

THE MAN IN THE SHOWER

The man in the shower stood in the shower naked, weeping. His head was in his hands. He was very distressed.

He said "Why is she so mean to me. Why is she like this."

Like that, over and over. Then he started pacing – as much as the shower allowed anyway.

"I don't deserve this," he said, pacing. He said, "I've got to think." Then just "What do I do, what do I do."

I don't usually care for this kind of behavior, this sort of wallowing.

"I don't know man," I said from the other side of the curtain, "that's a tough cookie alright."

I stared at myself in the mirror, my hair was thick and perfectly parted. It crashed against my forehead like a wave, shiny and clean. I looked down at the toilet bowl next to the sink. It was also very clean.

The man stopped pacing. "What did you say?" he asked.

"I said it's tough. Hey your toilet is super clean."

He said, "I like a sterile bowl. I'm always goin' over it, minutely."

I said, "I hear ya. How'd you get it like that though?"

"By goin' over it, minutely. I just said that." Then he said, "Are you even listening to me?"

"Sure," I said, "Maintenance on these babies is an overlooked thing."

I patted the toilet with my hand. It was nice and warm.

"Not about the toilet!" he screamed. "What am I going to do about my fucking wife – how the fuck am I going to get out of this mess!?"

He tore the shower curtain aside and caught me examining his toilet. I actually had the tank top lid in my hands and was peering into the reservoir. The water inside was bubbling fresh.

"What are you doing? Put that goddamn thing down!"

The man slapped his foot up on the tub rim, grabbing the curtain for balance. His eyes were red with tears. A ball of soap modestly covered the tip of his penis. I had my whole hand in the tank now and was fishing around in it.

"Sorry," I said "dropped my watch."

I hadn't dropped my watch really, I just wanted to mess around in that toilet for a while. It felt good doing it. I genuinely liked the toilet's components. The little plastic bulb. The rubbery plug which when pulled drained the reservoir, while fresh water flowed in from the side, producing that classic flushing noise. Amazing when you think about it. Makes you feel that there are people out there working to make your life easier.

"Stop whistling!" the man shrieked, and snatched at me, but found no purchase on my oiled naked back.

I dropped the lid in surprise. It broke on the floor.

"ooo damn," I said, "sorry chief."

"OH MAN LOOK WHAT YOU DID."

He was getting mad. Very mad. I just had one more quick look inside the toilet tank and that did it. He roared like a furnace and leapt at me. He pushed me into the wall, beating my chest with his great hands.

"I'm pouring my problems out to you!" he cried.

I said, "I know I know," but he kept hitting me, bumping into me. There was shampoo in his hair and it got in my mouth; I was behind him, wrapped around his waist with the bathmat sliding out from under us. I grabbed his arm and pulled it behind his back. Then with my strength I forced his body down, down to the very lip of the toilet tank, so the side of his head was directly over it.

"No no!" He shouted.

I flushed.

With the tank uncovered like that, the gurgling sounds were deafening. The man grabbed his ear in pain as his eardrum shattered. He fell and cracked his head on the bowl, he went "ooof," and rolled off the side. He landed at my feet, and didn't move.

I started to back away. There didn't seem to be anything else I could do. Then I noticed the bath sponge still looped around the man's wrist. It was shaped like a toilet.

THE END