

Nickolaus Kane and The Spectre of the Exile



By Peaches Pacione & Lewis Unknown

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The name's Kane, Nick Kane to my friends, Nickolaus to my parents, and Mr Kane to every sleazebag within 30 miles of Chicago. I'm a sex detective you see, and the best goddamned sex detective in Chicago; unkind folks say that's because I'm the only one in Chicago, but the truth is there could be fifty of us and I'd still rise to the top, like cream, or pond scum. I learned my trade in San Fran from the original sex detectives, Bob and Freddy, they taught me that you crack the case whatever it takes, whether that means swallowing a mouthful of baboon semen with a smile on your lips or suffering the attentions of a boatful of horny Turkish sailors who haven't seen a fresh piece of ass in six months, it doesn't matter, you take the hand that's dealt and you crack the case. Of course if there's one thing a sex detective knows it's that sometimes you have to bend a rule until it snaps like a hooker's inhibitions in the face of an ounce of blow and five hundred bucks, and this story is about one of those times when I had no choice but to kick the dealer in the nuts and claim it was a Royal Flush ala Illinois.

Like most of my cases this one started with a phone call, one that woke me up from a steamy dream about a threesome featuring myself, Brad Pitt, Denzel Washington, and a vat of hollandaise sauce. As I struggled back to consciousness I discovered that my neighbours cat had left a half-eaten mouse on my head again, whether it was critiquing my hairstyle or simply trying to be friendly I couldn't say, but one day I'd figure out how

the little hairball kept getting into my office. Of course I answered the phone with my usual savoir-faire.

“Five more minutes mommy.”

“Nicky darling, I’m not your mommy and it’s past noon, time you were up and at ‘em.”

I recognised those dulcet tones straight away; it was Babs, the proprietor of Chicago’s hottest gay club: The Exile, and the sweetest little drag queen to ever crush walnuts between his perfectly toned butt cheeks. Babs was also the only person I’d ever let call me Nicky; we’d had an on again, off again love affair for the past five years that would have been far more “on” if I’d been able to give up the sex detective gig and get a stable job, but I was too addicted to sniffing the world’s dirty underwear and Babs deserved someone who would always be there for him.

“Babushka, whatever can this poor weary soul do for you today?”

“I’ve got a job for you Nicky.”

My ear’s perked up at that, it had been a couple of weeks since my last case and my wallet was getting depressingly thin.

“A job, one that Frankie can’t handle? Tell me more.”

“We’ve been getting complaints about a strange smell and noises coming from the toilets.”

“Babs, I’m a sex detective not a plumber, why the hell are you calling me?”

“Because I’ve already had the plumber out and apparently everything is in perfect working order. If you do this for me darling... I’ll clear your tab.”

Damn, he really knew my weaknesses; a clean bar tab was worth crawling on broken glass for.

“I’ll be there as soon as I wash the dead mouse out of my hair.”

“Dead mouse? No, I don’t want to know, see you soon darling.”

A quick shower later and I was driving through Chicago in my old Road Runner munching on a slice of stale bread covered in salad dressing, I really needed to get some shopping. Sure this case seemed unworthy of my talents but if there’s one thing a sex detective knows it’s that you can’t judge a porno by its cover, I’ll admit most of the time what’s on the box is what you get, but sometimes... Sometimes there’s a midget in Marilyn Monroe drag inside.

As I pulled up to the kerb I wasn’t surprised to see Frankie at the door. Now for those of you poor slobbs unacquainted with Chicago’s gay scene and The Exile, Frankie is the doorman, bouncer, head of security, and the only man I’m genuinely afraid of aside from Mr Mulligan my kindergarten teacher. There’s a stereotype that gets bandied about that gay men are sissies who couldn’t fight their way out of a paper bag, but no one who ever met Frankie would believe that; he’s just under seven foot of solid muscle and scars. He’s ex-special forces to boot, and the rumour goes that he was court marshalled after eating his commanding officer’s dog for a bet – raw, something I could easily believe. And no matter how tempted you are *never* ask him if he’s been to Hollywood as he doesn’t have anything close to a sense of humour, but on the plus-side even the most fervent of bigots soon learn the joys of tolerance after a few minutes of his tender ministrations.

“Hey Frankie, Babs asked me to come over, ok if I go on in?”

After staring at me for a few seconds he slowly nodded his scarred, bald head and opened the door so I could step in to the foyer of The Exile. Ah The Exile, every time I visit I have to stop for a moment to savour the sight. Babs had a vision when he built this place and he didn't cut corners on anything; the finest leather and marble imported from Europe; a hand carved mahogany coat check table; genuine works of art; deep red carpets, and a stuffed pink flamingo on each side of the doors for some reason. Of course Babs couldn't have afforded all that by himself, in fact I first met him while investigating his blackmailing of several prominent senators and congressmen from his time as a Washington rent boy and I still think The Exile is the best misappropriation of tax dollars in this country's sordid history. All too soon Babs was prodding me in the ribs to remind me that I was here for a job, he was almost as stunning as the décor wearing a stylish pink Armani women's suit hand tailored for him, his blonde highlighted shoulder length hair was carefully styled to frame his soft, clean shaven face and his lipstick was a dark mulberry shade, my favourite.

"How do I look?" He whispered coquettishly as he did a little twirl in front of me, before laughing at the hungry growl that was the only response I could make.

"Business first Tiger, pleasure... Later perhaps, that is if you do a good job."

I stared at his ass in frustrated lust as he sauntered towards the toilets... I had to punch myself in the crotch four or five times to convince my hard-on to go away. Damn it, if there's one thing a sex detective knows it's that you have to think with your head and not your dick, but Babs was special, always had been and always would be, so with a mournful sigh and a whimper of delayed pain I scuttled after him.

The toilets in The Exile were of the same kind of quality as the rest of the place and were possibly the cleanest, nicest, toilets in Chicago. In fact this was the first time I'd ever smelt anything more unpleasant than the sweat and bodily fluids of the couple fucking in the stall next door, as it was it took all my self control to keep from puking my guts up at the rancid odour that wafted up my nose. It was worse than an unwashed

baboon, worse than being thrown face first into a hillbilly's outhouse and taking three hours to climb back out; it was as if someone had taken a Godzilla sized dump, sprinkled it with half a dozen rotting skunks, and then added a bucket of distilled raw sewage. I gazed at Babs to see only a slight look of disgust on his face

"How the hell can you just stand there like that?"

"I spent the summer working at a mortuary when I was in college, this is bad but I've smelt worse."

Before I could enquire as to what could be worse than this stench I was interrupted by a high pitched moaning, coming from one of the cubicles. I glanced sideways at Babs.

"I'm assuming that's the strange noise? Has anyone looked in there?"

Babs flashed a perfect smile at me.

"That's why you're here, go get them Nicky."

Steeling myself, I gently pushed the cubicle door open, ready to run at the first sign of trouble. I don't know what I was expecting to see in that cubicle, maybe a Yeti with diarrhoea I suppose, but what I got was a flickering white, almost translucent image of a fat midget in a Sox cap and a hoodie. I stood staring at him as he floated back and forward through the toilet bowl.

"Fuck," I said, "you're a ghost."

"Hey do you suck your dead mother's phallus with that mouth asshole? I prefer livingimpaired, it's a hate crime to call me a ghost and I'll go to the press and tell them all about it."

I stared in disbelief at the dumpy little spectre, of all the possibilities in Heaven and Hell I had to deal with Casper the Douchebag ghost.

“Excuse me a moment.”

I stepped back, closing the toilet door as I went, and turning to Babs.

“Well you’re haunted, only two ways to take care of it. Either you get a priest in...”

“Which is pretty unlikely given the club’s reputation.” Babs interrupted, “What’s the other option.”

“We find out what his unfinished business is and help him take care of it so he’s free to move on. It might be expensive though.”

“Nicky, do you think I can possibly open with my toilets smelling like that? ‘Whatever it takes’, as you always like to say.”

I’d hoped that Babs would be able to get a priest in to exorcise the little git but it looked as though when push came to shove it was up to me, and if there’s one thing a sex detective knows it’s how to push, though usually it’s pushing something up someone else’s rectum.

“All right Babs, I’ll try to find out what’s keeping him here and we’ll take it from there.” Muttering a prayer to whatever deity might be listening I pushed open the door to the cubicle again.

“Hey, Mr living-impaired,” I said cheerfully, “mind if we have a little chat, man to exman?”

I watched as he floated there for a few seconds turning what I had said around in his head trying to see if it was in any way insulting. I barely managed to repress a shudder

as I watched an ectoplasmic bead of drool form at the corner of his mouth and dribble down his goatee to land on the floor; clearly I wasn't dealing with an intellectual titan here.

"All right father fucker, but call me Nickolaus because that's my name, Nickolaus Patchyowne, and I was the greatest horror writer in all of Chicago before I was accidentally smothered to death in my sleepsack."

"You don't say Nick..."

"NICKOLAUS! I bet you rape your dead sister's dog while videotaping movies in a cinema with a camera you pirate asshole."

"All right, Nickolaus then, can you tell me why, out of all the clubs, in all the cities in the world, you had to haunt the toilets of this one?"

He hesitated for a minute or so; then his ghostly shoulders slumped in shame.

"I was a controversial and conservative author and I was always afraid that if my fans found out about my secret desires they'd abandon me. So all I could ever do was stand in the alley outside watching people come in here wishing I could join them so eventually I died regretting that I'd never known the hot sweaty pleasures of gay sex and then I woke up here."

"I see, do you think that if I could arrange for you to finally taste that forbidden fruit you would move on to the next world?"

"Of course you cocksucker!"

“Only when I’m running late with the rent Nickolaus,” I said with a smile on my face, “give me a little while to work out the details and we’ll soon get you to your final destination.”

Backing out of the toilet I already had a plan formulating in my head, it was going to be expensive and painful, having to deal with a lifetime of repressed lust in a few hours always was, but Babs had said whatever it takes and as long as my bar tab was cleared I’d survive the aftermath.

“Babs, pass me your mobile.”

“Nicky,” he said, a look of frustration on his face, “when are you going to get your own mobile; it’s 2008 darling.”

“Everyone knows the government tracks you through them and credit cards, I’d rather stay of the grid as much as possible.”

He chuckled as he threw me the phone.

“Whatever you say darling, so who you gonna call?”

“Not who you’re thinking about.” I said with a wink while dialling, “Our little friend in there has a lifetime of regrets from being stuck in the closet and we have to burn through it all in a single afternoon. We need The Sisters.”

Babs raised a querulous eyebrow.

“I told you it might be expensive, but if you can think of a better option than having him possess me and live out his fantasy then I’m all ears, it’s my body that’ll have to live with the aftermath after all.”

I could tell by the look on Babs's face that he was all out of ideas. I quickly explained the problem to The Sisters after they picked up and while they were sceptical they were also curious and professional enough to take the job anyway. Now odds are dear reader you've never heard of The Sisters and why should you? As two of the première gay dominators in America they don't advertise in seedy magazines or phone booths, the only way to get a hold of their number is to have a friend who knows it, or to have done them a favour once.

I spent a nervous half-hour pacing back and forward in that bathroom waiting for Pain and Pleasure to arrive, and when they finally swanned in with their professional gear I was almost ready to call it off and try and blackmail a priest. Pain and Pleasure are more than just professional names, it's their work ethic as well, they believe that only through contrast can the purest responses be obtained thus for every pain and torment there is an equal pleasure. Though of course people always get their names wrong, Pain is the thin young man in a mix of leather and feathers who looks as though he would never hurt a fly but knows exactly how to make a man scream for an hour and never leave a single mark, while Pleasure is the giant mute in the gimp mask with the burn scars on his arms whose gentle touch earned him a role as Oprah's personal masseuse, before he met Pain.

"So Nickolaus, my little sunflower," Pain said with a sardonic smile on his face, "where is this ghost client you have for us? Pleasure is simply dying to meet him."

I pointed wordlessly towards the toilet cubicle where our spectral visitor had taken up residence, and watched as both of them swung the door open to peer inside. After a few seconds they closed the door and Pain turned to face me with a look of amusement.

"Well Nickolaus, you never fail to surprise us." He said, "But how do you expect us to work on a client with no flesh to touch, no nerves to stimulate, no orifices to pleasure?"

“Possession,” I replied, “I’ll let the dwarf take over my body and then the two of you will go to work on me, but he’ll feel everything as well so once he’s had enough he’ll move on and I’ll spend the next day in a bath of ice with a bottle of whiskey.”

“Very well,” he nodded slowly, “go and assimilate our incorporeal friend, and I promise you that this will be our masterpiece.”

Not exactly reassuring as I would be the one having to deal with the aftermath, but like I said, you do whatever it takes to close a case. I ventured once more into the cubicle to explain what was happening to our unfriendly ghost.

“Hey, Nickolaus...”

“Who were those two faggots?”

He interrupted before I could even finish my sentence. Masking my irritation at his homophobia, surely a tragic side-effect of years spent in the closet I began to go through the details of our plan.

“Those ‘faggots’, as you called them, are here to help you experience all the homosexual pleasure you dreamed of your entire life so you can finally move on.”

“But how the fuck can they do that? I don’t have a fucking body you dumb shiteater.”

I counted to ten under my breath, reminding myself with each digit that this was really for Babs and not the little turd floating before me.

“That’s where I come in Nickolaus, you’re going to possess my body and then they’ll give you the time of your afterlife.”

“I’m not sure I can do that and besides isn’t it a little gay? Don’t you have a woman I can possess instead?”

I stared at him dumbfounded; surely he couldn’t be this stupid.

“Nickolaus, you spent most of your life dreaming about cock, after you died you wanted it so badly you wound up haunting the toilets of a gay club, I think it’s a little late to be worrying about doing something gay don’t you? Now let’s get on with this.”

Muttering about what an asshole I was he still acquiesced, realising that this might be his only chance to live his unfulfilled dream. He reached out his hand and touched mine and I watched in horror and awe as I felt his ectoplasmic essence begin to flow into my pores making them tingle before turning them numb. A feeling that slowly spread up through my arm and throughout my body until I couldn’t move and everything seemed to be covered in a milky haze.

“All right,” Nickolaus said as he swung open the cubicle door, and it was bizarre to hear his squeaky voice overlaid on my deep rich tones, like some bizarre mix tape, “let’s get started you fuckers.”

And they did, oh Lord they did, for the next four hours we went through every pain and pleasure you could imagine from two dedicated dominators with a varied selection of tools. After each one I prayed that this would be enough but Nicky the ghost’s appetite was insatiable and he demanded more and more bizarre and twisted acts as the time went on, even with the numbness of possession I could still feel most of what he was experiencing, The Sisters were just that good. Finally Pain called a stop, and it was the first time I’d ever seen him covered in sweat with his hair mussed up while Pleasure was wheezing like an asthmatic kid running a marathon.

“Nickolaus, my dear fellow,” he said, “I’m ashamed to admit it, but for the first time in my career I’m at a loss. Is there anything else we can do for you to help you pass on.”

“Well, there was this thing I’d read about with a gerbil.”

And sharing his mind I could see exactly what perverse act he intended to commit, and with my gerbil no less! I know I’d said whatever it takes, but this was one step too far and with a titanic effort of will I reclaimed my body and vomited his ectoplasmic form out onto the bathroom floor where it mingled with the sweat, tears and semen from the previous four hours.

“YOU LEAVE MR CHIM-CHIM ALONE YOU SICK LITTLE TROLL!”

I could feel everyone looking at me in shock as it seemed that I’d just wasted the past four hours, but after sharing Nicky’s mind I knew exactly what would finally get rid of him for good: the truth.

“What the fuck are you doing you faggot?!”

“Oh shut up you homophobic little shit. I know everything Mr “Controversial Author”, the only person who didn’t regret publishing your crap was you; even your family had trouble finding nice things to say about it. And as for never having experienced gay love, remember your visit to Poe’s grave? Yeah I thought you did. Newsflash dumpling, having another man’s cock rammed into your oesophagus counts as gay sex.”

I stared at the flummoxed little ghost who seemed to be growing smaller and smaller with each jibe.

“You’re so pathetic that even as a ghost you could only make it into the toilets in a place like this, now you’re going to get the hell out or I’ll read every last page of the goddamn Twilight series to you and do the voices. ‘Oh I’m such a special flower of a whiny, clumsy teenage girl that despite my angst every man wants me.’ ‘I tried to stay away

from you for your own safety because even though I love you for some reason, I'm a vampire and want to have you for lunch, now watch me sparkle"

That seemed to be the last straw as Nicky collapsed inwards until he was little more than a pinprick of ectoplasm floating in the air that finally imploded with a little popping sound and a final faint whine about how I was a shiteating plagiarist who never had an original idea in my life that quickly dissipated into nothingness, taking him and his stench away never to return. Babs looked at me with a raised eyebrow while Pain for once was as speechless as Pleasure.

"Really Nicky, Twilight?" Babs said, "I don't think that's recommended for use in exorcisms."

"Well Babs, if there's one thing a sex detective knows it's that you do whatever it takes even if it means going through the depressing realisation that all the good guys are straight fictional werewolves. Now if you'll excuse me I need to crawl into a tub of ice and forget this ever happened."

And that was how I closed the case of The Spectre of The Exile, I'd like to say that was my only brush with the supernatural but then I'd be lying and if there's one thing a sex detective never does it's lie.

The End