

## How Not to Pick Up a Date in a Supermarket

By: Sara Messina

"Hey, are you going to clean a skyscraper with all that?" It was a bad line, but it was all Bryan could think to say to the girl walking next to him out of BJ's. He didn't know why he felt the urge to talk to her. There wasn't anything particularly attractive about her, but perhaps she reminded him a little too much of a girl he knew in college.

She stopped, "No, I just like to stock up," she said, flicking her hair behind her ear as she bent over her purse to look for car keys. She found the keys after a few seconds, but dropped them almost immediately. Bryan bent down to pick them up and read the wooden block letter name tag on the set.

"Melissa—I'm Bryan." He looked down again at the three flats of window cleaner she had in her cart. "I could help you with those."

She paused to think for a minute, and seemed ready to say no. "No thanks. If I'm going to lug these up a flight of stairs I might as well get warmed up." She smiled widely, perhaps hoping Bryan would laugh at the joke.

"I could help with that too. I don't mind leaving my car here for a little while."

"I don't know..." Bryan realized his proposal probably sounded ten times worse than his pick up. "You could always leave me in the middle of downtown if I make a lousy muscle man."

She laughed. "No kidding she laughed," he thought, "I'm no more of a muscle man than I am a miracle worker."

"Okay." She relaxed and started walking, "My car is three rows down."

In thirty minutes they had made it to her house, it had taken them ten just to rearrange the garbage in her trunk. There were old pieces of plastic, boxes, fabric, and, of course, empty window cleaner bottles.

Her house was in the middle of a neighborhood, but still seemed isolated on a plot three times the size of the others. A two story house stood in the middle of a 3-acre square.

Bryan huffed as he climbed the steps to the front door, laden with all three of the flats (he had insisted on being a gentleman). She opened the door and let him in first. All he could see in the dark were spots of white. That's pretty much all he saw with the lights on too. The whole downstairs was covered in white sheets, save only the ply wood that should have been covered by carpet.

"Looks creepy, huh?" She had caught his eyes wandering, he nodded in response, "I'm getting paint and carpet jobs done next week, I live pretty much upstairs except for the kitchen. You'll have to climb more stairs to get where that goes I'm afraid."

"Lead on" Bryan replied, as he tried his best to tense his muscles to not look tired. Of course, he wasn't tired, he was aching. She took the lead up the stairs (which were rather steep and went on till they almost seemed vertical) and seemed to dart into a room off the upstairs hallway.

She came out with a dolly and he put down the flats, he couldn't even pretend anymore. "Now if you don't mind taking off your shoes, I did just finish the floor in there." Bryan thought this encounter might be heading in a new direction, and did as he was told before walking into the room. From the outside, the room hadn't seemed any different than any other, but inside it was blazingly bright. Bryan had to squint and refocus his eyes before he had begun to notice, she really did need all that window cleaner. Save for the few openings in the ceiling for lights, the whole room was covered in glass mirror panels. He looked down the floor was mirrors.

"Why—" he started. He felt an object come at him from behind.

Melissa had slid the flats off the dolly and hit him on the head with it. "So I can see everything. Every angle, every reflection." He fell. She dragged him out to the middle of the room, and grasping at flat panels and choking at the now obvious smell of window cleaner.

## Library Work

By: Kime Neal

It was late on Thursday night as Maggie wheeled the book cart out of the elevator. She gave it an extra push to force it over the grooves at the door and winced at the banging noise the grey metal cart amplified into the room.

Her sandals slapped the tile floor as she pushed towards the periodicals. She did a head count of people on the second floor, noting one soul typing at the computer. His hat was pulled low, his eyes just visible as they flicked between the computer screen and the case study that lay open beside the keyboard. The cart stopped suddenly as the tile floor turned to carpet; Maggie lifted the front end slightly as she pulled it onto the carpet wishing the cart could be as peaceful as the library. Besides the cart and the keyboard that kept an inconsistent rattling series of clicks the library seemed quiet and empty.

She left the cart at the entrance to the Periodical corner and picked up the magazines from the cart that needed to be reshelved. Unfamiliar with this task because she had started working at the DeTamble Library about a month ago she took some time to alphabetize the magazines she was holding. As she started a slow walk of the shelves she found the homes for the magazines and glanced at the others to try to remember what went where. As she reached the windows and turned to go to the last section of shelves across the sitting area she heard a door open. Looking up she saw the baseball cap boy disappear as she held one last magazine.

Maggie looked at her wrist, and realized that she must have forgotten her watch back in Wilmington, the three story freshmen girl dorm. She knew it must be late, and bed was sounding better every minute. Her Quest I homework would have to wait until the morning. She placed the last periodical on the shelf then turned to organize what books were left on the cart.

Maggie began to make her way to the elevator when she heard a faint rustling behind her. She turned and noticed that the periodicals she had just put away were lying on the floor. As she bent down to pick up the magazines she noticed a small hand sticking out from under the couch. She reached under and pulled out a porcelain doll that had long brown hair and bright green eyes. She was dressed in a simple green gown with tan lace around the hem, cuffs, and neckline. Maggie shrugged her shoulders and placed the doll on the cart to take down to the lost and found box. She replaced the periodicals that had fallen, then turned and pushed the cart towards the elevator. Once on the third floor Maggie began to shelve what books were left slowly making her way around the square.

The library was completely silent now; all that could be heard was the squeaking of the book cart and the bell from the Bell Tower signaling that it was now ten o'clock. Only thirty more minutes then I'll be able to go back to my room and sleep. Maggie turned the corner and noticed that there was someone standing at the end of the row looking at books on dolls.

It was a girl around Maggie's height with her blond hair pulled up into a bun at the base of her neck. "Oh sorry I didn't know that anyone was still here." The girl turned and it was then that Maggie noticed that what she had first mistaken as a long skirt and shirt was in fact a dress made from blue satin with an embroidered flower design in white across the bodice. She began to walk towards Maggie slowly her eyes fixed on the doll that sat on the book cart. Maggie backed into the hallway and noticed that as the girl passed under the overhead light she could see the books on the opposite shelf right through her. "You found my dolly," said the girl in a small childlike voice. Maggie screamed and ran towards the stairwell but when she tried turned the knob the door wouldn't budge. She ran around the square to the elevator and began to frantically push the buttons.

She didn't see the girl anywhere but at this point all she could think about was getting downstairs and out of the building. When the doors finally opened she rushed in pushing the buttons for the lower floors not even noticing the small porcelain doll that was laying in the back corner of the elevator. As the doors closed there was a scream that was said to have been heard from the security station across the lake but when the guards were able to pry the doors of the elevator open all that was there was two small porcelain dolls lying on the floor. One in a green lace dress and the other in an orange and yellow spotted tunic with blue jeans.

### Editor's Note:

The opinions expressed in the editorials and stories do not reflect those of *The Lance* or St. Andrews Presbyterian College.

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Thanks again,  
Alicia Toke

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