware of the new and invasive bulk between her legs. His hands reached out to her, and she accepted them, pulling herself up into a sitting position before hopping off the impromptu changing table.

There was a distinct change in her gait, Carla noticed, as she took a few tentative practice steps in the bulky thing strapped around her waist. "How's it fit?" Nick asked. Carla's ears rang with the crinkle of thin plastic. She twisted her hips a bit and bent and stretched to see if the noise could be reduced through use; like breaking in a new shoe. It couldn't. On the bright side, it showed no sign of slipping off, so there was that at least.

"Fits pretty good," Carla replied before picking the purple baby dress and slipping it on over her head. "It's been awhile since I've worn one of these, so I don't know how it's supposed to feel." She smoothed the material down and adjusted herself so that her breasts fit comfortably. Absentmindedly, she ran her hand down the down the hem of her dress and noted that her hand hit smooth plastic far sooner than she would've liked. That could be a problem.

Not having the luxury of time to fully examine herself yet, Carla quickly went about the business of pinning back her hair and slipping a wig cap on so she could properly adorn the violet wig, pigtails and all.

Nick chuckled to himself as Carla finished getting dressed. "You have no idea how pathetic you looked; all naked and afraid, begging me to help you put on a diaper. You couldn't even get it on without me."

The eyes in Carla's head rolled so much she almost got a glance at her own brain. "Ass," she playfully spat as she pulled on the baby booty socks, complete with grips on the soles and frills on the edges. "When was the last time you wore underwear that required assembly?"

"More recently than I'd like to admit," Nick smirked, "but not nearly as recently as you. And I wouldn't call what you're wearing underwear. Underwear is typically...under something." He pointed his finger and waggled it between her dress and the diaper.

The actress caught her reflection in the full length mirror by the door. It was worse than she thought: Her "hair" was plaited into two dangling pom-poms, her feet were slipped into in little more than baby booties, and she was wearing a dress that Cindy Brady might call immature. She was a sight to behold, like something out of a cartoon.

The dress seemed to flare out, making a kind of triangle at her hips. Only, more to Nick's point, the hem of the dress wasn't covering much of anything. To call this thing she was wearing a



dress was an overstatement. It didn't even completely hide her diaper; it covered the top half at most. There was absolutely no angle where one couldn't see that she was heavily padded. Carla burned inside a bit once she realized she thought of the diaper as hers.

"Ay, dios mio! I'm a friggin' Kewpie doll!"

Nick took a spot beside her in the mirror; comparatively the Ward Cleaver to her Cindy Brady. "I think you look kinda cute, actually."

"I look like I'm two!"

"The two concepts aren't mutually exclusive," Nick said, adding a wink.

Jackass. Flirt. Jackass flirt.

"You've got less than five minutes to get to the set," he quickly changed the subject. "So quit stalling, and go get 'em!" Carla nodded, more to herself than to him, and shuffled over to the dressing room door and opened it, giving Nick one last look back over her shoulder before she left.

"What?" Nick teased, "You need me to hold your hand and walk you there?" If he said anything after that, Carla couldn't hear him over the door slamming.

"Nick..." she cursed, before storming down the hallway towards the set. The word "storm" may have been an overstatement, though. It was actually very difficult to "storm" when every step you took reminded you that you were dressed more like your toddler niece than the adult you actually were.

As embarrassing as it was being dressed like this, though, it was evident she was expected. Every crew member she passed in the hallway nodded at her politely as she passed, and when she asked, one of them confirmed that she was headed in the right direction. Maybe her earlier outburst in the hallway had gotten her a little bit of respect.

"Aha!" a voice rang out as she approached the stage. "There she is!" Carla's neck craned as she looked through the crowd of key grips, best boys, errand runners, and interns. Finally, she located the source of the voice. An older man, dressed most peculiarly, was rapidly approaching Carla; considering Carla looked like she wasn't quite ready for potty-training, that was saying something.

The old man was dressed less like what a director would actually wear to set, and more like what someone going to a costume party as “a director” would throw together. His brown riding pants were tucked into black boots. A too-tight banana yellow t-shirt clung to his torso. His wrinkled face wore dark aviator sunglasses and he had a curly mustache penciled on with what must have been eyeliner. His fire-engine-red beret was complimented by an equally obnoxious red scarf thrown around his neck. In one hand he carried a riding crop and the other held a giant megaphone that a cheerleader might use.

The eccentric old codger made an exaggerated and genteel bow. “Miss Garcia, I presume? How do you do?” Carla’s lips smiled politely, but her eyes were frowning. She cocked her head to the side like she was looking at him from the wrong angle. Who was this joker? Looking past the aviator sunglasses and into his eyes, something clicked. She had seen this man barking out orders on set just moments before she had been shoved into a dressing room.

“Mr. Hammerschmidt?!”

The director’s mouth frowned while his eyes smiled, “Mr. Hammerschmidt is my father’s name. I insist that all the cast and crew call me ‘Max’. If the children who we make these programs for can’t be expected to pronounce my name, why should you?”

“I’m so sorry,” Carla apologized. “I didn’t recognize you at first. You just look so...so...so...” Carla stuttered to a stop; using her arms to gesture at his outfit.

“Ridiculous?” Max supplied the words Carla couldn’t quite spit out. “Quite right. It’s a bit of a superstition I have. If am to expect my actors to be comfortable in their borrowed skins, I must create one for myself.” He gestured dramatically, like a Shakespearean actor past his prime and drew her gaze to her current wardrobe. “Most of this cast is portraying a kind of caricature of childhood, and thus...” he paused for effect, “...I must portray a caricature of myself.”

“Oh,” Carla said, feeling stupid. “That’s...cool, I guess.”

“Indeed,” Max agreed, though Carla had the sneaking suspicion he was agreeing with himself more than her. “We must all sacrifice for art. Speaking of which...” His riding crop hovered to the hem of her dress and lifted it so that her diaper was on full display. Carla froze, her arms rigid by her side as if the crop were a poisonous snake.

Max leaned in, examining Carla’s padded crotch as though it were a painting, before nodding. “Good!” he said, letting the hem of her dress fall back into place. “Everything fits as intended, and you clearly know how to follow direction. We were lucky to find you on such short notice.”

Her mouth suddenly felt very dry. “Thank you?” This was a kid’s show, right?

Max squinted his eyes from behind his sunglasses. "You also seem to be one of those Latinos. Also very lucky. Very popular with the target audience these days, thanks to that Dora cartoon and all. So, good for you! Very good. Very good."

Carla didn't say anything to that, but felt her anger rising at the older man's casual racism. Her hands became fists at her side. Her fearful trembling mutated into furious shaking. Max, for his part, did not seem to notice. Instead he looked over her shoulder, raised the megaphone to his face and then blared "Aha! There he is!" before walking right past her to the next cast member that had caught his attention.

Her blood hot, Carla whipped her body around; the hem of her lavender dress angrily fluttering around her. A soft, feminine hand on her shoulder kept her from waddle-storming after Max to tell the old bastard off.

"I know that look," the woman attached to the hand said to Carla. She too, was older than Carla, with several strands of her otherwise straw colored locks giving way to a middle aged gray. "Let me guess, Max just said something casually stupid and or offensive." Seeing a sympathetic soul, Carla nodded to the newcomer. "Yeah," the older woman sighed, "Max does that sometimes. I don't think he means to be that insensitive, he's just a little out of touch with everything. Still, I'm glad he's sworn off voting."

Carla frowned. "And you are...?"

"Justine," the woman held out her hand, "assistant director and one of the few people willing to put up with Max on a regular basis." Smiling politely, but noncommittally, Carla shook Justine's hand.

"Max can be a little like everybody's drunk uncle at Thanksgiving," Justine explained, "but he's brilliant and brings out the best in his actors. He wore his own paper-mache dinosaur head when he directed Barney & Friends and got a daytime Emmy nod for his work." Justine's nose wrinkled as if remembering a particularly bad dream. "Had to be taken off the show the next season, though, because the kids on set were heard repeating his theories on ancient Egypt. Long story...don't ask."

There's a fine line between "crazy" and "eccentric", the measure typically being success. Obviously, Max Hammerschmidt was "eccentric". The cold and calculating lizard part of Carla's brain buzzed with ambition. She could handle some old white guy calling her "one of those Latinos" every now and then if it meant regular work on an award winning T.V. show.

Justine leaned in closer and Carla flinched, preparing for yet another stranger to stare at her pelvis. Fortunately, the assistant director instead peered at the actress's face. "Hmmm, you should have been given some prosthetic eyebrows to exaggerate your facial expressions. Didn't Wardrobe leave them in your dressing room?"

Carla's brow furrowed in concentration. The memory of two little slivers of rubber and a bottle of spirit gum left being swept off the countertop as Nick readied to diaper her flashed in her mind's eye. Shit...

Carla began to fidget nervously. "Oh yeeeeeah. I might have accidentally misplaced those when I was getting my..." she racked her brain for an appropriate euphemism, but couldn't find any delicate way to get around it, "...diaper put on me. I must've misplaced them then," she confessed.

Justine pursed her lips. "You couldn't put it on yourself?" Carla felt her cheeks heat up with embarrassment. So she had been expected to diaper herself.

"I was getting into character...?" Carla lied; the uncertainty showing in her voice.

"Well, not a big deal," Justine replied. "I'll send someone over with replacements to make sure you're camera ready. Just wait here." Carla nodded politely and did as she was told. Camera ready. That was a laugh. No one would be noticing her eyebrows once they got a look at her bottom. Two people quickly ran up to her and glued the purple strips of silicone to her face, making her look even more like a cartoon character, while she continued to feel sorry for herself.

Before the spirit gum had even properly dried, Max's voice rang out over the set from his megaphone. "Alright, alright! Actors gather round for the Big Baby Bella scenes!" Carla walked over to the stage with purpose, the crinkling with each footfall buzzing inside her ears and the smell of baby powder wafting up from her bottom making her increasingly self-conscious.

"It's just the crinkling of money," Carla whispered a prayer to the acting gods. "I'm getting paid for this. I'm getting speaking lines, and I'm gonna be famous someday because of this. That's not baby powder; just the smell of success."

The set piece where they gathered looked like a giant nursery. Every trope was accounted for: giant crib, oversized rocking chair, a box of toys big enough to be a coffin, a bouncy harness that looked like it would fit Carla perfectly, a rocking horse the size of a Clydesdale and the usual assortment of gargantuan stuffed animals worth thousands of tickets at a carnival. All of it was painted in bright, simple colors. There was grass green carpeting, sky blue walls, and purple, yellow, and orange furniture pieces with not a single muted hue to be seen.

None of that particularly surprised Carla, given the subject and theme of the show; though Carla did feel a pang of dread when she spotted the adult changing table with diapers identical to her own stacked and waiting on the shelves beneath. Please let that be just for decoration.

“Ah, Miss Garcia,” Max Hammerschmidt motioned for her to come closer as she approached, “join us, please. Everyone, this is our Big Baby Bella for today. Miss Clark canceled after the incident at rehearsals yesterday.” There was an uncomfortable and knowing nod from the other actors, hinting at memories best not revisited. What incident?

Max motioned to the two actors directly in front of him, “Carla, meet Randy and Miranda. They’ll be playing your parents, lack of family resemblance notwithstanding.” The hairs on the back of Carla’s neck bristled, waiting for some form of ignorance to spring forth from Hammerschmidt’s mouth. Thankfully, none came.

The two actors playing Bella’s parents, Carla estimated, were about her age: mid to late twenties, early thirties at most. The campy old-age makeup couldn’t really hide that fact, even though Randy’s plastic looking eyebrows and mustache were dust bunny gray, as was the square top wig he had on. Miranda, likewise, wore a stiff wig which was styled in a ‘do June Cleaver might call conservative, and was a shade of tangerine that still came off as a bad dye job in a technicolor world.

The “Dad” costume consisted of a boxy sweater vest the same nauseating pickle green color as Carla’s dressing room. His loafers were similarly the shape and size of shoe boxes. “Mom” wore a dress that was an orange hue only a few shades lighter than her wig. Like Carla’s dress, Miranda’s costume flared outward giving it a kind of triangle effect; with the main difference that being you couldn’t tell what kind of underwear Miranda was wearing at a glance.

“Hello,” they each said, politely. Carla returned the courtesy.

“And this,” Max indicated the actress standing beside him, “is our star, Debra Donaghy. She’ll be playing the part of ‘Little Miss Lucy.’” Carla’s jaw hit the floor.

Debra Donaghy was quite obviously younger than all of them. If she was eighteen, she was only just eighteen. Her petite form only came up to Carla’s shoulder, exaggerating the perception. Her neon blue wig came down in bangs, framing her face perfectly and drawing the eye to her too perfect button nose. Equally as complimentary was her light blue plaid jumper with leggings and high tops that matched her wig. Carla bit the inside of her cheek to suppress a jealous scoff.

This was the lead? Carla had never heard of Debra Donaghy, but she was instinctively certain that this was some ex-child actor who had gotten the part by sitting in some producer’s lap. She looked so young, Carla bitterly thought, that they should trade roles; girl looked like she just got out of Huggies anyways. Maybe that was the point, though: To have adults acting like babies while a baby taught them how to act like an adult. Visual Irony.

“Hi,” Donaghy’s smile was saccharinely over-sweet and obviously fake, “I’m looking forward to us working together. This’ll be fun.”

Carla returned the fake smile. "Same!" She'd met enough girls like this one in high school. Real queen-bee-mean-girl type who would kick dirt in your face the moment the teacher wasn't looking. She hadn't come here to relive high school, Carla reminded herself. The trick was to just keep things professional and everything would be fine. This wasn't junior year of Drama Club all over again.

"Alright! Now that everyone is acquainted," Max spoke up, "let's get to filming." He looked over to Carla, but something about his gaze gave Carla the feeling that he was looking through her and not at her. "Now, Carla, I'm told that you haven't had a chance to review the script yet. Correct?"

Mutely, Carla nodded, suddenly feeling small and "less-than".

"Not a problem," Max waved his hand Carla's insecurity. "Your dialogue is fairly basic. Debra is doing most of the heavy lifting. We'll give you a peek where needed before rolling. But just in case," he went on, "we'll start with a scene where you don't talk."

Apprehensively, Carla licked her lips. "Okay. Let's go with that."

"Places, everyone!" Max shouted. "Come with me, my dear. Let's chat." Suddenly the kindly grandfather, Max offered his wrinkled hand to Carla, the little girl. She took it and Max escorted her over to the toy box big enough to bury someone in.

"This scene is fairly simple," Max explained. "Little Miss Lucy has just come to Little Land and she's staying with Mr. and Mrs. Petite. This scene is where we meet your character. You'll be playing with the blocks, and generally ignoring them while they talk about you. I'll have the camera following Debra around, but she's the only one allowed to break the fourth wall. You just act naturally. Understood?"

The directions were so simple, Carla didn't know whether or not to be insulted. Besides, she hated it when people said "act naturally".

"Play with blocks. Don't look at them or the camera. Got it."

Max's lips puckered like he was sucking on a lemon. Once again, he squinted at her, sizing her up. "Let's see if we can get this done in one take, shall we?" Carla toddled over to the pile of alphabet blocks and went down to her knees so she could begin properly playing with the little wooden cubes. The other thespians, meanwhile, gathered downstage and took their places closer to the camera.

“Quiet on the set!” Max yelled into the megaphone. Soon there was complete silence and Carla was left with only the sound of the padding on her ass rustling as she gently shifted her weight. God, she hoped that wouldn’t be picked up by the boom mics. “Roll film! Aaaaand action!” The briefest of pauses loomed as the actors launched into character. “And here’s our baby girl,” Miranda said as Carla stacked blocks in the background. “She’s the apple of our eye.”

“Gosh,” Carla heard Debra say with the most over-the-top delivery possible, “she sure is big, isn’t she? She looks bigger than me.”

“She is,” Randy recited the script. “She’s our Big Baby Bella.”

“How old is she?” Debra did her best impression of a curious five year old.

“Twenty-two,” both actors playing Bella’s parents spoke in unison. Carla froze and looked up at the scene, her eyes wide. Her character was supposed to be how old?!

Debra gave a fake, hollow laugh like a child who didn’t get the joke but knew something was supposed to be funny. “Hahahahaha! That’s too old to be a baby.” Carla had no idea that part of impersonating a child meant having the acting range of one. Why the hell wasn’t Max shouting cut?

“Don’t you know?” Randy continued as if Debra hadn’t fed him the line like a total amateur. “This is Little Land!”

“No one grows up in Little Land unless they want to,” Miranda said the next line. A wave of revelation hit Carla. The block she was holding tumbled from her hand, almost knocking down the pre-constructed tower.

Ay, dios mio! Fuckity fuck fuck! Carla wasn’t an adult playing a little kid who didn’t want to potty train; she was playing an adult that couldn’t be bothered to stop pissing her pants!

Debra kept the scene going, and Max wasn’t stopping her, despite her acting. “Gee whiz! Can I meet her?” Where was the cut? Someone should be yelling cut by now! Acting this bad couldn’t be considered star quality, even for a kids’ show.

“Sure!” both “Mom” and “Dad” said in unison. Randy and Miranda followed the blocking and walked over to Carla and began murmuring coos and pantomimed pinching her cheeks and being deeply fascinated by her block tower. Meanwhile, Debra was mugging for the camera and talking to the little tykes in their living rooms once this show aired.

“A big baby! I gotta see this for myself!” the ex-child star said to the camera. “Come on!” she waved the camera man to follow her. Debra trotted over to where the rest of the cast were waiting. Carla caught a glimpse of Debra staring down at her from the other side of the block

tower; the trace of a sneer on the star's face before the camera wheeled around and put them all in frame.

Carla did her best to continue playing with the blocks as the other cast members loomed over her. She wasn't supposed to pay attention to them, she reminded herself. Only the blocks mattered. Only the blocks. Become one with the blocks.

"So she's really a grown up?" Debra, as "Little Miss Lucy" asked.

"Oh yes," Miranda said, "but she never really wanted to grow up, so she's still just a big baby."

"But that's not how growing up works," Debra put her hands on her hips and stuck her bottom lip out in a bit of blocking and delivery that would make the Olsen Twins seem Oscar worthy.

"It is here," Randy kept the scene going. "So our Big Baby Bella still lives here with us. She sleeps in her crib, plays with her toys, and goes on walks with us in her stroller."

"Does she at least go potty like a big kid?" Debra recited.

"Oh, goodness no!" Miranda laughed. It sounded genuine, too. That was how you laughed. "Bella isn't potty-trained." Even though it was in the script, Carla felt incredibly humiliated. She leaned back on her heels and pulled the hem of her dress downward, trying in vain to conceal her studio-mandated shame.

"But whyyyy?" Debra as "Lucy" asked. If the embarrassment of being diapered on camera didn't kill her, Debra's "acting" just might.

"She's too busy playing to use the potty." Randy said.

"Speaking of which," Miranda paused, standing over Carla. Carla was now acutely aware of the cameraman pivoting around the scene and getting Carla's backside closer into frame. Oh no, oh no, oh no! She felt the actress playing her mother pushing down on her shoulder and Carla felt she had no choice; dropping to all fours. For all intents and purposes, she was improvising, and the first rule of improvisation was to never say "no".

Then, to Carla's horror, she felt the tiny hem of her dress being lifted. No! Miranda wouldn't, would she? No one had shared this blocking with her. She hadn't been warned of this! She didn't consent to this! This wasn't part of the deal!



Deal or no deal, Carla felt the weight of the camera's gaze upon her, and feeling no other choice, shuddered in revulsion as Miranda's hand reached in and gave the back of her diaper a firm squeeze and finished with a light pat as if to confirm

A complete stranger had without warning just violated her personal space, and touched her as casually as any parent might check their own child's Luvs. Carla cheeks flushed hot with humiliation at the act. The world went blurry as tears came unbidden to her eyes.

"Looks like Big Baby Bella needs a diaper change," Miranda's words rang out in Carla's ears. Diaper change?! They weren't going to do that on camera, were they? This was supposed to be a kid's show, not a porn shoot. Good God, what had Nick gotten her into? Her breathing became shallow and Carla felt herself beginning to break out into a cold sweat. Chest heaving, Carla inhaled deeply so that she could scream her head off. If no one else was going to stop this lunacy, she would. Thankfully, Max beat her to the punch.

"CUT! NO, NO, NO! WE CAN'T HAVE ANY OF THAT! THIS IS A CHILDREN'S SHOW FOR GOODNESS SAKE!"

The diapered actress leapt to her feet, her heart pounding in her chest. She wanted to give the director the biggest hug. Standing up from his chair, Max stomped over to her. Evidently, he wasn't in the mood for a hug.

Stone faced and silent, Max stood in front of them with his arms crossed. "Do you think so little of our target audience?"

"Excuse me?" was all Carla could think to say. She looked over her shoulder, to check if Debra was standing right behind her or something.

"Children aren't stupid, Miss Garcia," Max said. "They know what a wet diaper looks like; especially when said diaper has-fade-when-wet designs. You've still got all of your butterflies!" He pointed at Carla's padded crotch.

Carla lifted up her dress and gawked down at the gaudy purple and white garment wrapped around her pelvis. She hadn't noticed before, but all the butterflies on the diaper went from front to back in a straight line right down the middle.

They wanted her to pee in this thing? On T.V.?! No wonder her predecessor had quit so suddenly.

“And while we’re at it, your acting left something to be desired too.” the director criticized. “Your manager led us to believe you were capable for this role.”

Her pride at stake, Carla got defensive. “You told me to not say anything and play with the blocks.”

“Yes, but what choices did you make?” Max pressed. “That wasn’t Big Baby Bella playing with blocks and then getting her diaper checked, that was Carla Garcia pretending to play with blocks and getting her ass patted. You need to get into your character’s head, more, Miss Garcia.”

The absurdity of the situation was quickly being lost to Hammerschmidt’s scathing criticism. Her desire to defend herself was being superseded by the pain of her throat tightening up and feelings of helplessness as even more tears threatened to spring forth. Maybe she really wasn’t that great of an actress. Maybe she only thought she was good. Maybe the auditions had a point.

Max turned on his heel and took a few steps. He looked over his shoulder at Carla. “Walk with me.” Suddenly numb and shocked into submission, Carla obeyed and waddled after him.

“Your character isn’t some mentally invalid simpleton, Miss Garcia,” Max told Carla. “She’s both victim and victor. Like our target audience, she was faced with the pressures of growing up and was too afraid to even make the attempt. Just like a young child, she fears growing up because some part of her thinks that being more independent means her parents will love her less. The only difference between her and a real child is Little Land gave her the option to not grow up.”

This production had gone from kids’ T.V. to a course in societal philosophy. “What does that have to do with me playing with blocks?”

“At this point in the story,” Max elaborated, “Bella is in complete control of her tiny world in the same way that a baby is in control of its parents. She calls the shots. Her world is complete. She’s playing with her blocks in a wet diaper because she’s in control by being so utterly dependent. That’s why toddlers do it. Their diapers aren’t their problems. They’re their parents’ problems.”

“Her diaper isn’t her problem,” the words came out of her Carla before she fully realized she had said them. “Her diaper is somebody else’s problem. Lucy isn’t my problem,” Carla slipped into character suddenly, “she’s Mommy and Daddy’s problem. And I’m playing blocks the same way that a Queen might play chess while waiting for her subjects to come adore her.”

Max snapped his fingers. His eyes lit up. For an instant he was Professor Higgins and she was Eliza Doolittle. I think she's got it! "Exactly! Now you're getting it. Now, go ahead and wet yourself so that we can get this on camera."

Reality came crashing back down on Carla's head. He wanted her to do what? "Can't we just pour a cup of water down there, or something?"

"Water never really flows quite right," Max shook his head. "It must come from the source, so to speak; more authentic that way."

"I...I...I..." Carla reached for an excuse. "I don't have to go right now." It was true enough.

Max held his forehead in his hand and seemed aggravated. "Actors," he muttered. "Very well. Let's get you something to drink, and do another scene while things are...progressing. Someone get the big baby a bottle!" he yelled before walking back to his director's chair. "We only have the nursery to work with today! So let's get as many of those scenes in the can as possible. We'll do the invitation scene in five minutes!"

"Thank you, five!" a bevy of shouts came from the actors. Carla's voice was the meekest among them.

The almost motherly, but not unwelcome presence of the assistant director came up to the diapered actress. "Rough first scene," Justine said. It wasn't a question. "Don't worry, if he's berating you and having you overthink things about your character it means he likes you." She shoved a particularly large baby bottle- close to two liters by the look of it- into Carla's hands. "Drink this. Bottle is courtesy of the prop department for the kitchen scenes tomorrow. Apple juice is compliments of the caterer."

"Do I..." Carla gulped. "Do I really have to...you know?"

"Now you know why the last Big Baby Bella quit," Justine said before adding. "Just think of it as another way to get into character." A loud crash then drew Justine's attention and the assistant director jogged away to deal with some new disaster.

"MAKE THAT TEN MINUTES!" Max's voice echoed off the sound stage's walls.

"Thank you, ten!"

Now with a whole minutes left to her, and still wanting the job, Carla had little choice but to insert the rubber teat into her mouth, tilt her head back, and drink herself sick. Carla hated apple juice, but she was on a mission. She had never consciously thought of her throat having

muscles before but as she forcefully gulped down mouthful after mouthful of the amber colored liquid- a liquid very similar in color to what would end up splashing into her underwear – she felt she was really giving herself a workout.

Breathing through her nose and not stopping until the bottle prop was drained, Carla guzzled down the stuff with roughly five minutes left; letting out a hefty belch that echoed so loudly several cameramen and sound guys stopped and nodded appreciatively. “Good one,” she heard one of them compliment her. Not exactly the kind of positive feedback she was looking for, but okay.

“Someone’s getting into character,” Debra Donaghy sashayed over to Carla. “Careful or someone might accidentally think you’re enjoying this.” The girl’s eyes sparkled at Carla with a smug sense of superiority. “Max told me to come run some lines with you real quick.”

“I haven’t read the-“ Carla began.

“Don’t bother,” Debra held up her hand. “You’ve basically got two lines. First,” she said “you wait for me to stop talking, and you say ‘But I love my diapees’. Then, you wait for me to stop talking again, and when I hold out my hand, you take it and say ‘Otay’. Don’t fuck those up, and you’re golden. It’s so easy, even a...whatever-you-are could do it.”

Between the director being an accidental jerk, and the star of the show being a royal bitch, the inside of Carla’s cheek was starting to get sore. It seemed her initial instincts about Debra had been spot on. Guiltily, Carla found herself wishing that a pacifier was a part of her costume. At least then she’d be chewing on a piece of rubber, instead of the inside of her mouth.

A flash of chestnut hair, and glimpse of a well-worn clip on tie on the periphery of her vision let Carla know that Nick was nearby. “Well, she’s a little c-word, isn’t she?” Nick whispered.

“Nick...” Carla warned. “I’m in no mood.”

Evidently, Nick couldn’t resist himself. “What? Cutie is a c-word, too,” Nick said, winking. He paused a beat before continuing. “Sorry I’m late. Had a call to take, other clients, but I wanted to see how things were going for you.”

“Your phone died, didn’t it?” Carla called him out on his bullshit.

Nick blanched. “Yeeaaaah. Also, I was bored, so I figured I’d come watch. Kinda sexy getting to watch you get felt up like that. Your ass looks bigger, too. In a good way, I mean.”

Jackass. Flirt. Jackass flirt.

“That c-word,” Carla told her agent, “is the star of this little circus.”

“So?”

“Yeah, that’s so.” Carla replied

Her agent shook his head. “No. I mean, ‘so’ as in ‘so what? Richie Cunningham was supposed to be the star in Happy Days until Fonzie came along. Breakout characters are a thing, even in kid’s T.V.”

Bullwinkle. Popeye. The Smurfs. Elmo. All of them hadn’t been meant to be more than bit supporting characters, and they all got their day in the sun. Maybe Carla could make this thing work.

“Too bad this is a one shot deal, y’know?” Nick’s words were a sucker punch to Carla’s hope. If Carla had had any apple juice left in her bottle, she would have done a spit take just then.

“One shot deal? What do you mean a one shot deal?”

Nick cocked an eyebrow and then frowned. His normally casual demeanor was replaced with genuine concern. “Haven’t they let you read the script, yet? End of the episode, you get potty trained and move out. Whole show’s about Little Miss Lucy helping a bunch of people grow up.”

“Nick...” Carla whimpered. The giant baby bottle slipped from her grasp and rattled around on the floor. She didn’t know if she was cursing him or pleading for his help. It might have been little bit of both.

“Nothing I can do, babe,” Nick sighed, “This gig is a guest spot, not main cast.”

“Places!” the call went out from Max Hammerschmidt and echoed around the set.

The diapered actress sulked back to the set. This was supposed to be her big break, not a random guest spot where she barely got two lines. She no longer noticed the waddle she was forced to walk with. Nor did the crinkle of soft plastic ring in her ears. Her diaper wasn’t her problem; her dumb luck and high expectations were.

The next hour or so passed by in a blur. Carla mindlessly recited one or two word lines and set up strawman arguments on the merits of not growing up while the star of the show butchered children’s programming.

“But I love my diapees.”

“Otay.”

“CUT! Next scene! Are you ready to wet, yet?”

“I don’t wanna be a big girl!”

“I never thought of it that way.”

“CUT! Next scene! Are you ready to wet, yet?”

And so the dreary dance went.

“Alright,” Max said, “let’s see if we can do the potty training scene. Miss Garcia, you’ll be relieved to know that you won’t actually have to relieve yourself in this scene. We can add the appropriate sounds in post production.” The prop department carried in a comically large pink potty chair and placed it square in the nursery. “Unless of course you’re ready to wet, Miss Garcia. Then we can delay the potty training scene for the introduction and the diaper change scene.”

For what had to be the sixth time that day, Carla shook her head, even though by now the apple juice was working its magic and her bladder was crying out for release. Carla was just far too potty trained to use the garment imprisoning her waist. But her diaper wasn’t really the problem, was it?

“Very well, places!”

Carla walked to the giant potty and stood opposite of Debra. This was the big scene where Little Miss Lucy convinced Big Baby Bella to grow up and leave Little Town. To leave her diapers behind and go be a big girl.

Her diaper wasn’t her problem.

Debra leaned in close and hissed, “Look on the bright side, you can add today to your resume when you eventually get desperate and go into porn.”

Her diaper wasn’t her problem. This bitch was. Carla was better than her. She was a better actress. Hell, she was a better person. But she wasn’t going to get a chance to prove it; not now, anyways.

Her diaper wasn’t her problem.

“AAAAAAAAND-“ Max’s voice rang out. Time slowed to a stop as Carla had what is often called “A moment of clarity.” Just as “crazy” and “eccentric” are separated by degrees of success, so too is it the case when something inside someone “snaps” and something in

someone “clicks”. Between the ticks of the clock- when the potty training scene was about to be filmed- was when something in Carla either “clicked” or “snapped”. Time to roll the dice.

“ACTION!”

Carla finally relaxed her bladder, sweet relief filling her up as she filled her diaper. The thing gained weight as it absorbed her urine and was already starting to sag a bit. The newfound weight of the diaper felt like the weight of newfound confidence. If she could wet herself on command, she could do anything. The best part was, she felt like she was metaphorically pissing all over Debra’s performance. Also, it admittedly didn’t feel that bad.

“...that’s why it’s time for you to grow up, Bella.” Debra finished delivering the stilted, poorly written lines. “Now are you ready to go potty and stop being Big Baby Bella, and start being Big Girl Bella?”

“No.”

There was a pause. Debra shook her head in disbelief. This wasn’t in the script. “No? What do you mean no?! That isn’t in the scri-“

“I was fine until you came here, Lucy” Carla spoke over the brat in front of her. “I had a Mommy and Daddy who took care of me and I got everything I wanted. It was perfect! Nobody really wants to grow up, and I didn’t have to. But then you came along and ruined everything!”

Debra tried to improvise to keep up with Carla. “But...but...your diapers...!”

“My diapers weren’t my problem. Someone else always took care of them for me. I was a princess,” Carla said. She stomped up to Debra and poked her in the chest; the fantastic warmth in her nether regions emboldening her. “You. You’re my problem. I’m not growing up, and I’m going to stop you from making all the other people in Little Land grow up, too!”

“CUT! CUT! CUT!” Max was waving his arms frantically. “What on earth was that?”

Carla shrugged nonchalantly. “Just made some different choices is all.”

Max’s face now matched his tacky scarf and beret. “I don’t like going off script, Miss Garcia.”

“I had an idea about that, actually.” Carla told him. “The script sucks. This show sucks. It’s missing something.”

Max wouldn’t let her finish. “You’re fired, get off my set. I refuse to deal with some prima donnas.”

Carla lifted up the hem of her dress and gave the director a full view of her diaper; butterflies all gone. “I was just getting into character, Max. It’s like you said. Diapers aren’t my problem.”

Max’s eyes darted down to Carla’s pee stained crotch. Then, perhaps for the first time, he made proper eye contact with the girl and something in his face changed. It was as if he were seeing her for the first time. “What did you have in mind?”

“Show needs a villain,” Carla said. “It needs a brat to act as a counterpoint for Little Miss Lucy.”

Debra started to whine. “But Maaaaax-“

“Not now, Debra,” Max shushed. He returned his attention to Carla. “Go on.”

“It’s like you said, Max. Kids aren’t stupid. They’ll know a one sided argument when they hear it. Make Big Baby Bella be the one encouraging the kids to stay babies and Little Miss Lucy the one to talk them out of it. Little Miss Lucy wins in the end, of course.” Carla stuck her tongue out at Debra. Little Miss Lucy might win on T.V., but Debra Donaghy was losing this battle in real life.

Max started stroking his drawn in mustache in contemplation. “That’s not in the script,” he finally said, “but it might just be better. This could be just the thing we need, like an evil Dora or something.”

Carla smiled and shot Debra a look as Max began pacing. “Yeah, something like that.”

“We’ll have to do rewrites of course.”

“Of course.”

“I’ll see if the monkeys in the writers’ room can make the necessary script adjustments.” Max declared. “You go ahead and freshen up. Get out of that costume for now. I’m not sure how long it’ll take, probably an hour at least for the scenes I’m going to need.”



“No thanks,” Carla smiled, looking down at her wet diaper before giving the sodden thing a firm pat. “I think I’m going to go play with some blocks for a while instead. My Nick-Nick can change me on the table over there if I need it.”

The End.

**Retrospective: Some backstory. So the people over at Cushypen message me and say “Do you want to do a request thread?”**

**I say “Sure. What’s that?”**

**They tell me that subscribers submit ideas. I pick out the ones I think I can do a good job with. I write them up at no extra expense to the subscriber, and I get paid a little extra by the site for the effort. Extra money? People throwing ideas at me? My choice? Lack of guilt because the requests are free for the requesters? I immediately know I made the write choice!**

**Then this idea slips past the thread. Paraphrasing: “A down on her luck actress gets cast in a kids show like Lazy Town but it’s about growing up instead of exercise, and has to wear a diaper for the part. Aaaaand the person who submitted it is C.S. Fox.**

**In case you missed the memo, I’m a big fan of C.S. Pretty sure he could write “Girl gets put on diapers” on a cocktail napkin and I’d applaud it. It’s both a good idea and I’m getting serious “Notice me Senpai” energy. So of course it makes the cut.**

**The thing is, this story is also a stretch for me in so many ways: I write girls, but it’s a lot easier for me to write boys. More significantly, this is darn near close to realistic fiction. I typically stick with “magic” and “sci-fi” because unless the story is about two consenting adults engaging in ageplay after a fully informed negotiation or years of living a dynamic, it’s gonna be fantasy anyways. Might as well layer it on.**

**So boom. Challenge accepted.**

**I feel deja vu, so I feel like I’ve typed this out before: But please excuse me if I’m redundant.**

**Making this all believable seemed harder to me than “magic”. (I don’t have to explain magic) But I’m a big comic book fan. And the difference between the Silver Age and the Modern Age of comic book storytelling is the same weird shit happens on the page, but in the Modern Age, characters acknowledge how bizarre it is as a way of suspending reader disbelief.**

**I used the same technique here. Okay. Weird show. Oddly specific niche. And diapers**

would need to happen and be used because kink story. Soooo...oddly specific method director. BOOM! And he was soooo weird. But in acknowledging how weird he was, he became believable.

Alice wouldn't have been so freaked out in Wonderland if she'd been able to turn to the reader and gone "do you see this shit?"

But there still needs to be more to the story.

"POTTY TRAINING THE SERIES" was never gonna be a thing. And for all the hell I was putting this character through with the diapers and desperation, I figured I owed her a happy ending. But how to make that realistic?

Make her character within the show the villain. It's not just about potty training, it's about growing up. Lazy town had a villain against exercise, so Little Land could have a villain against growing up. (That Littles would not-so-secretly route for if this were a real thing)

But there's gotta be stakes. Carla's gotta be cool and have some kind of arc and agency besides "I thought I was a bad actor, and I'm not so I got the job". So she'd have to invent the role.

But that meant upstaging the hypothetical lead. So the lead of the series had to be just...the worst.

And on and on it went, piece by piece until I explained away every plausible inconsistency (beyond of course, would this ever exist in any format) that I could think of.

Ta-da!