

## The Rival

### Part 5

By Dreamtales

Marvin was shaking in his Gucci loafers. The accountant, a short little pipsqueak of a man, dreaded going to Monique's office - ever since she became president of YouthGene she had given the term "Dragon Lady" a new meaning. And worst of all was bringing her bad news - especially the kind he had to deliver today!

"All right, Marvin!" barked Martha, Monique's executive secretary. "You've got five minutes!"

Inside, Monique was finishing up a call. The sultry redhead slammed down the phone and looked up impatiently, a disgusted look on her face. "Oh, it's you. Make it quick, I've got some fund managers coming in shortly!"

As the voluptuous ruby haired siren rose from her desk, Marvin tried to suppress his nervousness. He still couldn't get over how tall and well built Monique was - she had always been sexy but when had she become this six foot plus amazon? Christ, she was really built like a brick shit house! Monique stood, towering over little 5'2" Marvin, who shivered involuntarily as he looked up at her, her eyes flashing down at him in anger - or was it disgust? "W-well, M-Monique, y-you s-see..."

"Oh, come ON, you twit! I don't have all day! Out with it!!"

Jeez, what a bitch! thought Marvin. "Well, w-we've got some, er, negative f-feedback from some of the p-potential i-investors in YouthGene. T-they h-had some c-critical comments a-about your p-presentation..."

"WHAT comments, Marvin?" Monique had now come out from behind her desk and stood looming over little Marvin, hands on her hips and glowering down at him.

"W-well, l-let me read you t-this letter I received today. It's f-fairly typical..." his hands shook violently as he wrestled with the papers. "D-dear sirs: W-while we l-like the YouthGene concept, we h-have certain reservations about s-senior management. In p-particular, we were surprised to see your p-president, Monique, who did not appear to g-give the impression of a c-conservative corporate m-manager..."

"WHAT?! Not conservative!?? What the fuck does that mean?!"

"Ummm, err, well..." Marvin wiped his brow, which was sweating profusely. "It appears that that investors are reacting negatively to your, um, overly large and , ummm... well developed body..." Marvin was shivering all over now, the little man looking up in fright at the angry red haired amazon standing well over a full head taller than himself. "H-here's another Email I r-received t-today..." the little man adjusted his glasses as he shuffled the sheets in his hands. "W-while we a-appreciate the n-new role of women in

the w-work force, y-your president seems t-to come across more like an exotic d-dancer than a corporate chieftain..."

"So they think I'm too tall and sexy? You stupid little twerp! Why the hell didn't you tell me this before?!!"

"W-well, y-you s-see..."

"Oh, shut up, Marvin! God, you're pathetic! Come on - let's take care of this right now!" Monique grabbed the frightened little man by the arm and dragged him out of her office. She practically carried him to the R&D room, where she deposited him in front of the youth ray. "OK, Marvin. I'm going to climb inside. Now you just give me enough of the rays to counteract this antidote and bring me back to my normal size."

"B-but Monique! I-I d-don't know anything about this m-machine..."

"Oh, get a grip on yourself you spineless little weakling! Do as I say and don't give me any more of your fucking excuses!"

"Y-yes, Monique! Anything you say..." Marvin's hands shook violently as he flicked the switch on the youth ray. As he watched the rays strike Monique and counted off the seconds, he silently prayed that he wouldn't mess things up again...

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"MARVIN!!!!!" came the high pitched shriek emanating from the President's office. "Get me that fucking little..."

Marvin burst through the door, frantically looking for his tyrant boss. "Yes M-monique? Where are..."

"Over HERE you dolt!" Monique was sitting at her desk, glaring at the accountant with a fierce expression.

Marvin's mouth dropped open in shock! What looked like a small teenage girl was sitting at Monique's chair! Where just a few minutes ago his boss could barely squeeze herself into her seat, and seemed to dwarf even her oversized "chairman's desk," now Monique's angry scowl and burst of bright red hair barely cleared the top of her desk! And her face seemed smaller, her power dress hanging loosely on her small frame! That youth ray must have...

"You SHRUNK me, you idiot! Just LOOK at what you did to me, Marvin!" screamed Michelle, her voice now a little higher pitched but still sending shivers down the accountant's thin spine. The angry redhead stood up, the top of her bright crimson mane now stopping a few inches below Marvin's, but her eyes as fierce as ever! "How the hell do you expect me to meet investors like THIS?"

"W-well, Monique. I-I'm not s-sure what c-could have happened..."

"Well, you'd better fucking well find OUT what happened!! I've got the Jersey state pension fund coming in at five o'clock and I have no intention of meeting them looking like.. like a goddamn fucking MIDGET!!" This last outburst was punctuated by her clenched fist slamming down on her desk, rattling her phone and sending papers flying! "I'm warning you - you've got exactly two hours to fix this or your ass is history! Do you understand me, Marvin??"

"Y-yesss, Monique, I-I..."

"Well then, don't just STAND there like a fucking statue!! Get MOVING!!!"

Marvin seemed to almost leap in the air and disappear in a puff of smoke as she shot out the door, his shoulders dropping in relief as he escaped the dreaded dragon lady's office and heard the thick mahogany doors slam shut behind him. Shit!! He thought, wiping the sweat from his brow, I've got to come through this time! But where to go, what to do?? Standing nervously beside Monique's secretary's desk, he turned towards one exit then the other, then stopped, hesitant. Finally he seemed to make up his mind - Yes! Radford in research would know what to do! Good old Radford - he'd be sure to come through...

Monique stood fuming behind her desk. Was everybody on earth incompetent? What did she have to do to get something done RIGHT around here? She could feel the youth ray working, its light tingling feeling giving her goose bumps all over her still rapidly shrinking body. As she stood calming her self down, she felt her dress slip off one of her shoulders!

Kicking off her now oversized shoes, Monique stormed over to her closet and wrenched open the door, scowling at her miniaturized reflection in the full length mirror inside. SHIT!! She thought wildly. I'm falling out of my fucking clothes! Staring back at her was a small angry figure dwarfed by her deep burgundy power dress, which now hung down well past her knees! Looking closely, she could see that at least she was still an adult - apparently the growth formula must have counteracted the youth ray's age regression effect. Instead of becoming younger she was just getting smaller - and clearly she was getting even smaller by the second!!

Clutching her dress, Monique ran to her desk and punched the phone. By now she had to stand on her tip toes and stretch to the limit to reach the button across her vast desk. "Martha!!" she barked at her secretary outside, "Hold all calls!! And cancel ALL appointments until I say so!" she paused for a second, "And NOBODY is to open my door - and I mean NOBODY!! I don't care WHO it is! Do I make myself perfectly clear, Martha?!"

"Yes, Miss Monique!" came the instinctive reply, before the angry redhead huffed and punched off the phone.

Exhausted from her ordeal, Monique slumped in her seat. To her chagrin she saw that the chair now dwarfed her - the arm rests were now too high for her, and her legs dangled a good six inches off the floor! She had to think - there must be a way to counteract this stupid shrinking! But technology was not her strong point, and soon she gave up trying to

rack her brain for answers. No - she needed help to get out of this! Someone who could get things done - and speaking of getting things done, where the hell was Marvin??

Monique scooted to the edge of her chair and reached for the phone. Shit!! Even during the few minutes she had spent thinking, she had shrunk again! Her arms were now too short to stretch across her desk! Realizing she now had to stand on her chair to get to her desk, the redhead climbed up onto her feet - only to find that her dress now fell from her shoulders! The redhead's little face turned bright red with embarrassment and frustration as her dress quickly slid down off her small form, dropping almost to her hips before she caught it, revealing her naked torso! She needed both hands to wrestle with the dress, finally pulling it up around her neck, while the hem pooled around her feet and hung over the edge of her chair! She silently thanked God she had ordered her door closed - all she needed was for her employees to see her like this!!

But she still had to reach the phone. There was no way now she could get to it without climbing up onto her desk, and to do that she needed both hands free. The hell with it, she decided, shrugging her little shoulders and letting the now hugely oversized dress drop from her little frame. As long as nobody sees me, who cares what I look like! she thought as she swung her little body, now stark naked, up onto her desk.

It felt very strange to be walking up on her desk top, stepping around her everyday objects - pencil holder, blotter, papers, her phone, all now grown huge - and especially in the nude! She was probably now about three feet tall, she estimated! Her little naked body shivered as she realized she was not much bigger than a little baby - like her rival Suzy now was!

Crouching down before her big phone, she quickly punched in a number, then hitting the speakerphone. A few rings, then a click as the pick up was made. Monique shouted nervously, surprised and more than a bit mortified to hear how high and childlike her once commanding voice now sounded!

"Marvin!! It's me - Monique! I need you to..."

"Hi! This is Marvin!"

"YES! Yes, I KNOW it's you, you idiot! Now listen..."

"... I'm not here right now, but your message is important to me! Just leave your name and number after the tone and I'll do my very best to get right back to you..."

"Shit!! MARVIN! You fucking idiot! Pick up!!" screamed Monique, now standing and glaring down angrily at the phone as Marvin's inanely happy voice chirped out its message.

"...and remember - I WANT to hear your message! Now just wait patiently and after a few seconds you'll hear the beep..."

"Goddammit!!" screamed Monique, her little nude body now hopping up and down in

frustration. "I KNEW I couldn't rely on you, you fucking... TWERP!!"

"Shit!! If you want to do something right, you just have to do it yourself!" snarled Monique, as she punched off the phone and strode back across her huge desk. Muttering epithets to herself, the little nude laboriously climbed down off of the desk top, first sitting own on the edge of the desk, then lowering herself onto the chair, then turning and dangling her legs over the edge of the seat, and finally dropping to the floor, her little bare feet landing softly on the thick carpet.

Shit again! She was really getting tiny - her head was now almost level with the chair seat ! And she could feel the tingly feeling all over her little nude body, still as strong as ever! With a start Monique realized that if she shrunk any more she could be trapped in her office! Who knows - if this shrinking didn't stop she might become so small that.... she gulped at the thought, forcing herself to focus on the task at hand.

Now racing against time, she decided to run for the door, the little nude redhead at first stopping to pull her now huge tarp sized dress off the chair to cover her naked body, but quickly giving up as she saw how huge it now was to her - much too big to drag across the room! Dropping the giant dress, the infant sized redhead ran over to the outside door, but stopped in frustration as she saw that the door knob was now way over her head - and well out of reach from her short little arms! She spent a few frustrating seconds hopping frantically, trying to grab hold of the gleaming brass handles, and almost crying in frustration as they hovered teasingly well above her little head. She even tried backing up and getting a running start, but still it was no use - she was just too little to reach it!

"Martha!! Open the door!" yelled Monique in her little high voice, hearing only silence in return. Shit! She realized, the door was too thick to let any sound through! She remembered how she had insisted on her office being perfectly soundproofed, to prevent anyone listening in on her important dealings. But little did she know that this would now come back to haunt her - frustrating her when she most needed help!! Even banging her little fists on the thick wooden doors was useless!!

Her efforts in vain, and her little heart now racing with fear, Monique ran back across the room, the journey across the huge expanse of her power office now seeming to take forever. Reaching her chair, she had to jump up to catch the edge of the seat and pull herself up. Standing up on the seat, she was just able to reach across and grab onto the edge of her desk, working with all her might as she swung her little body up and gained a foothold, then struggled to crawl over the edge, finally gaining the desk top. The little nude, now only the size of a large child's doll, ran across the desk and desperately punched the phone, falling to her knees as she pleaded breathlessly into the huge receiver.

"Martha? Martha, are you there?" squealed Monique in her tiny high voice.

"YouthGene, office of the President." Droned Martha's brutally efficient voice, booming out of the large box.

"Oh, thank God! Oh Martha, I can't tell you how relieved I am to hear your voice..."

"Pardon me. To whom am I speaking?"

"Martha! Martha, it's me! Monique! Your boss!" squeaked Monique desperately. "Look, Martha, I need you to..."

"Excuse me. Don't you think I know the sound of my boss' voice? You sound to me like... you wouldn't be a little girl playing tricks, now would you? Does your mother know you're doing this? Now, listen little girl, why don't you stop bothering me before I call your parents..."

Monique was now crouching on her hands and knees, pleading into the phone. "NO!! Martha!! It really IS me! I just... I just..." she paused, at first unwilling to reveal her plight, then suddenly pressing on. "Look, Martha - something's happened! I've been reduced in size by mistake! It's that youth ray! Yes - remember how Marvin from accounting came in a while ago? H-he turned the youth ray on me and it made me shrink! And now I'm getting really little! PLEASE Martha, I need your help!"

"Well, Marvin DID go into your office earlier... but you don't sound at ALL like Miss Monique!"

"Wait!! Wait, Martha! I know this all sounds crazy, but it's true! Look, I'll PROVE it to you! Just open the door and look inside on my desk..."

Suddenly the speaker phone exploded in laughter. "Oh, so THAT's what you're up to! Trying to get me into trouble with my boss! You want to trick me into opening the door - after Monique just ordered me not to! Well, I'm not falling for it, whoever you are! I'm not fooled THAT easily!" another loud chuckle boomed over the desk, then, "Nice try, though! You really had me going for a minute there..."

"No!! Martha, I really AM..."

"Ho ho!! Shrunk by the youth ray!! What will people think of next! And that little high voice - just perfect!! How do you DO that?" a short pause for breath, then "I have to say this job certainly has its moments! Sure it's tough at times, but it really keeps us on our toes! Wait'll I tell the other girls... what a riot!! ...shrunk by the youth ray..."

Monique's little heart almost stopped as she heard the laughter echo, then end abruptly with a loud click as Martha rang off.

"Shit!! Fuck!! Goddammit" squeaked Monique as her doll sized nude body hopped up and down in frustration. What could she do now? Who could she turn to? Wait - suddenly she realized her last hope! She threw herself at the phone and, trembling with fear, leaned over the phone console and pushed the now huge buttons one by one with her little hands, then sat back and - for the first time in her life - prayed, exhorting God as she had never done before! She sat transfixed, her whole world waiting on the outcome of this one simple connection, holding her breath until finally the call went through and the other line began slowly ringing...

"Hi! This is Marvin! I'm not here right now..."

"Fuck! Fuck!! FUCK!!!" squeaked Monique, leaping to her bare feet and kicking her little feet against the phone as Marvin's inanely cheerful voice boomed over her.

"Goddamn you, Marvin!! Goddamn you!!" squealed the tiny redheaded nude over and over at the top of her little high voice until she finally collapsed, tiny and sobbing, in a helpless little pool on the desk.

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"...so, yes, I suppose theoretically it COULD happen." Radford was leaning back in his chair in the R&D department, puffing on his pipe and staring off into space as he slowly ruminated on Marvin's query. "Now what you are saying is that something - or some ONE - who had ingested the antidote then undergoes treatment with the youth ray in order to counteract it. Hmm... yes, it certainly might be plausible that the two forces might cancel each other out thereby causing the subject to simply diminish in size..."

"So can you fix it? Do we have an antidote?" Marvin was beside himself, having waited frantically for over a half an hour as Radford had slowly engaged in his rambling discourse, painstakingly outlining the parameters of Marvin's predicament. But as much as he wanted to leap from his chair and grab Radford by his collar, dragging the answer out of him, he knew that the talented little researcher with the frizzy hair and thick glasses worked at his own pace, in his own little world.

"...but of course all this is simply theoretical at this point. What would be needed is a test case of some sort, setting up a control and perhaps using one of the laboratory animals to experiment on..."

"But we can't WAIT that long!" interjected Marvin, now sweating profusely, his eyes bulging.

"Oh I dare say it wouldn't be all THAT long!" replied Radford agreeably, his eyes still fixed on the ceiling. "Why, it would only take a day or so for the initial tests, plus a short time for compiling the findings..." He stopped and looked over at Marvin quizzically. "Today's Friday, right?"

"Y-yes!"

"So it should be no problem, then!" concluded Radford, turning to Marvin with a triumphant grin, laying a reassuring hand on his knee. "I should think the results will be ready ... Monday! Yes, Monday at the latest!" .

End part 5.

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The Rival

## Part 6

By Dreamtales

Monique lay in utter desolation, sobbing and shivering uncontrollably for what seemed like an eternity. Finally, she choked back her sobs and pulled herself to her knees, using a post-it note - now the size of a large hand towel - to wipe the tears from her face. As frightened and helpless as she was, she realized she HAD to keep in control of herself! After all, she had to always remember who she was: Monique! - the successful business woman, the multi-millionaire, the resourceful redhead, who had never admitted defeat no matter how difficult the odds! If she could only keep her head there MUST be a way out! Gathering herself, she swore that she would - somehow! - survive even this fantastic predicament!

Standing up, she tried to clear her head and soberly assess her situation. She was now about the same height as her pencil holder - about 6 inches tall! Running over to the edge of her desk she saw immediately that she was now hopelessly trapped on top of the desk, the drop to the floor now the equivalent of a four or five story fall to her shrunken body! Stepping back cautiously from the edge - she never liked to admit that she was actually afraid of heights - Monique realized her entire world was now restricted to her four by eight foot desk top, now the size of a tennis court to her!

But what to do?? Shivering at the thought, Monique realized she had to plan for the future. If she continued to shrink, she might eventually be too little to see! She HAD to leave a note for who ever came into her office next - if anyone ever DID come in, that is! Cursing herself again, her thoughts came in wild bunches: Why the heck did she have to give that order to Martha, telling her to hold all visitors? And how long would it be until someone finally disobeyed her? She prayed that the cleaning ladies would be allowed in - but they weren't due for another 12 hours!

She had to write a note - something to tell everyone what had happened! She ran across the desk to her pencil holder, a slick designer black lacquer cylinder holding her one writing implement - a \$4,000 solid gold pen! Doing a quick chin-up on the edge of the pencil holder, the little nude could see at once that it would not be an easy task to get the huge pen out of there at her present size. She tried pushing against the pencil holder to knock it over, but her tiny body was now too weak to do more than just lightly rock it back and forth. And her arms were now much too tiny to lift the heavy pen up and out of the holder! Finally, she decided on a tactic - struggling up over the edge of the pencil holder and trying to push the pen out from the inside! After landing with a jolt on her bare bottom inside the holder, she reached down and threw her arms around the pen, getting her hips into it and using all her strength to lift the heavy gold cylinder. She just managed to heave it up and over the edge, where it flipped over and clattered loudly on the tabletop.

Grinning with delight at her small triumph, Monique quickly scampered to get back out of the pencil holder. It wasn't easy - she just barely managed to get out, having to jump to

catch the edge before struggling to swing her tiny body over the top. As she dropped back down onto the desk top, she realized with horror that if she had waited even another minute her rapid shrinking might have trapped her inside the pencil holder! Monique's little nude body shivered with fear at the thought.

Now she had a pen - but first she had to take off the cap! Still shrinking by the second, her stark fear egging her on, Monique quickly scampered around to the front of the huge pen. At her four inch size it seemed as big as a 10 foot piece of cut lumber - and much heavier! Gripping the cap, the tiny nude pulled hard, only to find that the cap was stuck, the golden tip holding firm as the huge pen began skidding across the smooth desktop. She tried putting one hand on the handle and one on the cap, but the strength in her tiny arms was no match for the huge cap!

She struggled in vain for a few more precious minutes, all the while her tiny nude body tingled with the effects of the shrinking ray, making her tinier, weaker and more helpless by the second! Finally she threw herself around the pen, using her entire tiny body in a last desperate attempt to pry loose the stubborn cap. The tiny redhead wrapped her shapely legs around the thick cold shaft of the pen, while her tiny arms pushed with all her might against the cap, using the pocket holder as a handle, pushing on it with both hands. She panted and groaned with exertion, using all her might, her tiny muscles strained to their limit, until finally the cap popped off with a satisfying click!

Monique lay limply on the pen, her tiny body was now covered in sweat, and labored to catch her breath - but she couldn't afford to relax! Now desperately aware of her ever increasing helplessness, she knew that every moment counted, each decision may be the difference between life or death! She HAD to write out her message before it was too late!

Finding a piece of paper, Monique tried to lift the pen to drag her message across it, but realized to her horror that she was now much too tiny to wield the heavy gold pen! She had now shrunk to only three inches tall - half the height of the now huge gold writing instrument! It took all of her strength just to lift one end from the desk top - writing with it was clearly impossible!

With a sudden burst of inspiration, the tiny nude ran to get a piece of paper - if she was too little and weak to move the pen, maybe she could move the paper instead! At first she tried picking up her normal 8.5 x 11 inch letterhead, but quickly saw it was much too unwieldy - at her size it was like wrestling with a 15 by 20 foot piece of thick cardboard! Desperately casting about for an alternative, she spied the only thing she could still handle: the little post-it, now almost as long as she was tall!

The tiny redhead carefully unfolded the now huge paper, still damp from toweling off her tears, and tried to iron out the wrinkles with her hands. It wasn't easy to figure out how to write by holding the huge piece of paper in front of the giant stationary pen, and Monique easily became confused as she tried moving the paper back and forth to create giant letters. And first she had to figure out what to write! She decided that a simple "HELP!"

was the best option, with a little arrow pointing to - she shivered again at the thought - where her tiny form could be found!

But in her nervousness and anxiety, Monique botched her first attempt, blending the letters into an unintelligible scribble. Taking a deep breath to calm herself, the tiny nude tried again on the other side, this time achieving only marginally better results. Even though the letters seemed huge - waist high to tiny Monique - she realized that they were only a bit over one inch tall! She prayed they would be big enough to catch someone's eye!

By the time Monique finished she was completely exhausted. She lifted up the post-it, now much taller than herself, and dragged it across the desk top, carefully placing it dead center in front of her huge chair. Looking at the little wrinkled piece of yellow paper, covered in barely legible scribbles, her heart sank as she realized that her very life now depended on it! Even though it now dwarfed her, it seemed so tiny, so inadequate, a little dot in what was now the vast landscape of her desk!

Now just under two inches tall, the tiny nude stopped to catch her breath, walking over and sitting on her gold pen. For a moment she was suddenly at a loss to figure out what to do next. As she sat looking around her, the tiny redhead was shocked at her rapidly diminishing size - the pen holder, even the telephone now towered over her!

"Brrrrrrinnnnnggggg!!!!"

Monique almost leaped in the air as the telephone exploded with a sound reminiscent of dozens of church bells pealing at once! She ran over to the phone and looked up at the huge instrument, the sloping keypad rising to what looked like a 30 foot peak above the desk top. She needed to get to the speaker phone button at the top of the keypad - to her it seemed almost 50 feet away!

Climbing up onto the phone was not easy. The lip of the keypad was over an inch off the desk, and she had to jump up and drag herself onto the face of the phone, then run up the steep slope of the keypad, moving between the keys, before she finally reached the huge gray speaker phone button. She needed to push down on it with both hands, using all her might, before the nerve shattering ringing finally stopped and was replaced by an eerie silence, followed an instant later by the huge boom of a giant voice.

"Monique? Monique, are you there?"

The tiny nude almost cried out in joy. "Oh, Marvin! Yes! Yes, it's me! Come quickly! I..."

"Hello? Is any body there?" came Marvin's booming voice.

Shit!! She was too tiny to be heard!! Suddenly paralyzed with fright, Monique screamed

at the top of her tiny lungs. "N-no! Marvin!! Listen! It's ME, MONIQUE! Please just..."

"Hello?" A pause, then, "Oh, is this your message service? Well, anyway this is Marvin from accounting calling for Monique. Now I've talked to the people in R&D, and I THINK they can be of some help. So, Monique, if you're listening to this message, please just call me back at 283-7101. Oh, by the way: I tried to get into your office, but I'm afraid your secretary insisted that you weren't seeing anyone. Now once again, in case you want to write it down, that number is..."

Swearing at the top of her lungs, the tiny redhead, now just one inch tall - the size of a large insect! - ran down the steep slope of the keypad towards the microphone. Maybe if she shouted directly into it, her tiny faint voice might be loud enough to hear! But when she finally reached it her tiny voice was drowned out by the overwhelming din booming from the speakerphone! She tried screaming over Marvin's idiotic rambling message, only to find her futile efforts finally ended with the sharp click of the timid accountant's phone followed by the dreadful silence of the dead line!

Shit!! Her last hope had just hung up on her!! Suddenly, Monique had an inspiration - what if she tried turning up the volume on the loudspeaker? Maybe that would amplify her voice as well? She wasn't sure how these things worked, but it was worth a try! Her heart now pounding with fear, the minuscule nude redhead ran across the phone pad to the volume control - a tiny wheel that now seemed as big as a huge tractor tire! Bracing herself with both feet on the phone pad, and her two tiny arms pushing with all her might on the wheel, she was just able to move it - hopefully enough to allow her to be heard!

Now desperately racing against time, insect-sized Monique ran back up the steep slope of the phone pad to the speaker phone button and desperately pushed down with both hands. To her horror, she realized that she was now too weak to depress the button! She tried banging at it with her tiny fists before finally backing up and running towards it, then jumping on top of the now coffee table sized button, landing on it with all her weight. To her immense relief, this seemed to work - the phone burst with what sounded like a ocean liner's fog horn - by far the loudest dial tone she had ever heard!

Now what was Marvin's number again? Working feverishly, the tiny nude ran across the keypad and hopped up on the number 2, hearing a loud chirp from the phone beneath her. Then she ran down the pad, weaving between the keys, until she came to the number 8. After another successful jump - she was reminded of bouncing on trampolines when she was at school - she again had to run back up and across the steep face of the phone to reach the number three. As the now ant size nude frantically ran back and forth, leaping onto the keys, she cursed Marvin between gulps of air. Why the hell did that blithering idiot have to choose numbers so far apart? It seemed like everything he did was just designed to irritate her!

A breathless run up to the top to hit 1, then back down to land on 0... the end was almost in sight! Now on the home stretch, Monique ran back up to 1, and landed on it with a triumphant grin. She had done it! She had dialed the phone...

But a chill came over her as she realized the last number had not registered. Standing on top of the now dining table sized key, she hopped up and down in desperation - but no response! Her miniaturized little body had finally become too tiny and light to push down the key!!

Her mind now snapping with frustration, tiny Monique threw herself down on the key and threw a miniature tantrum - her tiny arms and legs flailing helplessly at the huge key, which didn't budge beneath the now almost weightless nude. Wailing and crying, she finally collapsed and curled up on a little ball on top of the key, her body cradled by the miniature bowl. In her abject despair she didn't realize that her huge bed was actually just a tiny ergonomically shaped depression meant to accommodate a person's fingertip!

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"Now look, Marvin! I don't know how many times I have to repeat this for you, but Miss Monique has made it abundantly clear that she will see NOBODY today! No exceptions!"

"B-but Martha, please! It's a matter of life and death!"

"Now I think we're exaggerating just a little a bit, aren't we Marvin? Somehow I doubt that the accounting department deals very often with life and death issues!" Martha smiled condescendingly, "Look at it this way, Marvin - I just turned away two pension fund managers, each with over 50 billion in assets. And you expect me to interrupt her for... Marvin the accountant?"

"But you can't just leave the door closed forever!! I've GOT to get in to see her!!"

As much as she wanted to protect her turf, Martha felt for Marvin. He was obviously distraught, trying to obey one of Monique's many contradictory orders. While she couldn't go against her boss' wishes, but maybe a compromise could be found. "All right, Marvin! It's 5:30 now - I usually lock up around six o'clock. If nothing else happens, I'll let you go in after me when I straighten up her office and turn out the lights."

Marvin gushed his gratitude, then rushed over to wait nervously on the reception couch.

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Once again, through sheer force of will, Monique was able to bring her emotions under control. She sat up on the phone key and wiped her tears, her tiny legs dangling over the edge. Now utterly defeated, much too tiny to use the phone, she was in grave danger of getting trapped on it - and she HAD to reach the post-it note in order to have any chance at all of being discovered!

Quickly jumping off the key and running down the slope of the key pad - now like a

hillside dotted with huge square boulders - she reached the edge only to find that the 1 inch drop to the desk top now loomed like a 20 foot cliff to her! Realizing her tiny nude body could be injured by the fall, she ran over to the phone set, where she used the coiled cord to climb down, hopping from one huge coil to another until she was close enough to the desk to slide down the side, finally landing with a plop on the giant desk top.

Although the post-it was less than two feet away, she decided to run to it. The distance seemed like two football fields and was getting farther away with each second! On the way, she had to make a detour around the giant horizontal cylinder of her gold pen. Running around it, she had the strange feeling that she was on an airport runway - the huge pen was now the same shape and size as a Boeing 747! She cleared the end of the pen and, much later, the huge cavernous opening of the cap, looming like an empty airplane hanger over her tiny spec of a body!

After a few minutes she reached the post-it, now stretching to the horizon like a vast yellow wheat field! Her first attempts to mount it were frustrated, as the slight wrinkles now lifted the surface well off the desk top, and way out of her reach. Frantically running around the perimeter, she found a small flat portion and struggled over the edge, just the thickness of the paper now waist high to her!

But once on top her struggles still continued. At her size, she couldn't make out her writing, or the location of the arrow! Desperately, she ran for high ground, a high hill created by a slight wrinkle in the post-it! It was a few more minutes before she located the arrow and, lining up cardinal points like a junior orienteer, fixed its location and set off for her final destination. Once there, she finally collapsed. For once in her life all further efforts were useless - she could do nothing more. Nothing but wait and pray helplessly for someone - anyone! - to discover her!

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"I wouldn't be surprised if she's left already." Confided Martha as she pushed open the door to Monique's office. "She's been known to just take off with no warning - she has a private entrance through that back door over there. Sometimes she's gone for days!"

Marvin bust into the room behind her, looking around frantically. As he reached her desk, his eyes locked in horror on the pile of clothing on the floor. "L-look at this! What do you make of that?"

"Oh her clothing, you mean? Not unusual - she often changes her outfits, especially if there's a big social event planned. She keeps a whole wardrobe in that closet back there." Martha reached down and began collecting the garments, "Usually she's a bit neater, though. Must've been in a hurry today."

After smoothing out and hanging the clothes, Martha walked to Monique's desk, quickly picking up the gold pen, popping on the cap, and dropping it back into the pencil holder.

Then she leaned over the desk with furrowed brows. "Hmmm... What's this little note say? 'Hemp?' 'Harp?'" She squinted down at the crumpled little yellow paper with its odd scribbling. "Well, it doesn't look very important. Must just be some waste paper!" she decided, reaching out to remove the little crumpled piece of paper from the otherwise pristine desk.

"WAIT!!! STOP!!!" screamed Marvin, rushing across the room and grabbing Martha by the wrist just as she was about to crumple the little post-it between two fingers.

"What the hell? Marvin, you scared the life out of me!"

"Look, I can't explain it, but just wait here for a minute!" implored Marvin, his eyes wide as he backed away towards the door. "I'll be right back! And don't touch ANYTHING!!!"

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After a quick trip back to R&D, Marvin returned loaded with equipment - a magnifying glass, a pair of tweezers, and a high powered microscope that he set up on a cabinet in the corner of the office. He peered intently at the tiny yellow paper through the magnifying glass, then - oh so carefully! - lifted it up with the tweezers and carried it over to the microscope. Placing it under the lens, he took what looked like a pair of miniature headphones and placed one in each ear, then squinted down into the eyepiece.

Martha hovered in the background, eyeing Marvin's antics skeptically. "And what exactly, may I ask, do you expect to find, Marvin?"

"Oh! Er... It, um, might just be nothing, Martha. I'm just being, ummm... cautious."

"You can say that again, Marvin! Examining a post-it under a high powered microscope sounds pretty cautious to me, all right! And what on earth are those headphones for?"

"Oh those? Well, according to Radford in research they're used to amplify sound just like the lens amplifies images. Apparently it comes in handy in genetic testing..."

As Marvin turned the dial on the microscope - 50x, 100x - the vast landscape of the yellow note snapped onto focus. Desperately scanning for any sign of life, he decided to zoom in on one tiny spec on the lower portion of the paper. As he increased the magnification - 150x, 200x - he thought he detected some movement! Finally he flipped the dial to its maximum - 500x!

Marvin's mouth dropped open as there before him appeared Monique, her nubile nude body and long bright red mane of hair unmistakable against the bright yellow background! If there were still any doubts, they were quickly dispelled when he saw her angry expression, her mouth soundlessly ranting at her unknown observer, her arms furiously pointing skyward. Making a few quick adjustments, Marvin reached around and

flipped on the sound amplification system.

"...fucking idiot!! I KNOW it's you up there Marvin! This is all YOUR fault, you spineless weakling!! Just LOOK at me!! I swear when I get back to normal you'll pay for this!! I'll make you wish you never HEARD of..."

Martha was watching Marvin intently, and saw him suddenly wince as if in pain and quickly straighten up, removing the earphones and rubbing his eyes as he blinked them back into focus.

"Well?" demanded Martha.

"W-what?" asked Marvin, looking at her blankly, like she was speaking a foreign language.

"What did you see? Did you find anything?"

Suddenly breaking into a smile, Marvin casually reached under the microscope, picked up the paper, and crumpled it into a little ball, dropping it into the wastebasket.

"Oh you were right after all, Martha! It was nothing - just a little piece of waste paper!"

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