

I'll Need Smaller Scissors

By Motke Dapp

“I want to look like a magical creature,” ZuzuBee told her hairstylist.

“You are a magical creature,” Penelope replied.

“I know, I know, but people always mistake me for a small person. I want them to know that I’m powerful, or at least that I’m not human.”

“The wings don’t give it away?”

“Well, a lot of my outfits hide the wings.”

“What about the fact that you’re under a foot tall. And that you can fly?”

“I know, right? You’d think that would clue people in, but they don’t get it. Do you think it’s Ok for a faerie to have a pixie haircut? Most of the other faeries I know have long, flowing hair.”

“I think you can do anything you want. You’re pretty independent.”

“Ok. Chop it all off. I want to look like a pixie. Maybe I’ll get more respect then.”

Penelope had opened her hair salon, a converted car wash from the 70’s, three months previous to this conversation, and upon finding the unusual closet during the rehab of the building, her bizarre clientele had increased daily. Most of them didn’t pay in money, but in minor wishes or miraculous favors that helped day-to-day operations seem trivial.

Penelope had ordered boxes of smaller-tipped scissors to get the precision she needed for cutting faerie and pixie hair, not to mention the occasional elf or gnome.

The closet, a place where the car wash used to keep various parts and soaps, was still a functioning closet whenever she used it. But her magical clients would use the same door to enter and leave her shop. Penelope had never been able to go into their world, much to her dismay.

One Thursday in early autumn, two faeries and a small group of pixies were all patiently waiting to get a trim, chatting about relationships. The pixies relaxed on the sofa that had been reupholstered with a fluffy cover, originally used to soap up cars during the car wash years.

“You don’t have a boyfriend?” a pixie asked Penelope, who happened to be working on the tiny head of hair belonging to ZuzuBee, who was tired of being mistaken

for a pixie. It was similar to cutting the hair of a Barbie doll, except that the doll wiggled and squirmed.

“I don’t.”

“But you’re *beautiful!*”

“Well thanks, but I don’t have time for a relationship right now. I’m too busy trying to get this business going.”

A kitten flew past her head, swiping at one of her pigtails. She had no idea where it came from, but was starting to get used to the chaos that ensued when her magical clientele came for a visit. She made a mental note to see if the kitten stuck around after they left. She liked kittens very much.

“Most of the good men in our land are *your* size. Maybe you could meet one of them. They’re much too large for us. You’d be surprised at the lack of faerie and pixie men. At least ones worth knowing,” ZuzuBee said in a huff.

“And how am I supposed to date someone from your world?”

All of the magical creatures in the room looked at each other, pondering.

“Well, you can’t. But, we could *make* a boyfriend for you,” ZuzuBee finally said, a mischievous grin reaching across her tiny face.

“You mean like a robot?” Penelope asked, her voice dripping with skepticism.

“What’s a robot?” one of the squeakier pixies asked from the plush sofa.

“It’s a being or creature made out of computers or machinery.”

“Like a golem?”

“Something like that.”

ZuzuBee interrupted the lesson on modern robotics. “No, no. What I mean is, I can actually turn *something* from this world into a *boy* you can date. What good is having magic if you don’t use it?”

“This is ridiculous,” Penelope said, dismissing them all. After a few more moments of discussion, the subject was dropped and more hair was cut.

Two weeks went by, and Penelope’s human clientele numbers started to increase, which actually brought money into the shop. Her magical friends would only show up when no other humans were around.

“You can never tell anyone about us,” she was told early on by a gaggle of faeries. Knowing that no one would ever believe her anyway, she had no plans to mention it to a soul.

On this particular day, a handsome man walked into the shop, needing a haircut. Penelope was flushed the entire time she cut his hair, for no reason that she could put her finger on. Maybe it had to do with all the boy discussion with the faeries and pixies, but maybe it was just because it was warm in the shop that afternoon.

The man showed up the next day, and the next, always with a well thought out excuse for showing up without an appointment. By the fourth day, Penelope was almost expecting him, spending extra time on her hair and makeup in the morning before opening the shop. She even flipped on the neon Car Wash sign to give the place some extra pizzazz.

And as anticipated, the man showed up right around lunchtime with some Chinese carry out.

“I brought you some kitten-free Chinese food. I hope you like it,” the man said, looking at the playful feline on the sofa.

“Yes, of course!”

They fell in love.

They got married.

They had 2.5 children.

Penelope never told him about her friends from another land. And they were so happy for her, constantly giving her fun presents to dote onto her children.

Through the years, the fact that she was keeping secrets from her husband slowly began to eat at her. And before she knew what she was saying one day, she told him everything.

His face froze in place, first a look of shock, then one of sadness.

Right before her eyes, he transformed into ZuzuBee, her favorite faerie.

“We told you that you couldn’t tell anyone about us. I’m so sorry, Penelope. I really am. I love you.”

And just like that, everything in Penelope’s life disappeared. The only reminder of those days remained in her salon. The tiny-tipped sheers she had purchased specifically for her mysterious friends were mounted in a box on her wall. On occasion, she would pull them out to trim the hair of Barbie dolls she kept in the supply closet.