

## THE REAL CUPID

Novelization by Jacob Le Doux

From the Script by Jimmy Duke Traynor

The sun was shining on yet another beautiful day. The birds sang their song of love while the bees buzzed about the neighborhood. The air seemed almost alive with the electricity of summer. There was love in the air! And it made Susan miserable.

It seemed like everywhere she looked she saw the smiling faces of happy couples. Humbug! Its like everybody found what they were looking for and Susan was still lost in the aisles, trying to find just the right brand, for just the right price.

She's a business woman after all. She's educated and well respected. She works hard and she plays hard. Susan knows damn well the proper qualifications that are necessary for a good man and a good relationship. Like in any business, certain standards must be upheld to maintain the balance and reach all quotas.

Time is the problem. When balancing a busy life, one always has to rob from Peter to pay Paul. There are certain things that just have to be done. So no time can ever be wasted.

Susan takes her time very seriously indeed. From the moment she wakes up, she's on schedule. Everything is planned out and routine right down to the minutes.

She grabs a quick bite for energy, and most of the time it's a shake on the run. She steps right into her shoes, grabs her briefcase and keys that were left by the door and she's gone. Not even that sticky gate out front gets in the way of a powerful and successful woman like Susan. A swift kick and she loses no more than a half a second, keeping in stride. Nothing stands in her way.

Maybe her rigid adherence to routine and steam engine determination had held her back a little through the years. When you bulldoze through life one could certainly see how something as fleeting as love might be missed along the way.

It wasn't as if Susan hadn't had a number of opportunities. But they were never the right ones. There were always "things" to get in the way. Either her suitor didn't live up to what she knew she deserved or they were clearly going to hold her down. Neither of which would fly in Susan's book.

She was a strong woman with many needs. Susan didn't compromise on the price of a purchase and she would certainly not compromise on love.

Susan was a beautiful woman too. She had thick, shoulder length black hair like the night sky, the bone structure of a goddess and the figure of a very dangerous woman. And the best part or maybe most unique part was she truly had no idea.

She pushed through life working hard with her wit and her mind. Her mother had instilled in her the power of a positive, confident outlook. She always tried her best.

When it came to her looks she was no different. Susan always dressed to kill for whatever the occasion needed, but had no idea how truly stunning she was, even if wearing even a sackcloth.

She shined from within and that couldn't be missed by any on-looker. But none of these qualities stopped Susan from feeling the pain of loneliness.

Very few people really, honestly want to be alone. Many say it and some act on it, but not too often are humans successful at singular existence. In this, Susan was no different.

Having someone to come home to would be great. Having someone to talk to and share her burdens with would be amazing. But where do these forbidden fruits grow and who has the time to go looking for them?

While it does seem like everybody needs love, not everyone needs the same kind of love. Some need a friend. Some can get by with a pet. Heck, some can get by with a houseplant, but not Susan. Susan was tired of the single life. Tired of not having someone there to eat with or just watch a silly or sappy movie with. She had friends, but she wanted someone to share her ENTIRE life with, not just a pizza.

Seeing couples strolling down the street or walking through the mall just infuriated her. She wanted that connection. But there simply wasn't time. She gets up goes to work, goes home, eats, cleans, gets ready for the next day, goes to bed, rinse, wash, repeat, etc, etc, etc. The monotony was mind numbing.

Now here she is again, at the end of another work day. Unwillingly soaking up the sunshine and the beauty of the day around her.

Heading to her car, she can't help but sulk at how happy the whole town seems to be on a day like this. For Susan, it was just another day on the wheel.

"Time to get outta these shoes," She mumbled to herself. Then she put the car into drive and headed off for what would surely be yet another boring night. She could already picture the sandwich that was waiting for her at home. She could almost taste the solitude.

Driving through her neighborhood Susan couldn't help but wonder when her time for love would come. Patience is a virtue, but she really wasn't trying to be that virtuous these days.

As she rounded the corner onto her street she suddenly had to come to a sudden and abrupt stop; a couple had walked right out into the road in front of her, without even looking. They were holding hands and lost in a loving conversation. But if she hadn't been so aware of her surroundings they might have been lost together in the ER.

Susan beeped her horn, getting no response but for a courtesy wave. That just made her even more angry. Their wave was as if to say, "Hey, sorry we almost put killing us on your to do list for the day."

Sheesh!

She took a deep soothing breath and waved back smiling. The couple smiled back and continued on their merry way. Probably off to whisper sweet nothings to one another all night. What a day! It was as if someone had been throwing lovebirds in her face since she'd left the house that morning. Everywhere she turned, she was reminded of how alone she felt.

"No worries," Susan said confidently to herself. "Out of sight, out of mind."

She just had to get home and find something loud on tv to distract her lovestruck mind. Easy right? Things were rarely ever that easy were they?

As she pulled up to her house, she was assaulted yet again, for the umpteenth time, by love's friendly slap in the face. Right there, right there in front of her own gosh darn house, a man was proposing on bended knee before his blushing beloved. What were the freakin odds, Susan wondered?

Many of Susan's neighbors were now out on their porches watching the happy couple. They were biting their nails, waiting to see the lucky lady's response. The parade of affection pouring in from the onlookers was just icing on this love charged cake.

"Next thing ya know, I'm gonna walk inside to an impromptu wedding being thrown in my kitchen," Susan thought to herself.

Before the man on bended knee could hear the response to his question, Susan was through the sticky gate and in the front door of her home. Shaking her head in disgust the whole way, she mumbled "good luck." Not that the couple could hear her or would care even if they did.

Leaning against the closed door, Susan let the cool embrace of her house wash away the scene outside. Another deep breath to expel the negative energy and she's feeling better already. She sets her briefcase down in its usual spot by the door and steps out of her shoes. Time for a nice, freshly made sandwich and a little tv.

She returns from the kitchen with plate in hand and picks up the remote. As she started flipping through the channels something caught her eye. Susan was about to start an interesting and very unexpected journey.

"What are we watching?" said an unexpected voice.

As the words were being spoken she was turning to find a strange and unimaginable sight. There was a funny looking man sitting across from her on the couch.

Susan had one of those big L-shaped sectional couches and the man was sitting directly adjacent to her on the other side of the couch, looking like he belonged there wearing a goofy-ass smirk on his face.

He had thick, long, red hair and a giant red beard that had to be at least a foot long easy. He was dressed like someone out of a Roman Empire period flick, wearing a toga of sorts, tied with a thick, red, bushy belt.

As Susan stared in disbelief, she realized that the man also had a very bright red heart on his chest, with a bow over his shoulder. The bow was silver and looked made by a destitute elf. The strange man also had several silver arrows with red tips tucked into his fluffy red belt. The whole ensemble had a dollar store vibe to it that only added to the absurdity of the scene.

Susan probably, almost definitely would have screamed her head off if the scene didn't seem so ridiculous and if she wasn't temporarily gripped by paralysis. But the silly man just sat smiling and looking at Susan, like he was expecting something from her.

As Susan started to get a grip on herself, she came to the realization that she was essentially trapped. She was now sitting in the corner of the sectional and this bizarre stranger could cut her off whichever way she tried to run.

She didn't know where to go so she crawled farther up the corner of the couch when she was finally able to speak, she asked, "WHO ARE YOU!?"

The strange, chubby man chuckled, "Really?" He waved his hand over his outfit like Vanna White on the Price is Right. "The outfit doesn't give it away?", he asked her.

Not really sure how to respond or what to do next Susan settled on yelling. Thinking this might be enough to shoe him off. Trying to sound as scary as she could, she shouted, "Get out of here or I'm calling the cops!!"

Chuckling even harder than he had been, the chubby, bearded Roman didn't move an inch.

"And tell them what?", he asked. "They won't believe you regardless of what you tell them. Then when they showed up I could just do this.."

In the blink of an eye, he'd disappeared right in front of her. There one second, gone the next.

Now in full-blown panic mode Susan was starting to question her own sanity. "Could it be me?", she wonders.

She pondered on it for only a second and then said to the room, "Oh no! I'm the one going crazy, huh?"

Then a disembodied voice responded to her question, "You are not crazy."

With that Susan started slapping herself in the face. Cheek to cheek she beat a pattern and spoke out-loud again. "Then I must be asleep!", she said to seemingly no one.

"Well, you're not asleep!" Another response from the bearded ghost.

"See..."

"Ouch!" He'd pinched her butt to prove she was awake. Susan was so surprised by the ghostly goosing that she jumped up in the air and landed on the other side of the couch.

"Maybe I'm just dreaming?" she wondered aloud.

"But I already pinched you. You're obviously awake.", said the invisible voice once more.

Hearing this Susan slid back to the corner of the couch with the sad realization that she must be awake.

Unconsciously rubbing on her pinched cheek she asked, "Well, where did you go? How can you even do that?", no answer came.

She called out "Hello?" and again received no response.

Suddenly the empty room seemed that much more welcome and she thought to herself, "Now might be a good time to make a dash."

Glancing around she saw nothing but her living room and stood up. Lifting one foot in the air like a kid about to run for it, she asked again, "Are you still there?"

Nothing.

She lightly put her foot down and started to carefully put pressure on the floor board. She didn't want some squeak giving away her great escape.

Sneaking out of her own house had just become priority number one on her to do list. She tensed her muscles and was prepared to make her move.

"The heck with everything!", she thought. Susan was just gonna run straight to the front door and get out of there. She could think about trying to make sense out of all of this later when she was far, far away.

She took a deep breath, counted to three, and as she was about to make her move, the mystery man came walking back in the room with a plate in one hand and a beer in the other. She screamed in shock, then jumped back to her spot on the couch, defeated. She'd been so close.

"You weren't going anywhere were you?", the intruder asked with a chuckle.

She didn't know how to respond or what to say, even if she did. This was crazy, but Susan couldn't help but think that this all might actually be happening. Much to her dismay, it was not really all in her head. At least the weirdo who invaded her house seemed more goofy, then demonically frightened or like some psycho like Freddy Krueger or Jason Vorhees or anything in that ballpark. One really never knows. But thank God for the small stuff.

"Where did you get the sandwich and the beer?", she asked. She really wished she had a better response to all of this but she couldn't help but ask.

"The one you threw up in the air when you saw me looked so good I had to make one for myself!"

"But what about the beer?", Susan said. "I don't remember having any beer in my house at all!"

Smiling he nodded and said, "Yeah...that's cause you don't have any! I had to pop into your neighbor's house for the beer." He then cracked the top of the can and continued, "You really should stock up on some of the stuff. Ya know, for guests and what not."

Susan was dumbstruck at his audacity. "Guests? I wasn't planning for any company though!" She said this very pointedly.

"Yeah, I know. I'm here to help in that department though. Well, I was anyway. I'm supposed to and all, but I'm just not really in the mood anymore." The man was rather dramatic.

Susan was trying hard to soak up the whole crazy scene and wring some kind of sense out of it. It wasn't looking promising.

"Ok, so I saw you disappear. Are you some kind of magician or something?", she asked.

"What?", he responded scoffing. "Magician's have capes. You don't really get the whole outfit ensemble I've got goin on here do ya, huh? You'd kinda think it would be obvious." Standing up, he began to show off his duds.

"So...you're... " Susan was trying. "This is all so tough to swallow. Hold on give, me a minute."

"Cool!", he responded nonchalantly, then picked up the remote to the TV and started flipping through channels. "Any horror movies on?", he asked.

"Come on, really!", Susan said in disbelief. " If you are who I think you want me to believe you are..."

"Go ahead!" His smile grew wider and wider in anticipation. "You can say it!"

"Cupid?"

"That's me!" Now his grin was ear to ear.

"Horror movies?"

Cupid takes a bite of his sandwich and gives her a questioning look. "What's wrong with horror? I like Sci-fi, also just please, pleeeeeease none of those sappy love stories. Ek!" The irony was a little funny.

"Please God! Just let me wake up!!!", Susan exclaimed to the ceiling.

Taking another big bite of his stolen sandwich cupid started to speak, "I ask..." Then he holds his finger up because he had way too much sandwich in his mouth and needed to chew. "I asked him a few times for that as well. Ya know this job has gotten so much harder through the years. Seems almost too much every now and again."

"Wait... You talk... to God?", Susan was in awe. He just didn't seem the type.

"He gave me this job after all. I mean, I wanted something cool like the Grim Reaper or something ya know. But No, Ralph got that job." The last part was said with not so well hidden disdain. "Hey, times are tough. What's a guy to do? Plus, those psych evals always go the wrong way."

Susan had heard enough.

"Please! Please stop talking!", Susan screamed.

She forgot about running, but at that very moment it had seemed like a great time to get back to the plan. She tried to look casual as she sat back in her seat on the couch. She didn't want to seem too obvious. But this scenario was all too much and the time to move was now.

Then, with her decision made, she suddenly jumped up and ran straight for the door, moving as fast as she was able. Susan couldn't get out fast enough.

Thankfully, Susan was almost always able to park her car directly in front of her house. She didn't wanna lose any time getting away from this madness.

She opened the car door and jumped in fast, like the ground was lava. Before she was able to get the key in the ignition, Cupid suddenly appeared beside her.

It was like something out of the old "I Dream of Genie Show." Cupid just popped in wherever he wanted apparently.

"Listen! If you're going to the store...", he started.

But Susan instantly began screaming. She had no interest in his requests. This was crazy. How could this be happening to her.

Cupid however seemed totally un-phased by her reaction and simply waited for the screaming to die down before continuing.

"Are you done?", he asked like a patient parent dealing with a petulant child. "I was just going to ask you to pick up some more beer. Geez lady! I really hate stealing from your neighbor. It is a sin you know?" With that final ridiculous request, he disappeared as quickly as he'd appeared.

Susan began hitting the steering wheel in frustration. It looked like there was nowhere to hide from this calamity and she knew it. Not with Cupid's apparent ability to pop in and out as he pleased.

Then, as if on cue, he abruptly popped back in again as she was having the thought. She couldn't help but cry and whine a bit.

Cupid, still unconcerned with her present mental state, asked, "Hey, did you want me to record the show I'm watching so you can watch it when you get back? It's really good!"

Susan suddenly became overwhelmed by everything and started shaking and crying even harder.

"Damn! You're a big baby!", Cupid said. "Fine!", he blurted, then he finally poofed off for real.

Susan tried hard to calm herself doing some simple breathing exercises. But she was still shaking so badly that she was still having trouble getting the key into the ignition.

With the car finally started, she took off. She didn't really have a destination, she just needed to get away from the nonsense of the situation and fast. She had to clear her head and try to figure out what was going on. Was she going crazy? Or was there really a six foot bearded cupid popping into her life all of a sudden. Crazy, she hoped.



At the house next door to Susan lived Martha Waters and her husband, Burt. Susan didn't know them well, but they seemed sweet and always said their hello's when sighting one another.

They were a lovely older couple who were enjoying their time together during retirement.

That day, Martha was elbow deep in the sink washing dishes when her husband Burt came in the room and opened the fridge. He looked into the refrigerator with confusion, that quickly evolved to anger.

Turning to his wife he asked, "Did you take my beer?"

After taking some time and driving around, Susan found herself the victim of her own shattered rationale. She decided it most definitely had to be some crazy daydream. There was no other explanation for it.

As she drove around listening to Sade and trying to find her happy place she came to the conclusion that she was acting foolish and decided to head back to her house. It is often all too easy to rationalize the things we don't understand.

Susan found her normal spot empty, as usual, and parked out front of her house. She was back at the scene of the crime, feeling hesitant.

Saying a silent prayer she headed inside. She stopped immediately in the hall by the door and waited, listening.

She couldn't hear any movement and she didn't see Cupid on the couch or any other mystical creature for that matter. Thank God.

It truly was all in her head. She hoped.

She breathed a very welcome sigh of relief. Then she heard the toilet flush and was filled with dread. She let out another little whimper just as Cupid came walking out of the bathroom and into the living room.

"It was really good going in, but it came out horribly BAD! I would wait awhile before going in there! Heck, I'd avoid that whole area of the house for now! PHEW!!!" He said this while waving away the invisible fumes. Then he proceeded to sit back down on the couch and continued speaking.

"I've been watching some good stuff while you were gone. Oh and by the way, that new Indie film by Jimmy Traynor "The New Devils", it's not a horror movie at all. False

advertisement I tell ya!" He said all of this with a chuckle and a shit eating grin.

Susan was still standing by the door. She was a little too scared to move and still shaken from the stark reality that this was all real and just waiting for her to have returned.

"What's wrong?", asked Cupid. Seeing the dread imprinted on her face.

"Why me?", Susan replied.

Cupid looked at her as though she was the most adorable puppy ever. "I already told you", he said.

"Please tell me again! Please!" Susan's head was spinning with this hard to swallow pill. She was getting lost in the fact that this was all too real.

"Well, like I said, you're my new assignment. But we both know that you don't even believe in love. So why should I bother?", he asked.

While Cupid was starting to do his version of explaining, Susan was making her way into the living room. She was thinking about what Cupid had just said. But before she had time to make a response to his comment, someone knocked at the front door.

Susan didn't even have time to get to the door before the knob started turning. Susan looked to see her good friend Anna walk into the house. She and Anna had known each other for a long time now and walking right into Susans house was one of Anna's many known traits.

Sadly Anna also looked like she'd had a bad day.

"You aren't going to believe this!", Anna burst out. No "hi!", no "how are ya?", just straight to Anna's own problems.

Susan didn't really know what to say. She was too dumbfounded with the fact that Anna hadn't seemed to notice Cupid's big hairy ass sitting on the couch.

Susan was at a loss for words and just pointed towards where the big bearded mass was sitting. Anna definitely didn't seem to get the hint.

"Yeah, you're right. I need to sit down a minute. It's been a day!", Anna said walking over to the couch.

Anna walked directly to where Cupid was sitting and looked as though she was about to plop down on the couch right into the hairy cherub's lap. But just as she started to sit down, Cupid popped out of existence again.

He disappeared from where he was sitting and suddenly reappeared on the other side

of the couch.

"What!", Susan called out. She was so confused.

"That's what I said. I mean, why me?" As usual Anna was oblivious to the woes outside her personal bubble.

Cupid turned to Susan and smiling said, "She can't see me."

Susan was in shock. This whole scenario just kept getting worse and worse. It was starting to feel like a three ring circus. How was she supposed to keep her sanity in all of this.

"I don't believe this!", Susan exclaimed.

Anna continued, "You know where I'm going with this huh!?" As usual Anna remained wrapped up in her own little affairs. "I mean, every time I sleep with a guy, they get attached! I can't help being so desirable! And I need a place to crash by the way. 'Cause now, yet again, I have to have maintenance change the locks at my place and then figure out how to get the guy out of my apartment!"

Again Susan had no time to respond before Cupid jumped back in.

With this recent news flash, Cupid jumped up off of the couch very excited.

"Whoa, whoa whoa, she is not staying here!", he said. "I can tell just lookin at her that she's a remote hog and I have this whole week planned out for us!"

Trying to think fast, Susan was lost in thought. Then she heard Anna start snapping her fingers. They were right in Susans face.

"So...?", Anna asks still snapping.

"So what?", Susan replied, still not quite following the conversation.

"Is it cool if I chill here for a few days?"

Cupid sounds off a resounding, "No!! No, no, noooooo." He's making a lot of noise but he knows that only Susan can hear him.

Susan starts getting shaky.

"Oh my God!", Susan cried out in desperation and started too lightly weep again. "This is... it's just... this is just...", Susan fell into sobs. As Susan got worse, Anna jumped off her side of the couch to comfort her friend.

"Are you ok?" Anna asked as she tried to help Susan. Putting her arms around her, she

lead her to sit down.

"No!", Susan quickly replied. " I need some serious help. My head..." Susan put her hand to her brow and leaned back into the cushions.

Now, finally, Anna was concerned.

"Here you are listening to all my B.S. and you look like you're gonna croak or something", Anna said. "Hold on girl. I'll go get you something."

Cupid stares hard at Anna as she leaves the room. "Look what you did!" He shouted, certain that Susan's sudden meltdown was owed to nothing more than Anna's abrupt arrival.

But much to his surprise, Susan turned to him with tears in her eyes and responded, "You are the one!". Somehow Cupid just couldn't wrap his head around the accusation.

"What did I do?", he asked incredulously.

"Are you serious?", was her only response. But he still couldn't figure it out.

"She's the one who brought her problems in here!", Cupid shouted pointing hard at Anna. "I just asked for a beer!"

Susan just sat there and held her head in her hands, while repeating the ever faithful mantra of the hopeful, "This is not happening. This is not happening. This is not happening."

At that moment Anna returned to the room offering Susan some little white pills and a bottle of water. "Here have these. You'll be fine.", she said.

Cupid wasn't done yet.

"Oh, and by the by, that whole, just hooking up thing, everyone is doing..." He threw angry punctuations into the air behind his words.

"If I ever found the person who started that...OH..." Then he started dancing around like a surefooted boxer throwing jabs and hooks as he continued. "...It would be so, ON!", punch, jab, punch-punch, "...makes my job so much harder!" Cupid was still punching the air.

"Take that! and That! and maybe .... ", Cupid goes for a super high kick and then decides against it. All the while Susan was just losing more and more control of herself as he continued.

"Well... Maybe no high kicks in this outfit.", he said. "But trust me they'd be on the GROUND!" Cupid finished his rant with a few well placed air stomps.

Susan began to sip the offered water while focused on her breathing. She had already popped the pills and just had to give it a minute.

"It's a good thing I'm here", said Anna. "Looks like you really need me."

"No! She doesn't!", yelled Cupid.

Anna stood and turned to Susan. "I'll just go get my stuff from the car. You gonna be ok?", she asked.

Susan had no response. She just shook her head sadly.

Anna headed out the door to the car to get her things and Cupid quickly threw the door closed behind her and locked it.

"Ha!", He exclaimed. "She isn't getting back in!"

Susan hopped off the couch and walked over to Cupid. She was just starting to regain some composure. Either way, she was gonna reach her limit of coo-coo soon.

"How do I get you to leave?", she asked.

"Leave!... But I literally just got here", said Cupid.

That was Not what she wanted to hear. So she took a slightly different approach.

"What would make you move on?", asked Susan.

"Nothing!", he replied. Then paused a second. "For one thing I like you. Besides, I can't go anywhere until this assignment is completed."

"Well, hell, in that case you were wrong. I do believe in love", she said hastily, but not convincingly.

"Liar!", he responded quickly and with a laugh. Letting the word ring out a note.

"No. Really! Give me someone, anyone!" She had an air of desperation in her voice.

"What you mean, anyone. Like this is a bet or something?", he asked.

"Well, Yeah!", she said. "If I can prove that I fell in love, then..."

Cupid wasn't so sure. "Well for this to work they'd have to be in love with you, too, ya know. And even if it did work, what would I get if I win?" Cupid asked in response.

She had to think fast. "Ok, if you win and I can't make it work, then you get to move in

and pick all the movies. And I will load the refrigerator up with beer for you!" She threw the last bit in like she was talking to a child. Susan felt confident that she could reach this goal like everyone that came before it. Not that it would be easy.

All the while that Susan and Cupid had been discussing the bet, Anna was still outside trying to get in.

She was stuck outside behind the locked door, but yet kept trying the handle like she wasn't sure. It seemed like she started to get the idea when she started shouting.

"Susan! Suuuuusannnnnnn! Open the door my hands are full." Then she started to kick the door as if it might make things move quicker.

Cupid was annoyed by the sounds of Anna's impatient kicking and throwing his hand up gave a quick flick of the wrist and a finger snap.

"Quiet!", shouted Cupid. And it was.

Susan gave him a questioning look.

"I'm thinking... I'm thinking... about our possible bet.", he said. "It was hard to focus with all that noise."

Then Cupid opened the door revealing Anna frozen at the thresh-hold like a statue.

"What about her?", asked Cupid.

Susan didn't miss a beat this time.

"She's gone!" said Susan. "Just you and me for as long as you want.", she said. Then Cupid closed the door on Anna once again.

"And I get to pick the person?", asked Cupid with a sly grin.

"Anyone!", said Susan too hastily. "Just at least give me a chance to make this happen! I know I can do it." She begged with her eyes.

Cupid put on a tough thinking face while pulling at his beard. Then he smiled and said, "OK! You've got a deal. And I've already got a plan. Let's go meet him. He's out back!"

With that said, Cupid and Susan disappeared in the blink of an eye and before Susan even has time to be worried.

Susan and Cupid went winking out of the house just as Anna snapped back to reality. Finding the door now unlocked, Anna headed inside with her stuff, to an empty home.

Henry, the homeless man, had seen better days. But he had certainly seen worse as well. He was behind Susan's house that day, trying to find a bit of comfort on a seemingly lovely summer day.

It had been awhile since Henry had a bed to rest in. While being homeless is never easy, it sure can help a little when the sun is shining and you can find a nice spot to relax.

Though the beauty of a day like that can also very easily remind you how crappy things are.

He was just hoping to get some sleep before the sun set and it got too damn hot for comfort. He also had to take care of some urgent business. Unbeknownst to Henry things were about to get interesting.

Susan and Cupid popped into place behind Susan's home looking directly at the disheveled heap of Henry the homeless man.

"Well, here he is!", Cupid said with the sweep of an arm and a goofy grin. "Don't worry. He can't see us." His goofy smile was anything but reassuring.

"He looks like he's in pain.", Susan remarked seeing the funny look on Henry's face.

Cupid bit his lip and with a slow nod replied, "I'm pretty sure he's going to the bathroom."

"Ewwww, really?" Susan was spinning with the absurdity of today's events.

"Oh my God! That's Nasty!", she exclaimed and could barely contain her disgust.

"What's he gonna do?", Cupid squeaked. "There's no toilets out here.", he said this while looking around as if to prove his point. "It's an alley!"

"Are you serious?" Susan asked. This was bound to be much harder than she expected.

Cupid was losing patience and seemed to find this whole affair much more amusing than Susan did.

"Alright look, look...", Cupid said while slowly wandering away. "I'm gonna go pop in on your neighbors. Ya know, the ones with the beer. I'll be there until you get that girl out of your house. Oh, and by the way you have one week." He said this with a smile and a curtsy.

Susan was floored.

"What!", She yelled. "One week!" How could she possibly pull this off in only a week. She couldn't help but stutter when she continued. "W..w..what..well, that's not fair!" It was all she could think to say.

"Fair!", Cupid barked with laughter. "Life's not fair babe. Deal with it. That was my deadline and now, thanks to your little deal with me, it's yours!", then he blinked away again. But only for a split second. Returning with that growingly annoying smile he said, "Oh by the way, he can see you now." With that he was gone again.

Susan was left staring at a rough looking character laying on the ground. Henry had his eyes closed and that was the only reason he wasn't aware of her yet.

How could she fall in love with this man. He could have any number of known diseases. Not to mention how many unknown ones. This is crazy she thought for about the millionth time that day.

Before Susan could fully gather herself for a first statement. Henry opened his eyes.

"Oh! I'm sorry, I'm, I'm..", Henry was confused and perhaps a little scared. He looked more worried than she did. He couldn't afford to get locked up or worse.

"It's okay.", she said with the hopes of reassuring him. Her mission had just begun and she couldn't afford to scare him off.

"I was just trying to find some comfort", Henry replied. "I didn't mean no harm! Please, don't call the police ma'm. I'm leaving."

"No, it's okay.", Susan said again. This time she put a little more assurance into her voice. She didn't wanna freak him out and he seemed docile enough. So she continued, "Are you hungry? Did you, maybe, want something to eat?"

"Yeah Right!" Henry responded in doubt. He wasn't falling for that one again. He stood up and began looking around waiting to see how this was a setup. It had to be a set up.

"I go in your house and THEN you call the police. I don't think so! No thanks." Henry had plenty of reason to be wary. He started inching away.

People weren't usually nice like this when you look like Henry did. And that was only one reason to be concerned.

"I'm not gonna call the police.", Susan said in another effort to reassure him. "But look at it this way, even if I do call the cops, you'll wind up with a warm bed to sleep in either way."

She knew it sounded better in her head before she said it out loud but oh well. He appeared to be weighing it out.



Henry stood there hesitating for a moment. He was thinking it over. He doubted he would wind up being put in a worse position, then he was already facing.

She could be a crazy killer and try to do the whole misery thing. But that was pretty unlikely. Plus, she was right. Even if she called the cops, he'd just get a nice cot for the night. Beats the streets.

He was skeptical but he was in.

He nodded in acceptance and they headed towards the house.

Listening in from up on the roof of Susan's house was Cupid. He sat with another sneakily stolen beer in hand and a smile on his face. "This could actually work.", he thought to himself. " But either way, it oughta be interesting."

Then Cupid cracked the beer in his hand just as Henry and Susan went inside.

Susan's wayward friend, Anna, was in the kitchen at the back of the house thinking about her relationship problems. She heard the knob on the back door turn. Sadly for Henry, he was the first through the door.

"The day I'm having...", is all Henry heard before pain and darkness.

"You picked the wrong house!", was Anna's second statement. But it came just after the big bang.

Anna moved with lightning fast reflexes. As soon as she'd seen this strange man walking into her friends back door, she grabbed the nearest object to use as a weapon.

Unlucky for Henry, it was a big, metal frying pan. It made a big, funny noise when it met up with Henry's face. Though the noise would probably have been a lot funnier if it hadn't knocked Henry out, flat on his butt.

Susan came following just a few too many steps behind Henry. "What are you doing?!", she yelled at Anna as she came in through the threshold.

"Protecting us!", was Anna's defiant reply.

"I invited him in!", Susan shot back.

"Are you nuts? He's a stranger!", Anna was sticking to her guns.

"Yeah, and so are those guys you sleep with on the first night you meet them!", Susan said with maybe a bit too much venom in her voice, as she knelt down to check on Henry. He was groaning and totally out of it.

Anna was hardly affected by the harsh words. She didn't even hear them. She was too busy grossing herself out at the moment. She couldn't help but picture Susan and this scruffy bum bumping uglies.

It was a nasty thought.

"Get some ice, please." Susan asked.

Anna was pulled out of her daymare by Susan's request.

Anna turned to get the ice from Susan's freezer. She just couldn't shake the thought of the funky coupling. She had to know.

"Oh My GOD!", Anna nearly shouted. "Is that what this is?" She was still seeing her mental show. "Sweetie I can hook you up with some far better guys than this. Many things better than this!" Anna grabbed the ice pack as she spoke and handed it to Susan.

Susan was shaking her head. "No! He just needs my help.", she said, accepting the ice pack from Anna.

"And so you bring him into your house?", Anna asked, still holding the frying pan prepared for anything. "This is crazy!"

"I know, but I have to do this.", Susan replied.

At this point Henry sat up off of the floor, looking a little starry-eyed. Susan handed him the ice pack and he put it to his head.

"What's your name?", Susan finally asked, realizing she never had.

"Henry.", he replied weakly, rubbing his head.

"Jesus!, Anna exclaimed. "I at least get their names before I let them in the house."

Susan gave her a look of utter doubt

"Most of the time I do.", Anna said abashed.

Henry gave Anna a strange look, then he started to scratch hard at the uninjured side of his head.

Anna spoke up again, "Oh Great! Henry's got fleas. And... what the hell is that smell?"

As Susan met eyes with Anna she covered her mouth, as though she couldn't actually put it into words. As they both looked back at Henry Anna put it together quickly.

"Oh my GOD! Susan...!"

"Hey, if you were my friend...you'd try to understand. You'd.."

"What!?", Anna asked. "I'd what? Jump off a bridge with you? 'Cause that's what this feels like. Look I don't get this at all, but I am your friend. So I will support you.", then a beat, "But from a distance." With a final glaring look at Henry, Anna walked out of the room.

Susan followed.

Henry still sat on the floor of the kitchen, holding an ice pack to his bruising head. He remembered the chicken leg in his pocket that he'd found earlier, a couple streets down. He pulled it out and put it up to his nose. He smelled it. Still good.

In the living room, Anna was half hazardedly stuffing all her items and clothing back into the bags she'd brought in from her car. It was a small struggle. Mostly because she still held the frying pan. Her plans to stay had changed and in a hurry.

"You just have to trust me.", remarked Susan.

"I swore to myself I would never move back in with my parents.", Anna complained. "But it looks like I don't have a choice." She handed the frying pan back to Susan, "I don't know what's going on here, but good luck."

"Look, I know what I'm doing. Eventually, it'll all make sense!", Susan hoped there was confidence in her words.

"I hope so!" Anna replied. "I'll check back in on you later, to see if Homeless Henry has killed you or not.", Anna was hoping for not.

"Ok. I'll call you." Susan helped Anna through the door. She knew how this had to look, but she was also on a very limited time frame. "Bye!" She said one last time and closed the door on Anna's perplexed face.

With a sigh of relief and exhaustion, Susan headed back to Henry in the kitchen. He was still sitting by the door, holding the ice pack to his head.

He still looked a little scared, like a deer in headlights. Then Susan thought about the fact that she was still holding on to the deadly frying pan.

She put it behind her back. Ignoring the chicken leg in his hand, she asked, "So, did you want something to eat?"

Henry shook his head. "No. I'm ok." He just sat there staring at his chicken leg. He was a sad sight.

"You can get up ya know.", she told him.

"I'm ok right here." He wasn't moving.

Susan wasn't sure what to say or do next. Anna was right. This was all so crazy.

"Ok.", she said. "I know it's been a long day. If that's what you want, that's fine. But you know you're welcome to come chill on the couch where it's a little more comfortable. That's where I'm headed", she added hoping that he might get the urge to join her. She had to connect to him somehow.

"I'm ok right here.", Henry said again sounding frail.

"Ok. Suit yourself.", Susan responded. She didn't know what else to do. So she left Henry sitting on the floor, clutching his chicken bone for dear life and went back to the living room still holding the weapon. She sat on the couch and tried to brainstorm a way to work things out.

How did this happen to her? How was she going to make what was essentially an arranged marriage with a homeless dude work in everyone's favor? She had to get rid of Cupid and this was the only way to do it. Maybe she was a little hasty with her bet. She'd just have to give it her best. That was her final thought as the craziness of the day over came her and she drifted off on an unexpected nap.

At the house next door Susan's neighbor, Martha, was just getting home from an evening run to the local grocery store. She brought the bags into the house and headed to the kitchen. When she flipped the light on to put away the groceries, she found her husband had been hiding in the dark with a broomstick clutched to his chest. She gave a start.

"Oh! Burt! You near scared me to death!", she exclaimed with an edge of worry to her voice. Then she put the bags on the counter.

He stood right up, his eyes fogged over with circles beneath them. He must have been sitting there in the dark the whole time she'd been gone and she'd been out well before she hit the store. He looked half out of his mind.

"I know somebody's been stealing my beer." His voice seemed almost haunted. "One by one they keep vanishing. I'm staying right here to find the culprit." Burt then retook his station as the refrigerator guardsman.

Martha watched her husband with love and concern and a little bit of amusement. As she turned the light switch off again she said, "Alright, goodnight hun." Then she slipped out the door.

"Goodnight.", Burt whispered to no one. Alone in the dark he waited.

Susan awoke in a place of comfort. She had a warm blanket, the sweet spot on the couch and great lack of frying pan. She was all wrapped up like a sleepy butterfly.

Could it all have been a dream she wondered? Cupid, Anna, Henry, all of it, could it all have been a crazy daydream? She must be working too hard. Susan made a pointed effort to remember to slow down. To take it easy for awhile. Then the bubble popped when she heard someone in the kitchen.

Henry had gotten no rest as he massaged the tender spot on his assaulted dome. He kept looking at the door wondering why he wasn't leaving. The nice lady, Susan, wasn't the one that had hit him with the teflon bat. It was her loud friend. But still, where could this possibly be going that ended well. He should have left. He should have run for that matter. Instead, he made breakfast food he found in the fridge.

Henry was finishing up some eggs when Susan walked into the kitchen with a look of disbelief plastered to her face. She couldn't help but feel disappointed to again realize this whole thing was real. But she wanted desperately not to show it on her face.

"Morning!", she said, with maybe too much cheer.

"Did you put the blanket on me?", Susan asked.

"You looked cold", he replied plating the egg.

"Thanks!", she said with a genuine smile.

"Foods almost done." As Henry said this, he threw another sausage into the frying pan from the pack he'd found in the freezer.

She looked almost impressed he noted.

"Sure, that sounds good! Thanks for the food. It looks great.", Susan said.

He stopped short, "Uh, you wanted some?", Henry asked. Then he stood there looking from the food, back to Susan, then back to the food.

She was taken aback, feeling goofy, she wasn't sure what to say, "No! I'll...um..."

"Just kidding.", he said with a childish smirk.

It was cute though, in a grungy sort of way.

"It's for you of course.", he continued. "This is your house after all." He gave a short chuckle.

Also a little cute. Dirty cute.

"Well, at least I know you have a sense of humor", she replied, smiling again.

He hesitated one beat, then asked, "Do you mind if I make a request? Let's keep the frying pan for just making food, ok?" He said this with an oddly serious tone.

Susan was a little confused till she thought about it. Looking back and forth from the couch to the kitchen, she realized he must have been scared to come into the living room.

"Is that why you didn't move last night, cause I still had the pan on the couch?", Susan asked.

He gave her a serious look and furrowed his brow before responding. "You learn very fast on the streets. Someone beats you down, you stay down until the threat is over." Henry added the links to the plate and brought it over to Susan.

As if remembering himself for the first time since Susan came in the room, Henry gave himself a once over.

"I don't have any clean clothes", He said. "I wanted to clean up but I wanted to be sure it was ok first."

A simple fact with an easy remedy.

Susan took a step back, taking in the soiled garb one more time. "Well sure, yeah, I have a robe you can wear. And if you want, I can wash your clothes while we're eating, if you'd like. Then the shower is up stairs and-"

"Yeah, I know.", he cut in. " I went through the house when you were sleeping."

He said it with a straight face, but she wasn't sure how she felt about that.

"Ok." was her simple reply.

"Why?", Susan asked as Henry began walking away.

He stopped, turned and said, "I guess we'll find that out." Then he left the kitchen.

The very second that Henry the Homeless man, was out of the kitchen and before Susan could even wonder at Henry's mysterious final sentence, Cupid popped back into the room from who knows where. His sudden arrival caught Susan off guard as usual and she jumped with a little shout.

"Hey, you gotta get outta here!", said Susan. She was not happy to see him so soon.

"So touching I almost cried.", Cupid crooned, bringing his clenching hands to his bosom.

Susan couldn't tell if he was being sarcastic or not. She replied, "Hey! We just met. This whole thing just started. It's going to take time. Not that I have any." She threw in at the end.

Cupid looked back at her, confused for a second. "No!", he bellowed. "Not you guys. I was moved to see you got rid of your friend for me." He really did seem so very pleased with himself.

"I didn't do that for you.", She said

"That was sweet", he said with a grin.

Susan was growing tired of all his antics

"Leave, so I can get this done", she pleaded, tired of everything already.

But Cupid made no response. Without another word Cupid poofed back out of the house, off to wherever he spent his time. Susan was left spinning, like after every encounter with Cupid.

She had so little time to make such major improvements, not to mention improvisations.

Little did she know that Henry had been on the stairs for her short visit with Cupid. He only saw her talking to herself, since of course, he can't see or hear Cupid, but he knew something weird was going on. But hey, he thought, when isn't there.

Broken from his vigil he mumbled to himself as he went up to the shower, "Oh God, she's nuts. I'd better hide that frying pan."

The next day, Cupid made a quick stop to check in on Susan. She was waiting for Henry to get ready when Cupid popped in.

"OH!", Susan said with a start when Cupid showed up just a few feet away. "Would you stop doin that? Geez!"

"Hey! Hello!", Cupid was always too happy when he came around. "How's it goin? What are you doin? Where you headed?" He was asking too many questions, too quickly. She wasn't ready for another visit so soon.

"I have things to do. What do you want?", She asked, trying to brush him off quickly.

"Well, I don't know.", He was meandering. "It just seems kind of... Well, kind of like you're throwing away your week. Or not being serious-.."

"No, no, no, I know what I'm doing.", She cut him off. "I'm working on it. I know what I gotta do. It's under control, ok?" Susan had a plan.

Cupid smiled in that please-punch-me way he has and said, "Oh ok, alright. Well, since you have all the time in the world, I'll be back. I'm just gonna pop over to our friends house again. Maybe crack a bottle or two. Ya know." He folded his hands in front of him and said, "Well now, you enjoy yourself." Then he did a little I Dream of Genie wiggle and nod and he was gone.

Susan was ready for this to end and there was so much more to do.

Next door, Burt was just starting to feel better. He'd stayed up most of the night guarding his brewskis. None disappeared and no one appeared to disappear them.

Maybe he wasn't getting enough rest. Maybe the old lady had a couple, one or two here and there. He wouldn't blame her for that. Plus it didn't make any sense that some dumb kids would break in just for a brew or two. But who knows these days.

Then, right then, as Burt opened the refrigerator door to grab a beer, they vanished into thin air right in front of his face.

He couldn't believe it. Letting out a puff of disbelief he stared wide-eyed at the spot on the shelf where only a split second ago had sat two of his perfectly chilled brewskis.

No way. This is nuts.

"My God.", Burt muttered in disbelief, backing away from the fridge with a hand to his face.

This simply wasn't possible. Still blown away by utter confusion, Burt closed the fridge and decided he should probably go get some rest.

That was probably for the best. Shaking his head, he moved towards finding sleep and a hope of regaining some sanity.

Back at Susan's house Anna was just arriving. She knocked, but no one heard her. As most tend to do by habit and without a thought, she tried the knob. When she found that the door wasn't locked, she decided to head on in. Susan seemed to love it when Anna just popped in anyway she thought.



"Hey! You're alive!", was the first thing out of Anna's mouth.

"Of course I am!", replied Susan. "I told you to trust me."

"Like that was gonna make me feel better.", Anna threw back.

Susan didn't respond to that but continued on, "Henry has been getting fixed up since you left. He's about to show me some of the new clothes I got him."

"I'm sure that'll help.", Anna responded. She was still very skeptical.

Then Henry opened the door and stepped out of the bathroom.

"He smells better but he still looks like shit!", Anna said. "Dude, shave!" Anna was never one for holding back.

Susan looked at Henry, feeling guilty. She really did agree with Anna but she didn't want to force Henry into anything he didn't want.

He was starting to show some cuteness and was growing less funky by the hour, but there were still some improvements to be made. If nothing else, she wanted to have him looking a little less street friendly or hobo grown.

"Yeah Henry," Susan probed, "How do you feel about maybe shaving?"

"Doesn't matter how he feels he still looks like-", Anna didn't get to finish the statement.

"-Please!" Susan jumped in. "Henry, you can do whatever you want. Whatever is fine with me." Susan didn't want him to feel offended.

Henry seemed to think for a second. He rubbed over his face with a coarse hand. "I would like to shave actually."

"Well ok!", said Susan, trying not to reveal how happy she was with his decision. "There are razors under the sink. Feel free to use whatever you find and take your time. No hurry." She didn't think he noticed.

Henry turned back towards the bathroom without a word and headed to his next task. Bit by bit, he was looking more and more like a regular joe. Maybe even a cuter than regular joe.

Anna piped up quickly, "Wow! You really are trying to live outside the box huh? You NEVER and I mean NEVER ask a guy what he wants."

"What do you need?", Susan asked. Anna rarely just swings by for nothing. Even if she was concerned for Susans safety, there was still bound to be a request.

"Nothing." Anna smiled the smile of a liar. "Ok, maybe I need to borrow your car."

"Where is yours?", Susan asked, not shocked much at all.

"Ok. Well, you know that guy I had told you about that I must have given my keys to use, he returned and wasn't leaving my apartment?" Anna asked with an awkward smile.

"Of course, it was just the other day.", Susan replied.

"Well, long story short...He must have gotten more than just my house keys." How Anna says these things with such lack of concern is beyond Susan.

Shaking her head in mock disbelief Susan gave in. She had too much on her plate already. "Go ahead. Take the car. The keys are by the door as usual. Just have it back by six please."

"Thanks!", Anna burst out. Then the look in her eye became more mischievous. "So... whats the story?", she asked. "You said this would all make sense eventually, but I'm not seeing it. Is it eventually yet?"

Susan's mind was a flutter. Anna had been her best friend for many years. It was an odd coupling, but they got along great and they supported each other when they had no one else. Susan couldn't possibly tell her the truth. Not the whole truth. Not without seeming absolutely crazy. So she went with some soft lies that were actually true.

"He lost his job.", Susan replied. She figured the sympathy route would be best. "His wife left him and he lost everything. He says she didn't believe in him anymore. She lost the faith, I guess. When she left, he fell in with the bottle. He wound up drinking himself right onto the street. It's pretty sad really."

"Yeah! Good story." Anna responded with a heavy lilt of sarcasm. Anna was not a bleeding heart. "My bet is he offed his wife and that's why he was hiding on the streets for lack of anywhere to run."

Susan didn't want to get too deep into this debate. She couldn't take the chance of letting the truth slip out and looking crazy.

"Don't you have somewhere to go?", Susan threw back. She figured it would be best to just get rid of the problem. The problem being Anna at that moment.

"Oh yeah!", Anna said proving her concern only went so far. "Thanks again!", she said heading towards the door. She really was a one track pony.

Then Anna left without another word.

Next door Burt was having a breakdown.

"Gone! It's Gone! All of it!", he said in desperation. He was weak at the knees, with tears in his eyes. His caring wife, Martha, looked on with sympathy.

Cupid had been at it again.

"Hun, listen", said Martha, cooing. "Burt listen, you gotta listen to the doctors. You gotta get a hold on all this drinking!"

She was so worried about him. He hadn't been sleeping right and he was convinced that someone was sneaking in to steal his beers. She held him close as he got more distraught about his brews.

Pulling back from their loving embrace, he stared into his wife's eyes. "I don't know what I'd do without you. I love you! I love you so much."

Martha didn't know whether her husband was truly losing it or just drinking it. But she couldn't help but admit that the emotional side of Burt was pretty nice. Maybe the beer thief will keep it up. Could be a nice bonding experience she thought with a sly smirk.

Back at the house of crazy, Susan was glad to have gotten rid of Anna. She loved her, but it was no small taste of relief for having avoided any more of the now less Homeless Henry conversation.

Susan turned back to the bathroom and the task at hand. Just as she did, the door opened and Henry presented a nice, clean-shaven face.

"Very nice!", Susan complimented him. It wasn't that hard either. Much to Susan's surprise, it really was a great improvement.

She couldn't help but feel the pressure of her bet with Cupid. Though things were looking better with each passing hour. Henry was a nice guy and pretty cute as it turns out. But this whole thing seemed crazier than a one armed kangaroo in a boxing contest. But Susan was a fighter, too. Susan was always determined to win, one way or another.

It had been a weekend for the history books. Susan had less than a week left to seal the deal with Cupid and she still had a lot to accomplish. Susan was again in her kitchen. They say the kitchen is the heart of the home. But every time Cupid comes popping in, it feels more like a heart attack.

Susan was feeling pretty proud of herself at the moment. She had been able to set up a job interview for Henry, while on her morning break at work. She pulled in a favor or two and after work sealed the deal just before she went to the store.

After returning home, she was putting away some groceries when her hairy, cherubic huntsman appeared again. As usual, Cupid came popping in without a warning, making Susan jump at least three inches off the ground. As she did so, she dropped the bottle that she was putting into the cabinet.

Cupid snatched the item in mid drop and handed it back to her.

"So, how's it goin?", Cupid asked.

She felt confident, but didn't want to play her hand too strong.

"Good! Very good!", Susan said. "Things are heading in the right direction."

Cupid gave her a questioning look of doubt. "Let's see." He responded. Then with a snap of his fingers they both disappeared.

They reappeared in the living room, to the side of the couch. Her first thought was why couldn't they have just walked into the room, but she held that back.

The question slipped quickly out of her head, as she realized she was seeing Anna on her couch watching her tv. Susan could only assume that, like before, no one could see or hear them, unless Cupid wanted them to.

"What is this?", Susan asked. "Why is she on my couch? She left."

"Ok!. You know you just set up an interview earlier for Friday, for Henry?", Cupid asked.

"Yeah?", Susan responded, waiting for the shoe to drop.

"Well...Now it's Friday!", Cupid said matter of factly, despite the statement being absolutely nuts.

"NO! It's Monday!", Susan exclaimed. "I still have the rest of the week!"

Cupid shook his head slowly before he began. "Sorry, but I am a very impatient being. So I decided it was best that we skip ahead."

Susan was floored. She was so confused, yet again. How could he do this to her?

Susan simply pointed at her friend Anna.

"Why?", Susan asked still pointing at Anna. She would have to figure this out one bit at

a time.

Cupid turned from Susan to glare at Anna on the couch.

"Oh her!" Cupid said with obvious distaste. "Get this. She met someone, a stalker, who followed her to her parent's house. So now she's hanging low here. She REALLY has some issues!"

Before Susan can ask another question to try and unravel this ball of nonsense, the front door opened and Henry came walking in with a sad looking face. This just kept getting weirder.

Cupid quickly raised his hand and snapped his fingers, freezing Henry and everything else in the room in place.

Cupid turned back to Susan.

"Hold up, hold up. I want to be the one who breaks the news.", he said with a giggle. Then he sang his next lines, "He diiidn't get the jooooob!" Cupid amused himself so easily. He started to do a little jig and dance around. "That's right!", he continued singing his lines, "Break out the booooooze, he's hit rock bottom agaiiiin!" Cupid sang it like he thought he was some kind of rockstar.

Susan had heard enough.

"SO what?! It's one interview. He'll be ok."

Cupid halted his shenanigans to respond in a serious tone. "Yeah, but it is a big deal to Henry. Remember all that stuff you guys talked about during the week. He really feels like he's let you down."

Susan was getting more upset with every word. What was this crazy fool talking about.

"What stuff? When? I just went from Monday to Friday like turning a page. You said I had a week. What happened between us, between Henry and me?", She pleaded. "Tell me what the hell is going on!"

Cupid was unfazed. Ignoring her questions, he went on to explain. "Come on. You know. The normal stuff. Well, I guess you don't know. Ok, so see, you guys laughed, you got to know each other, you did what all noobs do. It was very deep. And now at this point you even started to depend on each other. You know, emotionally of course. And as we both know, remember, today is the deadline. And at this point with the connections you've made, well, he feels like a total loser!"

"What? But he's not a loser." She was so lost. "A loser doesn't even try. Henry's been trying to do a good job. I am proud of him. I'm proud of his trying! And what do you mean today is the deadline!"

Susan felt like her head might explode. It probably would've helped. It definitely couldn't have hurt. Cupid was getting obviously annoyed with her sentiment. He clearly was trying his very best to make her lose. This was hardly fair at all.

"Ok! Fine!", he barked. "Let's continue the show then shall we?"

"Fine!", said Susan.

Cupid snapped his fingers once more and the whole scene came to life again. Henry looked ruined and slowly made his way to the living room. He saw Anna lounging on the couch.

"Hello", he said to Anna, sounding fully deflated.

"Hey!", Anna replied.

Susan was watching them both, but turned to Cupid with confusion in her eyes. This was all nonsense.

"This is so weird.", Susan told him. It barely even summed up the basics of her life since Cupid showed up, but it was all she could think to say.

Cupid made no response, but to pull his bow out. He set an arrow into place and made ready to fire. Susan didn't know what was going to happen next, so she backed away.

Up to this point, Cupid hadn't shot her or Henry before. He never even pulled his bow out. What was his game now she wondered.

Cupid let loose the first arrow and the arrow hit its mark, going right into Annas breast.

Susan was shocked, "What are you doing?" She asked. Though the arrow clearly didn't seem to hurt Anna she thought.

Cupid, looking sly again responded whole heartedly, "Cheating!"

"That's not fair!", Susan shot back.

Cupid just put his finger to his lips as if to shush her.

Susan wasn't about to be silenced. Not now, not ever. Except, that she was. Very literally.

No matter how much she tried to shout and scream her thoughts and feelings at Cupid she couldn't be heard. Not by Anna and Henry on the couch and not even by her own ears. Cupid had truly shut her up.

Susan watched on in an uncontrolled silence as Anna started to look a little buzzed.

"Damn!", Anna said turning to Henry. "I just have to say, you clean up nicely!"

Anna got close to Henry with a hungry look in her eye. She started pawing at him, making obvious advances.

Susan wasn't happy, but she couldn't be heard. So she simply grimaced on.

Cupid smiled, "First rule in Cupid school, always have more than one arrow handy." As he said this, he fitted another arrow into the slot and shot it right into Henry's groin. Then he snapped his fingers again so that Susan's lovely, confused tones could again join the party.

Henry and Anna were fully taken over by the emotions born of Cupid's arrows. They couldn't seem to keep their hands off of each other.

Susan turned away. She didn't want to be a witness to this. Susan was hurt.

"Why would you even bet me, if you knew I couldn't win. Why?", Susan shouted to Cupid.

"Love is like that", Cupid responded. "Nobody ever REALLY wins, but it's still so much more fun to play, than to just sit on the sidelines."

Susan held her heart. In a way, she couldn't even understand why it hurt so much. True, this was all some funhouse nightmare, but she had just met Henry. She shouldn't care about this. She shouldn't CARE about him. This whole crazy adventure had only lasted a matter of days, as far as she was concerned.

"Oh my God!", Susan shouted. She'd had enough.

"What's the matter?", Cupid asked.

"I want it!" In a flash, she understood her mixed emotions. "I don't want to be alone anymore. I want love and trust and happiness and all that crap, just like everybody else." She fell to her knees with the weight of the words.

Suddenly, Henry pulled away from Anna.

"I can't do this!", said Henry, as he continued to distance himself from Anna.

Susan turned with all her hope present. She wanted to see him fight the arrow.

Henry continued, "Susan believes in me. I can't do this. I believe in her. I want-" Just then Cupid cuts Henry's words in half with another set of arrows.

"-you so Bad!", Henry finished.

Suddenly, Henry and Anna were back at it, like two drunk school kids on prom night.

"Stop!", Susan shouted, knowing only Cupid could hear her.

"If I stop you win!", shouted back Cupid. "And nobody beats Cupid. That's not right. I never lose!" He said all of this with the confidence of an obstinate child.

"You can move in and stay with us. With me and Henry.", Susan offered. "Whatever you want. Just, please don't do this to me!"

At that moment Henry seemed to find his strength again.

"Stop!", Henry called out and again broke the embrace of Anna. "What are we doing? We can't do this!"

Anna's eyes seemed to focus a little more. Then, she too started to fight the arrow's power.

"Yeah, I'm sorry. I may be bad, but I'm not this bad. I feel terrible.", Anna admitted. She couldn't help but wonder why she was suddenly so attracted to this guy or why she would take the chance of messing up her friendship with Susan. It all seemed so out of her control.

Cupid laughed. "Who is she kidding? She's exactly that bad." He laughed again. " But I mean, look on the bright-side. At least now you know you can trust her, Anna that is. She was hardly in control of herself. Plus I mean, Henry just fought off the urge with two of big Cupid's arrows sticking out of him." He said this tapping his chest with pride." That's honestly very impressive, I must say."

The bizarre scene was broken up again when Susan herself came walking through the front door. Future Friday's Susan looked up to see Henry and Anna on the couch. They looked undeniably guilty.

"What the-", began Friday's Susan, but Cupid cut her off with a quick snap of the fingers. Now the whole room was yet again frozen, but for Cupid and our very own Susan.

"I guess now would be a great time for you two to become one.", remarked Cupid, staring at a flabbergasted Susan.

"Who?", asked Susan, still hardly coping.

"You and you.", Cupid said, pointing at Friday's Susan. "She doesn't look familiar?", he asked.



Susan was in a whirlwind. She could hardly process all this information as quickly as it was being thrown at her. Apparently, today is now Friday and she just lost a chunk of the week. Henry and Anna, from the future, are sitting frozen on the couch feeling guilty after just having been shot with "Big Cupid's" arrows and sucking face. Now, on top of all of that, she was standing here staring at another version of herself in the doorway to her own home. Friday Susan, future Susan, her future self. What...WHAT!!

"This is so weird." Is again the best response Susan can think to say.

"Look it...", Cupid started, "She, the other you, has this past week of knowledge that she lived through, but you didn't. And you, have the knowledge of what transpired here just now, still in the future of course, but just now. But then again the future is now, but anyway. You know what happened here and she doesn't, is what I'm trying to say. Well you know what didn't happen I mean, I guess." He waited a tick as she stood up off of the floor. " You know what I mean?"

No, she didn't, was the thought screaming in her mind, but instead she said, "Is this really happening?"

Was it possible that she never made it home from work last week? Was she dead? Was she dreaming? Is this really Friday?

Cupid smiled a friendly smile. "Sometimes Susan, amazing things can happen just by simply believing."

Susan was full of doubt but hopeful. She didn't have much choice but to hope, really. It was this or the mad house. She made a very small step towards the Friday version of herself.

"So, what do I do?", she asked, turning back to Cupid.

Again with his please-punch-me smile, Cupid responded, "Just touch yourself!"

"What?" She shook her head in offense. She fully understood what he meant, but she couldn't believe he decided to put it that way.

"What do you mean?", she asked.

"Yeah, just, you know, touch yourself", Cupid said, giggling.

"No! What?" She was not sure about this at all.

"Yeah, just go ahead", he said, giving her a little push.

"Don't push me! NO. Wait a minute!", she continued in her protest.

"Just go. Jump to the future." Cupid was clearly still amused.

"She doesn't even look like me."

"She looks just like you."

"No she doesn't."

"She looks exactly like you. She's you in another outfit. Come on. Get going", he said, giving her another light push.

"I don't know about this. It's all so weird." She was still so skeptical. But she had nothing to lose.

"Go would ya. There's nothing to be afraid of. We just poofed to the future together. Come on with it. Go!", Cupid could barely contain his glee.

"Fine." Susan gave in.

Susan was nervous. She wasn't sure what was gonna happen here, but she knew it couldn't be any worse than what had been happening. With a wary smile, she leaned in to grab her own arm.

Then Cupid snapped his fingers and Friday's Susan moved just an inch or two again back to her previous path. But it was just enough that before Cupid snapped again to stop her our Susan missed the grab.

"Oops you missed!", Cupid chuckled. Still so pleased with his fun.

"That's not funny!", Susan said, with the meanest face she could muster.

"Yes it is! It's funny", Cupid says still laughing. "Just remember dear, life is fun! Enjoy it."

Before Cupid could play anymore games, Susan gathered up all her courage and jumped towards the body of her future counterpart. Suddenly, they were one. All the thoughts and emotions of the past week, flooded into Susan's newly formed mind.

As she melded with her future self, the entire week, unfolded before her eyes. She saw the laughter, and the tears, and recalled the conversations that helped her fall for Henry. However bizarre and strange the circumstances, she couldn't help but feel the romance that blossomed through their week together. It was strange and new. It was exciting and crazy. It was unexplainable, but it was hers.

Seconds after the mind meld, Susan realized everything was in motion. The room returned to normalcy a week from where it started. She was now the new Susan and staring at an odd couple on the couch. She had to act as normal as possible. Not that Anna or Henry would ever know what transpired here.

She also noticed that Cupid had taken his exit.

"How'd the interview go?", Susan asked. "Everything wrapped up quicker than I expected.", Susan said, in what she thought was a successfully normal tone.

Henry went from looking shocked, to abashed, too sorrowful in a split second.

"Yeah, I didn't get it." He said with a heavy with an obvious sadness in his heart.

Then Anna broke in. "Susan! I need to tell you-" Because as usual Anna's problems were at the fore-front of her mind.

But Susan cut her off. She had to act at least a little upset.

"Save it! Don't try and seduce my boyfriend! You hear me!"

"It wasn't just me!", Anna responded with a look of guilt.

Then Henry stood up and walked over to Susan. "Boyfriend!?", he said with joy replacing all the worry in his voice.

"Well yeah!", offered Susan. "I think we are at the point where we can say it!"

Henry accepted that statement with ease. The two lovers embraced for what was really Susan's first kiss in a long time.

Feeling a little awkward, Anna announced, "Yeah, ok...I think i'll just be in the other room."

"No!", Susan said without hesitation. "You need to go. I'll talk to you about all this later."

Without responding, Anna scurried off. Susan could worry about that at another time.

"I can't believe this!", said Henry, still dazed from the kiss.

Susan reached up and wrapped her arms around Henry's neck as she said, "A good friend once told me amazing things can happen-", she pulled him close, "we just need to believe."

Then she gave him a passionate kiss. This could be the start of something truly magical she thought, as she lost herself in Henry's warm embrace..

In the kitchen, we return for one last time. There we find Cupid watching, as the scene in the living room plays out to an end. Over his shoulder appears a tiny, beautiful angel

in an all white gown.

"Very impressive!", said the lovely angel. "Although your methods are how should I say..."

"I like to call it 'different' ", chimed in Cupid. "But if you get the job done, does it really matter?"

The angel didn't respond at first. She just looked down at her clipboard.

"And the beer?", she asked.

"Hey!", Cupid responded defensively. "I already opened it! They frown upon waste up there you know?" As he said this, he pointed up to the ceiling.

"Well, either way, I suppose you earned a vacation.", said the angel reluctantly. Then she stamped "approved" on the paper work clipped to her clipboard.

"Yes! But I knew it would be. I'm pretty much awesome at what I do! You know," stated Cupid, in his cockiest tone, "I could probably knock out another one before I go", he said this with a chuckle. "Hit me with your best shot!" He giggled some more.

The angel smiled a very big smile. She said, "Ok!", before they poofed away.

Suddenly, they were in a bedroom later that night. Though now empty-handed, Cupid still felt the strong edge of confidence. Then the wind got fully ripped from his sails when he saw who was laying on the bed before them.

"Whats your name again?", asks Anna in a sultry tone.

Cupid snapped with lightning speed to pause the scene. He turned to the lovely, levitating angel with fear in his eyes.

"Okay...on second thought, I worked really hard on that last one. I definitely deserve that vacat-"

But before the word was fully spoken the angel was gone. Disappeared with the beat of a heart.

Cupid called after her in a final attempt.

"No! Wait! Really! COME BACK! Did I tell you that you look great in white?!" It was too little, too late.

Feeling totally defeated and fully deflated, Cupid snapped his fingers again. May as well get the show on the road, he thought to himself.

"Screw it! I don't need your name", said Anna. "We have chemistry!"

Cupid, what have you done to yourself this time he thought. Then he spoke out loud,  
"Now I really do need that beer!"

The End For Now.....