

## **In the Air**

“I would eat the ass out of a yak for a pair of shorts.” Billy’s eyes were swimming in his head, floating in a place between here and there.

“You won’t find a yak here, they don’t even let dogs in anymore.” Audrey Rose was at Sunpie’s in a circular frame of mind. She drifted around the bar, around the bar, stopping here and there.

“I had on shorts but I put on pants because you had pants on.” His friend also had a long sleeve striped button-down shirt, that could have captured rings of sweat, but the beer had already absorbed the wetness in him.

“I’ll tell you how you can get a pair of shorts, without eating the ass of a yak.” Audrey Rose offered.

“How’s that?”

Audrey Rose sat in front of them on the grass. “Bet someone you can drink two pints of beer before they can finish one shot.”

“Sounds like a good way to lose a bet. What’s the catch?”

“No catch. They just have to be drunk first. Excuse me, I’ll be back in a minute.”

Audrey Rose felt something trying to climb up inside her. She went out the front door, around the side of Sunpie to a grassy area, hiked up her dress and watered the lawn.

Back inside.

“I’ll burn your fucking house down,” said a thick-necked rugby player.

“Go ahead, I’ll collect the insurance money,” his friend replied.

“I’ll make it look like you did it.”

“I’ll chop you into little fucking pieces.”

Audrey Rose sat on the beefy guy’s lap. “Why are you guys so angry?”

“Not now, Audrey Rose.”

“I’ll buy you a round of shots if you can find something nice to say.”

“That dress looks good on you.”

“Not to me, to him.”

“Alright, if I burn your house down, I’ll make it look like an accident.”

“Gee, you’re swell.”

“Close enough. You boys ready for a giddyup?” Audrey Rose went up to the bar and ordered a couple of Jeagerbombs. At the bar, there was a man with dark sunglasses, dark hair and the best smelling armpits Audrey Rose had ever smelled. They were spicy and sweaty. She shoved her nose in his armpit and inhaled.

“Should I know you?”

“I don’t know if *you* should but your armpits definitely should.”

“And how should my armpits address you?”

Audrey Rose curtsied. “I’m Audrey Rose. A simple girl in a simple town.”

“I find that hard to believe.”

The bartender put three Giddyups on the table. “Oh, there are three one for me and one for each of your armpits. It’s fate,” Audrey Rose exclaimed.

“Are you sure you didn’t order them for someone else?”

“I don’t think so, I haven’t met any other armpits that I know of.”

The man lifted his hand to down the shot while Audrey Rose stuck her nose in his pit. She did the same with the other, then did a merry jig. She finished her giddyup, then moved around back down to the water.

“Only insane people snort.”

Audrey Rose laughed so hard she snorted. Stopped, then moved on.

“I can’t miss my flight. I’m going to the gun store right now so if I miss my flight, I’ll shoot myself right in the face,” Billy said.

“What about me?” the striped shirt asked.

“I’ll kill you first. Murder/suicide pact.”

“Murder/suicide pact!”

“Yeah,” they said together and high-fived.

“You guys make it sound like so much fun,” Audrey Rose chimed in.

“You still didn’t tell us how to win a pair of shorts.”

“Okay. I have to get two beer glasses and a shot. I’ll be right back.”

She floated down to the river and jumped in. She shook her hair out like a dog. As she came out, a couple of tourists asked “How cold’s the water?”

“Stick your fist in your drink. About that cold.”

Audrey continued clockwise. “Where’s our shots?”

“Oops. I gave them to a couple of armpits. Have you boys made nice?”

“Jacko was telling me you’re a writer.”

“I only tell stories to the trees and the river. Not to people.”

“I bet I could give you something worth writing about.”

“I like presents.”

“This is a *big* surprise.”

“Sunshine there are no surprises in life. And as big as you think you are, there’s always someone bigger.”

“Hey, what’s Begbie’s name in Trainspotting, his real name?”

“I bet giddyups will help.”

“Make sure you bring them back this time.”

The armpits weren’t at the bar, but the scent was. Audrey Rose licked the air a few times, before ordering some giddyups.

“Good day, Audrey Rose?” Steve her favorite bartender asked.

“Every day’s a good day to die, but today is an even better day to live.” She was getting a little dizzy, so she decided to walk backwards.

She straddled the thick boy. They did the shots. “Would you cum in a cup for me?”

“What? You’re fucking crazy.”

His friend offered “only if you brush your teeth with it. How pimp would I be if I could say my girlfriend brushed her teeth with my cum?”

Audrey Rose moved laps. “That’s the best answer I’ve heard all day. I’ll brush with your cum if you moisturize with my juices.”

“Deal.”

Audrey Rose hopped up. She started to move around, before turning back and calling

“Robert Carlyle.”

“Fuck that was bugging the shit out of me.”

The tourists had turned red. “Seriously how cold is the water?”

“Negative ten.”

“There’s no way. Are you serious?”

“Probably not, but it will feel a lot warmer to you if you expect it to be negative ten.”

“Honey, your face is pretty swollen from all that drinking last night. Why don’t you dip in,” the man’s wife said.

“Look how fast the water’s flowing. If I fell, I’d be in Utah before you caught me.”

“Oh, don’t worry, dear. I wouldn’t try to catch you.”

Audrey Rose moved to the six hand of her circle.

“Who doesn’t like to throw Lego’s at girls?” Billy asked.

Audrey Rose sat at their feet. Oh, crap. The drinks are at twelve o’clock. I’ll be right back. She moved up the hands of the clock to the bar, returned with two pints and a shot.

“Only two rules away from a pair of shorts.”

“Tell us.”

“First, I finish my pint before you can touch your shot. Second, we can’t touch each other’s glass. No trying to knock it out of my hand, or fuck around at all.”

“That’s it?”

“That’s it.”

“Go.”

Audrey Rose sipped her pint slowly. Tubers floated by on the river. A white ass mooned them. A couple of teenage girls held up a plastic bag of red wine. “Whooo hooo.” They yelled.

“Come back,” called one of the guys.

When Audrey Rose was done, she turned her glass over onto the shot glass and started her next beer.

“You boys have a fine day now, and keep your faces out of yak’s asses.”

“Yes ma’am.”

Audrey Rose forgot which way her circle went and cut in a diagonal to the bar. The clock was broken. The ticking tocked.

Audrey Rose climbed over the fence to pee. The sun got caught in the leaves of the trees as Audrey Rose climbed back. The tourists were gone. Maybe they were on their way to Utah.

Down by the river, the two boys had a cold bottle of beer for Audrey Rose. She reached out her hand.