Perchance to Dream: For in that sleep of death bodysuit, what dreams may come…

Our tale begins, as such tales often do, with a celebration. Kyle Devlin, on the occasion of his eighteenth birthday, received a surprise gift from an uncle—his late father’s elder brother—he had never met. It came in a box, packed with myriad styrofoam peanuts and wrapped in layers of plastic. To his mother’s horror, it was a gun.

“Oh God, how could he do that?” she said. “The man knows how much I hate these things!”

“Chill out, Mom. It’s not a real gun. Looks more like a prop from some old sci-fi show.” Indeed, the gun was overly bulky, with what appeared to be multiple barrels but only a single tiny opening at one end. It lacked even a gun-sight.

“I see what you mean,” Miranda said, running her fingers over the name stencilled on the side: ACME COSTUME GUN. “Maybe it’s a fancy water pistol.”

Kyle said nothing, because he knew exactly what the device was—or at least, purported to be. And if it was the real thing, then it was a gift beyond compare. The ultimate gift, really, for someone like Kyle, who was rather fond of exploring his mother’s closet when she was out of the house.

No time like the present to test the thing out.

“Hands up,” he said, pointing the gun at his mother. She played along, laughing as she did so. A thin beam of blue light lanced from the gun and struck her in the abdomen.

“Oh my.” Her smile vanished. “That feels so—” The word ‘odd’ died on her lips. Her eyes rolled back and her body shrank in on itself. A moment later she collapsed—literally, into a heap of loose skin and clothing.

“Holy crap, it worked!” Kyle placed the gun on the dining room table, next to his untouched birthday cake, and bent over what remained of his mother. If what he knew of the costume gun was accurate, she would recall nothing of whatever transpired until the moment he chose to reanimate her. Gently, he separated out the skirt and blouse she’d been wearing, then her jewelry and undergarments, and finally the object to which her body had been reduced: a skintight bodysuit that reproduced Miranda Devlin in every outward detail. Or soon would.

He held it up by the shoulders, flipped the head forward—with its long dangling mass of brunette tresses—and located the zippered seam at the back. With a glance at the clock—there was just enough time—he lay the bodysuit on the couch. Then he dropped his pants, tore off the rest of his clothes and kicked them into the corner.

“Can’t believe I’m doing this,” he muttered, as he sat down and drew the legs of the bodysuit over his own. With his feet snugly entrenched inside Miranda’s, he was suddenly able to feel the carpet underfoot. Touching his toes felt like touching his own skin. Biting his lip, he pulled the suit up over his thighs. His legs grew thinner, into what could only be described as shapely, and utterly female. His mother had been underage when Kyle was born, and at thirty-five was still fitter than most women ten years younger.

Standing, Kyle tucked his privates into the suit and wiggled it over his waist. He gasped as the magic of the bodysuit rearranged his insides. Wonderingly, he touched the very opening from which he himself had emerged eighteen years before. The fact that it now lay nestled between his own legs seemed both miraculous and strangely appropriate.

The now-female Kyle worked the bodysuit over his torso and slipped his arms inside hers. When his hands popped into the suit’s gloves, his sense of touch quickly returned. They were his hands now, albeit with longer and better cared-for nails. With some difficulty, he pulled the suit closed behind his neck and drew the zip up his back. A moment later, the zipper track vanished, his spine reappeared and the breasts that graced his chest came wonderfully alive.

He cupped them in both hands, hardly daring to believe what was happening. From his neck all the way down to the tips of his painted toes, he was female. Not obviously his mother, of course, since this could be any woman’s body of the right age and general health.

And it was in very good health; that much was obvious. Kyle swore to himself that he’d never make fun of Miranda’s spin classes again. Not with results like this.
Only one thing left. He opened the neck of the attached headpiece, ducked his own head and pulled. It was a tight fit, but the bodysuit’s slick interior made it possible. At first, he couldn’t see a thing—nor could he breathe, since the mask covered eyes, nose and mouth alike. He fought for air, his fingers plucking at the seam, tugging it down to meet the lower part of the neckline. When the two came into full contact, the seam vanished and his face began tingling—painfully. Then, like a slap to the face, cool air rushed into his lungs. He opened his eyes.

Had it worked? He felt his face, noting the wide mouth and high cheekbones. He ran slim fingers through the dark hair that cascaded over his shoulders. Every last strand, as it danced across the skin of his back, left a sensory impression etched into the fabric of his mind. His mind went blank. It felt… beyond wonderful. A miracle.

Kyle arched his back and gave his head a shake. *What would Mom do now?* He checked the time. Well, she wouldn’t hang around the living room naked, he told himself. “Derrick will be here soon,” he said out loud, and inched himself onto the chest, fumbling the clasp shut. Then the wrap blouse and the short yellow skirt she had been wearing only minutes before.

To complete the outfit, he slid his feet into her open-toe slingbacks and tugged the narrow straps over his heels. He added dangling earrings to his now-pierced ears and slipped the bangles from her wrist over his own. It was done. If someone were to walk into the room now, they would see Miranda Devlin and no one else.

Kyle picked up his mother’s phone and checked the last message. “Be there at 7,” it said, although it was now ten-past.

In the bathroom he brushed his long tresses to bring order to the curls that floated across back and chest, then smiled for the camera. It was her smile, of course. All he had to do was keep it going when Derrick cracked one of his lame jokes and never in a month of Sundays would the man guess he was out on a date with his girlfriend’s son. "Well, why should he?" his image purred, smiling. "This is me—Miranda."

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The doorbell rang at half-past the hour.

“You’re late,” Kyle said, pouting, as she opened the door. “Just like always.”

“Sorry, babe.” Derrick slipped an arm around her waist and pulled her in for a quick kiss. “I was on the phone. The dude just wouldn’t stop talking.”

“Some big-shot client, I suppose.” She leaned against him. “More important than me?”

“Nope, but I’d have some serious ‘plaining to do back at the office, if I hung up on the guy.”

She rubbed his chest. “Oh, well. My big strong man-friend is here now.” She presented her lips for another, much longer, kiss. Derrick seemed eager to oblige. She returned his passion.
“Where’s the kid?” he said, when she finally let him inside. “Got his present right here.” He drew an envelope from his pocket. Cash, no doubt. Or gift cards. What Derrick lacked in creativity he more than made up for with extra zeroes.

“You just missed him,” Kyle said. “He couldn’t wait to wander off with his buddies.”

“Really? He has buddies?” He chuckled. “No offense. Always seemed like more of a loner.”

“He is, most of the time. Probably that bunch of boys from school. They were going to the pub anyway. He’s old enough for that now.”

“I see. So he’ll be gone for awhile.” It wasn’t a question. More like a statement of fact.

“I imagine so.” Kyle drifted toward the man, as though drawn by invisible hands. “We have the place to ourselves.”

“I like the sound of that.” Derrick pulled her into his arms and again their lips met. Kyle sagged against him, her face tilted upward. Slowly, one leg lifted from the floor. Her lips moved against his, and she moaned a little.

“We could go for a walk,” she said, coyly, when she was able. “It’s a lovely evening.”

“We could,” he said, grinning. He ran his hand through her hair. “But we won’t, will we?”

With a smile, she shook her head. “Your place or mine?” Her slim fingers stroked his cheek and its crop of rough stubble.

“You’re pretty handy.”

“So it is. And what do you know, there’s a nice big bed upstairs.” She dusted his lips with hers. “If we put our heads together, I bet we could think of something fun to do.”

“Two heads are better than one.”

“Mmm. Three heads are even better.” Her hand briefly slid between his legs. Then she led the way to Miranda’s bedroom.

As Derrick undressed, Kyle removed her skirt and blouse, and out of habit returned them to their proper place in the closet. The dresser provided her with a black negligee that seemed like a good bet to get the man’s motor revving, assuming it wasn’t there already. “Back in a flash.” She gave her hair a quick shake.

In the ensuite she removed her underwear and slipped the negligee over her head. It half-hid her breasts and shook out over her thighs. It wouldn’t stop him for long. Gazing at herself in the mirror, she took a brush to her long hair.

“You are quite the little tart tonight,” her image said. “The old Miranda wouldn’t fall into bed this quickly. She’d make him suffer.”

Kyle’s head tilted back as crimson nails stroked her throat. “But the new Miranda can’t wait, can she? She needs it bad.” Dark brunette tresses bounced against her back. “As for my darling Derrick… I think he deserves better, don’t you? A woman who appreciates his… attributes.”

Derrick was already in bed when she returned. Kyle joined him under the covers.

Without speaking, they kissed and their hands got busy. His tongue pried her lips apart and slipped inside. With their mouths engaged, their hands went to work. He caressed her breasts and gently tweaked her nipples, while she played his manhood like a clarinet—minus the lips.

“Softly,” he whispered, during a break between kisses. “Timing is everything.”

“I know.” She nibbled on his ear. “We certainly wouldn’t want you to pop off before I’m ready to rock… now, would we?”

“Mmm. You sayin’ you’re not ready to rock and roll?” His fingers probed between her legs. She clutched at his chest. “Oooh. Keep that up for another twenty minutes and I might be.”

“Twenty minutes? By that time I’ll be done and dusted, and halfway through my shower.”

“Don’t you dare!” She gripped his manhood. “As long as I’ve got this… you, my great big strong man, aren’t going anywhere.” He laughed. “Like I’d want to.” Their lips met once more. “I have to say, Mandy, you’re acting like quite the little nympho tonight.”

“I’m making up for lost time,” she said. “Does that mean you disapprove?”

“God, no! You’re every man’s wet dream,” he added, probing a little deeper.

“You’re my wet dream,” Kyle said. Long lashes fluttered and slim fingers locked onto the ‘third’ of their three heads. She didn’t let go.
There were no more words. Ten mind-blowing minutes later, Derrick turned ‘Miranda’ onto her back and mounted her like a stallion in heat. Her legs locked onto his thighs and together they fell into a rhythm that ended in his violent shudder and her prolonged squeal—one that could have been heard across the street, were it not for the closed and curtained windows.

That, Kyle realized, was what it must have been like for her the night he was conceived. And how appropriate that he should grow up to experience that same ecstasy in the body that bore him.

Kyle stroked the strong arms that encircled her. “That was wonderful,” she said softly.

Rough lips nuzzled her ear. “Of course it was, babe. I’m only the best.”

Playfully, she slapped at his hand. But it was true. He was the best she’d ever had.

In the morning, Derrick showered and left soon thereafter. Kyle retrieved the costume gun from the dining room, next to the now-stale birthday cake. She found the reversal switch, toggled it, and turned the gun on herself.

Her whole body tingled and—painfully—she felt the zipper track re-emerge from her spine. She fled back to the bedroom, flung the negligee in the hamper and drew the zip down her back. The bodysuit parted like the Red Sea. She extracted her head, then stripped the rest of the suit from her—now his—body. His mouth felt terribly dry and he was bathed in sweat.

“I so can’t believe I’m doing this,” he muttered, as he tidied the bed and arranged the bodysuit under the covers. He backed into the doorway, fired the gun at the pillow—and left his mother to awaken naturally.

Then he took his own shower.

An hour later, he was plowing through a plate of scrambled eggs when Miranda staggered in. She had washed her face and donned a thick robe. She collapsed into a chair at the table.

“That… that gun of yours,” she said, sounding exhausted. “What does it do?”

“It’s a prop, Mom. It doesn’t do anything.”

“No… it definitely does something. I remember you aimed it at me—and then I woke up in bed.”

Kyle shrugged. “You fell asleep after dinner. I had to help you up there.”

Her eyes narrowed. “I woke up naked. I do hope you had nothing to do with that.”

He shook his head. “You must’ve stripped down sometime after I left.”

She heaved a sigh and went to the fridge for orange juice. “I don’t feel all that rested,” she said, returning to the table. “And you know, I had the strangest dream.” Kyle’s ears perked up. “I was with Derrick. It was pretty erotic.”

Kyle muttered “lucky you”.

“Speaking of which…” She slapped the table. “He and I had a date last night. Was he here?”

He was not, Kyle claimed. “Dude’s not all that reliable, Mom. Kind of a stiff, really.”

“Now, Kyle. He’s been very good to you.”

So true, Kyle thought. And in ways his mother couldn’t begin to imagine.

A strange dream. He was on a date with Sophie, the girl who’d been after him since kindergarten. He’d never given her the time of day, yet here she was, writhing under him like a bitch in heat.

In a way, it was so ordinary. No talking dogs, no running away from some monster only your legs won’t work right. Just dinner, a movie, then back to his bedroom for a night of unbridled passion. His mother wasn’t around, so it was just the two of them. Love in the morning was followed by a day at a nearby amusement park, then another night of passion.

Few dreams last more than a few minutes, yet this one spanned a day and two nights.

He awoke. Abruptly. The room was still dark and his whole body ached, like he’d had no rest at all. Or far too much. He checked the clock. Six-AM. Only it was the wrong day; Saturday, instead of Friday. What the hell?

Kyle staggered into the kitchen, poured himself a glass of orange juice and collapsed into a chair. His mother was across the table, tucking into a large plate of scrambled eggs. Momentarily, they locked eyes. She looked… guilty.
He heaved a sigh. “Where’s the gun, Mom?”

She smiled, grimly. “In a safe place.”

“I see. So you figured out what it does.”

“I did. And quite the eye-opener it was.” She bit into a slice of toast with jam. “I certainly freaked out when you collapsed into a heap. Thought I might have killed you. But then I remembered, this is what you did to me, so maybe it isn’t fatal after all.” She laughed. “God only knows what prompted me to try the thing on. But I did.”

“Oh my God… You turned yourself into me? My own mother? And then ‘did it’ with Sophie?”

“Don’t get all ‘holier than thou’ with me, young man. Isn’t that exactly what you did? Derrick really was here the other night, wasn’t he? And you had sex with the man in my body.”

“Two wrongs don’t make a right, Mom,” Kyle groaned, his head in his hands. “Maybe not. But it does even the score.”

More dreams: college classes, dates with Sophie and nights of passion. Meeting her parents. “We always liked you, Kyle. We’re so glad the two of you finally got together.” His mother was never there; at the house or anywhere else. Or maybe she was everywhere. It was hard to tell.

Kyle awoke to find Sophie standing beside the bed, holding the gun. “We found an online user guide for this thing,” she said. “It says you’re supposed to reverse the process at least once a ‘twelvemonth’ or the bodysuit will degrade and maybe die. Can’t have that, can we?”

She fired the gun. Mom was standing behind her at the time, her arms crossed, looking guilty.

Classes, tests, dates... Christmas with Sophie’s family. Spring break and a trip to Disneyland. A summer spent tree-planting in British Columbia.

Sophie again, still with the costume gun. “We’re engaged. Your mother makes a way better ‘you’ than you ever did. Funny how that works.”

They never gave him a chance to talk. Not once.

Several years passed. He graduated and so did Sophie. The two of them got married. Sophie showed up with the gun propped against a very obvious baby bump. “For what it’s worth, you’re about to be a father,” she said. “We figured you might want to know.”

Sophie was pregnant for a second time. She was looking more grown-up, rather sophisticated in her own way. Miranda stood nearby holding their firstborn; a son, Sophie said. His mother looked older as well. Wearing a bodysuit didn’t seem to ward off the effects of age. Kyle found the time to wonder what he must look like by now.

Kyle found himself being studied by a pair of owlish eyes. The boy might have been eight or nine years old. “That’s so cool,” he said to the women standing behind him, one of whom held the costume gun. “So you’re sayin’ this really isn’t my real Dad? The nice old lady is my real Dad? And this Dad is just some guy I never even met before? Gee whiz!”

Years passed. The dreams blurred and seemed to merge together, like a movie montage. His mind could not hold it all. Like a bucket with too much water, the memories spilled over the edge and were lost. They belonged to someone else.

Too many dark rooms. Too many strange beds. Kyle no longer cared. He no longer tried to leap up and hurl himself at whichever woman was holding the costume gun. Whatever happened to him, it didn’t matter anymore. Nothing did.

Dream too long and too deep and you may be sure of one thing: the nightmares will come.
Another strange bed, but this time the overhead light was on. Miranda was there, holding the gun. But it wasn’t aimed at him. Instead, she dropped it onto the bed. “It’s all yours,” she said.

Kyle could barely speak. “How… long…?”

Miranda sank into a chair. She looked old. “How long? I dunno… thirty years? Thirty-five? I’ve spent nearly as long being you as I was me.”

His eyes cast about the room. They were alone. “Where… is she? Sophie…”

His mother sagged. “She—she died. Hit by a drunk driver.” Her body seemed to shrink in upon itself. “I’m done. Go ahead and shoot.”

Kyle managed to pull himself upright. In a mirror across the room he caught sight of a middle-aged man. He clutched at his face. He wasn’t eighteen anymore, not by a long shot. “You stole my life,” he said hoarsely.

“I know. It was wrong. I was in love. What more can I say? Just shoot me. I deserve it.”

A knock came at the door. A man walked in. He might have been in his early thirties. “I’m your son,” he told Kyle. He picked up the gun.

Kyle tensed himself for a blast that never came. The man ignored him. “You sure this is what you want?” Miranda stared at the floor and said nothing. The gun buzzed. Her body collapsed like a punctured balloon.

The man’s hands were shaking. He flung the gun onto the bed. “First my mother, now my father,” he said, caught between rage and sorrow. “All I’ve got left is you. And you don’t know me from Adam—which is my name, by the way.”

“I never meant this to happen,” Kyle said.

“Well, duh. Dad—Miranda, that is—she told me you started this by turning yourself into her. But the rest of it was all on her. They were happy, you know. Truly in love, if that matters.”

Kyle just shook his head.

“Man… you’re just a kid, aren’t you? Barely eighteen and this happens.”

Kyle licked his lips. “What am I—” His voice broke. “What am I supposed to do now?”

“Heaven and earth know that you were living with an older person, so you have to die.”

“Who knows? We’re kinda breaking new ground here. I dunno if this god damn thing has ever screwed up a family this badly before.” He bent to gather up bodysuit that had been Miranda, and her clothing as well. “As for me, I’m going to get dressed and blow this popsicle stand.”

Kyle’s jaw dropped. “What? Are you, uh…?”

“You got it. I’ve always had a thing for older women and now I’m gonna be one for awhile. You of all people should get that.” He paused in the doorway. “We bought a cottage in Miranda’s name, set up bank accounts and all that stuff. So don’t try and find me. Or us. Whatever. I dunno why you might want to, but even so.”

“She’s my mother,” Kyle said.

“Which makes her my grandmother. But she’s also my father—sort of. So your son is about to merge with his dear old Dad and turn into your mother, if that makes any sense.”

“Maybe it will… if I think about it.”

“Me too. But don’t be sad or anything. I’ll make sure the dreams of her golden years are pleasant ones. She deserves that much.”

Kyle was silent. He found himself of two minds on the subject, which seemed only appropriate.

“By the way,” Adam said. “My sister Kylie will be home in about an hour. She was named after you, oddly enough. She’s twenty-eight and hot. She’s also the biggest bitch you could ever hope to meet. We never got along, so…” He gestured at the costume gun. “Go ahead,” he said with a grim laugh. “Make the world a better place.”

When Adam was gone, Kyle picked up the gun. What did he have to lose? Better to be a beautiful woman than a teenage boy in a throwaway body. That was a truisim thirty-odd years ago and it was just as true now. One hour… He took a seat in the living room with a clear shot at the front door.