Orange Juice Coffee

By C. Jade Wyton

After a stressful night out with her friends trying to gather information, Tiffany spends some time with her boys. Unhappy with their treatment of the babysitter last night she has a serious talk with them, and tries to make sure they understand the severity of their behaviour.

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Tiffany had all but passed out the moment her head hit her pillow, and her dream had been feverous and terrible.

Some long stressful thing about the vampires and lindworm and demons all having some sort of party and tearing up the linoleum from her bathroom floor.

Her alarm had woken her just as she'd tried to run the bath only to have the faucet drip out a gelatinous cube, and she'd needed a moment to reorient herself before stumbling to her boys' rooms and attempting to wake them for breakfast.

The trio of them were all standing in the hallway, completely exhausted, when Trent had asked, 'Do we have to?'

To which Tiffany had simply sighed and answered, 'Oh, fuck it,' and all three of them had gone back to bed.

Tiffany was only a *little* bit ashamed of herself for it. But mostly, she was glad to have a day she could sleep in without feeling like she was letting her boys down.

It was just before noon when Logan crept into her room and gently shook her awake.

She rubbed her eyes and sat up as Trent put a plate and cup on her bedside table.

Eggs, bacon, toast, coffee— It was clearly an attempt at appeasing her after last night.

'Oh, look at that,' Tiffany chuckled; then she looked to her boys with concern. 'Did you use the stove without me?'

'Yes but, okay, before you get mad—' Trent started, raising his hands up in a submissive way. 'We found out that we're fireproof, so we're not going to burn ourselves!'

'Mm, that's good. But also not the *entire* point of it,' Tiffany gave a half-laugh, rubbing at her gills as she yawned. 'Did you remember to turn the stove off?'

'Yeah,' Trent answered.

Logan frowned. '*Did* we?'

'Yeah,' Trent repeated. 'Pretty sure we did.'

'Go check, please,' Tiffany instructed; grinning as Trent hurried out of the room. 'Thank you!'

'You're welcome!' Trent called back cheerfully.

It was a stark contrast to Logan's guilty silence.

He wouldn't meet his mother's eye as she sat up and moved the plate into her lap.
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‘This looks great, Logan, thank you,’ she said; trying to make it clear she was offering him a chance to have a conversation.

‘Yeah uh, Trent did most of the cooking,’ Logan admitted sheepishly. ‘He thought you might still be tired after last night and stuff and wanted to make you feel better.’

‘That’s very sweet of him,’ said Tiffany. ‘And I appreciate that you helped.’

A shy smile twitched at the edges of Logan’s lips, and Tiffany pet the edge of her bed as an invitation for him to sit down with her.

‘You know, it used to be Trent who was the troublemaker,’ Tiffany joked. ‘And now it looks like *you’re* the one goading *him* into things, hm?’

‘Only lately,’ Logan defended. ‘He been trying to behave because he wants you to act normal again.’

‘I see… so why are *you* misbehaving, then?’ Tiffany asked. ‘Do you want me to act different?’

‘I dunno,’ Logan let out a sigh, and swung his legs out absently as his brother returned to the room. ‘I want you to be happy. *Real* happy, not faked like when we first moved here. Even if it means things have to be different from before. And I want you to be honest with us and not lie again.’

‘Yeah, I’m sorry I had to lie,’ Tiffany let out a long, long breath and reached out to pet Logan on the arm. ‘You know I was just trying to protect you, right?’

Logan nodded; as did Trent.

‘Life’s gonna be pretty different now, isn’t it?’ Tiffany said, softly. ‘But it doesn’t have to be a *bad* different. If we all put some work in we can make it into a good different.’

Logan lifted his legs up so he could rest his chin on his knees. ‘Are you still mad at us about last night?’

‘Absolutely,’ Tiffany answered in a serious tone. ‘I’m still *very* mad at you both.’

The boys looked to their feet, shifting guiltily as they prepared for their scolding.

‘You *knew* I had to be somewhere important last night, and you *knew* I was going to be tired and stressed when I came home,’ she told them. ‘You *knew* that I needed you to behave for me— And you also *promised* me you wouldn’t try and summon demons in the apartment again! And it really hurts that you broke your promise. You boys *never* break your promises!’

‘Well… not the promises we make to *you,*’ Trent added.

Tiffany had to bite her lip to stop herself from chuckling at her son’s unnecessary admission. She picked up the coffee and held it up to hide her face, giving it a curious sniff as she did.

It smelt different.

‘Don’t be too mad at Trent, okay? It was all *my* idea,’ Logan admitted. ‘Trent just wanted to play Scrabble and Stardew Valley and eat ice cream. But I asked him to help me with what I wanted to do and— And—‘

‘And you always say we gotta look out for each other!’ Trent finished. ‘Even when we maybe shouldn’t.’

Tiffany snorted a laugh into her drink and shook her head playfully. ‘I have said that before, haven’t I?’

‘Yeah.’

‘Aw, *boys*…’ she sighed, taking a sip of her drink. ‘Oh. That’s different! I like it! Did you experiment?’

‘Yeah!’ Trent lit up at his mother’s compliment. ‘It’s got orange juice in it!’

‘Does it, now?’

‘Yeah!’

Logan cleared his throat loudly, and Tiffany let out a soft chuckle as she offered him her free hand.

‘Hon?’

‘You said last night that you were gonna punish us today,’ Logan pointed out. ‘Is that still happening?’

‘*Shh!*’ Trent hissed a whisper. ‘*Why would you remind her about that?!*’

‘*I don’t want to make her madder at us!*’ Logan whispered back loudly.

‘Oh, boys— Boys! Logan. I appreciate the honesty, hon,’ Tiffany put her drink back down. ‘Look. I… I don’t *want* to punish you, but I know you boys— If you don’t have *some* sort of consequence to make you think twice you won’t hesitate to do it again.’

‘Heh, yeah,’ Trent agreed with a nervous chuckle. ‘So… what’s the punishment?’

‘Well, let’s look at the crime, shall we?’ Tiffany moved her plate so she could cross her legs and make room for Trent on the bed. ‘First is the big one— Summoning a demon in the apartment when you promised me you wouldn’t. That’s *two* things there. Dangerous activities, and breaking your promise to me.’

‘Sorry, Mum,’ Trent apologised.

‘And then there’s poor Josie,’ Tiffany continued. ‘That girl went out of her way to try and make sure you boys would have fun, and you deliberately caused problems for her! I’m very upset that you would treat someone like that. I thought I could trust you to treat people with respect.’

‘*Sorry,*’ Logan mumbled.

‘Why did you misbehave so badly?’ Tiffany asked, moving so she could pet Logan on the back. ‘You’re both usually so good for me.’

‘I dunno,’ Logan shrugged. ‘She made me feel like a kid.’

‘You *are* a kid, hon,’ Tiffany sighed. She saw Logan shift uncomfortably at what she’d said and pulled him in for a hug. ‘I know it doesn’t feel like it anymore, when so much has happened. You feel like you’re four times as old as you are, don’t you?’

‘Yeah,’ Logan answered.

‘Yeah,’ Trent agreed.

Tiffany felt Trent lean into the hug from her other side, and opened her arm so he could cuddle into her. ‘*Yeah,*’ she echoed. ‘But feeling bad isn’t an excuse to hurt others and break promises. That only makes everyone else feel bad, too.’

‘I *know,*’ Logan whined.

‘Yeah. So let’s talk about your punishment….’

‘Um, I’d like to use this,’ Trent mumbled, pulling a folded piece of paper from his pocket and handing it to his mother. ‘And not get in trouble.’

‘Ah. I see,’ Tiffany took the paper. ‘I knew I was going to regret giving you this.’

‘Logan said you’d take it, no matter how mad you were,’ Trent told her.

‘Yeah. He’s right…. *Alrighty,*’ Tiffany let out a breath and tore up the paper. ‘Trent. Could you go out to the lounge, please, so I can talk to Logan alone?’

‘Yes, Mum,’ Trent obediently slipped off the bed and, taking the torn-up paper from his mother, headed out to the lounge.

He only half-shut the door behind him, giving B.B the opportunity to push his way in and scratch on his climbing tower.

‘Ah! There you are, you little bastard,’ Tiffany teased loudly. ‘I’ll have your nuts on a platter if you piss in the cupboard again!’

Though the cat ignored her, Tiffany heard Logan snicker and couldn’t help but grin as she stroked her hand gently over his head.

‘*Alright,*’ she said, half-sighing as she did. ‘Punishment, hm? Let’s see….’

Logan’s snicker turned into an anxious hum and he buried his face deeper into his mother; who continued running her hand over him, scratching along his scales with her nails in a comforting way.

‘I want you to write me an essay,’ Tiffany said.

‘An essay?’ Logan echoed, pulling back so he could look at his mother in confusion.

‘Yes, an essay,’ Tiffany confirmed. ‘At least one full page. About trust. Why it’s important, how it can be broken, and how to work on rebuilding it.’

‘Really? Is that… all?’ Logan asked, looking surprised. ‘You’re not gonna ground me, or tell me I can’t watch TV?’

‘Do you think I should?’

‘That’s how all our classmates get punished— Angela’s mum took her iPad last week cos she snuck chocolate biscuits when she wasn’t meant to.’

‘And did that make her think about what she did?’

‘No, it just made her sad.’

‘Mhm,’ Tiffany hummed her agreeance. ‘Exactly. I don’t think that sort of punishment would do you any good. I want you to think about why what you did was wrong; not make you miserable. So I need to be sensible.’

‘Oh…. That’s why you had to sleep on it?’ Logan asked.

‘Yep. Because if I tried to punish you last night when I was tired, I would probably have done something stupid and unreasonable,’ Tiffany told him. ‘Same thing as when I tell you to count to ten before coming back to something or screaming— Only I was *so* mad I had to wait twelve hours instead of ten seconds before dealing with it.’

‘Wow.’

‘Yeah, wow,’ Tiffany gave a chuckle, and brushed Logan’s headfin from his face. ‘Do you think an essay is a fair punishment?’

‘Hm…’ Logan scrunched up his nose. ‘Honestly? I was expecting a lot more— I-I mean, I don’t *want* more punishment! But I was expecting more after what we did.’

Tiffany just shrugged. ‘I dunno. I’m not used to having to punish you boys. I feel like I’m being too harsh.’

‘*No…*’ Logan gave a heavy, defeated sigh. ‘You’re *not*…. You’re being really nice about it. I dunno any other mums who’d be this nice about getting us in trouble.’

‘Well, most other mums don’t have boys half as good as I do,’ Tiffany said, pulling Logan in so she could peck a kiss on his forehead. ‘And I know there’s always a reason when you do something like this.’

‘Yeah? You think so?’ Logan leant back against his mother. ‘*I* don’t even know the reason I feel so weird, though.’

‘That’s okay, you don’t have to know these sorts of things,’ Tiffany reassured; her hand returning to gently pet her son’s head again. ‘Dealing with the bad stuff is my job, okay?’

‘Mm,’ Logan let out a sigh. ‘*I guess*…. I just… I dunno.’

‘You gotta trust me, hon,’ Tiffany echoed her son’s sigh. ‘Hm… well… maybe I should write one of those essays, too….’

‘*You?*’ Logan sat back up to look at his mother with confusion. ‘Why you?’

‘Cleary something’s gone wrong,’ she stated. ‘If I’ve made you feel like you can’t trust me to take care of the bad things.’

Logan shifted uncomfortably, though he said nothing.

So Tiffany took his hand and squeezed it. ‘We’ll get there, okay? We’ll work on it. And by the end of this mess we’ll be able to trust each other with *anything,* okay?’

‘You think?’

‘Yeah, I do,’ said Tiffany. Then, she gently nudged her son up out of bed. ‘Come on, let’s join Trent in the lounge.’

‘Okay,’ Logan nodded, motioning to Tiffany’s bedside table. ‘Don’t forget your breakfast!’

‘I won’t, hon,’ Tiffany picked up the plate and cup her boys had given her and followed Logan out to the lounge.

They joined Trent on the couch, and Tiffany picked at her food as her boys began to talk quietly to each other.

The food had gone cold, though she didn’t mind. She’d gotten used to her food going cold only weeks after her boys were born; she still appreciated their effort. And it wasn’t like it tasted bad— The coffee, especially, tasted fantastic. Even if it was a strange combination.

She sipped at it, watching her boys watch the TV.

‘Wow, isn’t Newkama Land cool?’ Logan asked, nudging his brother.

‘Eh. It’s kinda like if you mixed Aunt Ruby and Aunt Steph’s places together,’ Trent shrugged.

Tiffany snorted a laugh into her drink.

‘Mum?’ Trent turned to eye his mother. ‘You alright?’

‘Yeah, hon,’ she chuckled. ‘You’re funny. That’s all.’

Trent couldn’t have looked more proud of himself if he’d tried.

‘Mm! Actually, also,’ Tiffany put her drink down on the floor and motioned to her boys. ‘I want you both to apologise to Josie today, please.’

Logan groaned loudly. ‘But we *already* apologised—

‘Well, apologise again,’ Tiffany interrupted. ‘A proper apology this time; not rushed and while I’m yelling at you.’

‘I used my get out of trouble card, though!’ Trent complained. ‘You said I wasn’t gonna get punished!’

‘This isn’t a punishment,’ Tiffany said. ‘Its a responsibility. If you upset

someone you have to apologise. Even if you aren't in trouble. It's part of being a nice person.'

'Mm…' Trent looked like he wanted to argue but couldn't think of how; then he let out a defeated groan and leant back in his seat. 'Okay. You're right. We'll go apologise. C'mon, Logan.'

'What! *Now?*' Logan visibly winced.

'Yeah, now,' Trent poked his brother. 'Cos then it'll be done and we won't have to worry about it anymore. Right, Mum?'

'It doesn't *have* to be now, but you're right— The sooner the better.'

'Fine,' Logan whined, reluctantly turning off the show and letting himself be led out of the apartment. 'Oh! Aunt Ruby! Hi!'

'Hey numb-nuts!' Ruby greeted affectionately, and Tiffany glanced over the back of the couch to see Ruby was ruffling up her boys. 'How'd you go last night, huh?'

'We have to apologise to the babysitter,' Trent told her.

'*Woof,*' Ruby chuckled. 'That bad, huh?'

'Yeah,' Trent gave a sheepish laugh. 'We'll be back soon, we just gotta go apologise now.'

'Ah, great! Gives me some time to talk with your mum!' Ruby said as she shooed the boys into the hall. 'Gotta talk girl to girl!'

'About the vampire from last night?' Logan asked.

'Yeah, 'bout that exactly,' Ruby confirmed, slowly beginning to close the door. 'You boys go, and when you're done I'll give you some drugs! Just don't tell the cops a'ight?'

'You don't have drugs!'

'I do *so* have drugs!'

'No you don't!'

'Yeah! Mum would kill you if you came over with drugs!'

'Yeah!'

'A'ight, fine then! Don't believe me— More for me! See you, losers!' Ruby fully shut the door and, after straightening herself up and pushing back her hair, turned to Tiffany. 'So ay, right- Shamus, huh! He was a fucking deadly bloke weren't he?!'

'*Right?!*' Tiffany exclaimed, leaping off the couch so she could turn to Ruby properly. 'God, he was *hot!* And you see him regularly?!'

'Yeah, cunt! He's a beaut!' Ruby marched over so she could prop her leg up on one of the chairs and make a *very* sexual motion. 'Like a bloody bull, right? I tell ya, find a bloke who actually leaves you feeling satisfied and you've struck fucking gold! Did ya let him have a sip of ya?'

'You mean of my blood?' Tiffany clarified. 'No. He didn't bite me.'

'Aw, c'mon, the biting's the best part!' Ruby blew a raspberry. 'Did you even fuck him?'

'*No!*' Tiffany exclaimed. 'You know I went there for a reason!'

'Yeah, but that doesn't mean you couldn't have had a quickie in the car there or whatevs,' Ruby shook her head dismissively. 'Bloody hell, Tiff! Do I have to hold your hand to get you to sleep with someone? Or maybe I should just cut out the third party and fuck you myself!'

‘Oh, this again? You want to fuck me yourself?’ Tiffany felt herself grinning wickedly as she stepped over to Ruby and put her hands firmly on her own hips. ‘Just *do* it then, girl!’

For a second, Ruby paused; clearly taken aback by Tiffany’s answer (different from her usual joking rejections). Then she seemed to catch on to the forming game and returned Tiffany’s impish look. ‘Do what?‘

‘Fuck me yourself,’ Tiffany challenged, playfully. ‘You *always* talk about it, but do you ever actually *act* on it? No! Coward!’

‘I’m not a coward!’ Ruby mock-gasped, advancing on Tiffany and forcing the triton to step back a pace. ‘I’ll fuck you, right here, right now!’

‘Come on then!’ Tiffany egged her friend on. ‘Do it!’

‘I’ll do it! I’ll fucking do it!’

‘*Do it!*’ Tiffany teased; before immediately finding herself shoved backwards into the wall.

Ruby’s knee slammed against the wall beside Tiffany’s head, and Ruby had to bend down awkwardly to huff a breath into her friend’s face.

The look on her face was expectant; she was waiting for Tiffany to laugh and duck away as she grew closer.

But Tiffany didn’t. Ruby’s lips were only centimetres away from Tiffany’s own now— But she wasn’t going to back down. This was only the *second*-gayest spontaneous game of chicken she’d ever played, and she hadn’t lost the last time, either….

Tiffany knew that the best way to win gay chicken was to *commit*.

So when Ruby’s lips pressed against her own, Tiffany stuck her tongue in her mouth; surprising the tabaxi into pulling away.

‘HAH!’ Tiffany exclaimed as Ruby took a step back and gagged. ‘I win!’

Ruby was too busy licking the roof of her mouth to respond; a confused and disgusted expression on her face. ‘What is that *taste?*’ she asked. ‘Tiffany what did you *eat?!*’

‘Ah, that’d be the coffee Trent made me,’ Tiffany chuckled. ‘Thoughts?’

‘Coffee shouldn’t taste like that!’ Ruby scoffed. ‘Eugh! I would have won that if your mouth didn’t taste so foul!’

‘*Sure* you would have,’ Tiffany chuckled, wiping her mouth. ‘So you didn’t just come here for the gossip on Shamus, did you? Cos that seems like it could have been phone talk.’

‘Oh! Yeah, nah, I got you these!’ Ruby yanked her shoulder-bag around and rifled through it, pulling out some poorly-labelled disks. ‘I got you some bootlegs. Film Red, cos I know Logan’s been itching for that one and they just won’t fucking release the damn DVD! Uhh, I also got Spider-Verse…. Guardians of the Galaxies—‘

‘Galaxy.’

‘Yeah, yeah, whatever. They guard more than one galaxy, right?’ Ruby dismissed, taking out more DVDs and dumping them on the coffee table. ‘Elemental. Transformers…. And I filmed the new Mario Movie last night, for Trent. I know he’s been wanting that one. You’re gonna love it; Bowser’s played by Jack Black.’

‘Oh, be still my beating heart!’ Tiffany mock-swooned, fanning at herself for

effect. 'Jack Black as *that* reptile? *Whoo!*'

Ruby snickered loudly, petting her friend on the back. 'Too bad for you he's *clearly* gay— Hey boys! Apology go well?'

The front door opened, Trent and Logan rushing in, and Ruby cut the conversation there.

'Yeah, Josie was understanding,' Trent told her. Then he turned to Tiffany. 'Will she be watching us again? I liked her!'

'I didn't,' Logan huffed, marching back to the couch and sitting down with a dramatic sigh. 'She was annoying!'

'I don't know, boys,' Tiffany shrugged. 'She did a good job, given the circumstances. And she's close to home— If I can't get your grandmothers then I might have to ask her again.'

'*Ugh!*' Logan flopped over, and Tiffany shook her head as he let out another over-dramatic sigh. Then, after a moment passed, he rolled over to look at his mother. 'Did you get your blood drunk last night? With the vampires?'

'No,' Tiffany said, simply. 'Though that *was* my job there, they weren't thirsty…. What about you? Did that demon you summoned teach you any magic?'

Demon? Ruby mouthed curiously. *They summoned a demon?*

'No,' Logan replied. 'But he did answer a lot of other questions.'

'Like what?'

'Like that we're not evil.'

'I could have told you that, hon!' Tiffany chuckled, poking each of her boys on the nose in turn. 'You've always been good-natured. It's one of the things that makes me proud to be your mother.'

Logan smiled, despite clearly trying not to.

'Alright, well, I have to get to cleaning,' Tiffany told the boys. 'Do you want to help or watch TV?'

'Help!' Trent beamed.

'TV,' Logan mumbled.

'Telly for me, too,' Ruby added, grabbing one of the disks off the table and heading for the television. 'Oi, Logie, I got you Film Red!'

'*Oh?!*' Logan shot up straight; his entire demeanour changing as he began to excitedly smack his knees. 'It's out?!'

'Nah, I bootlegged it,' Ruby told him. 'But it's a *good* bootleg! Friend of mine in Aus took it and he was the only one in the cinema at the time— Weirdly common. Specially in Hoyts….'

Logan laughed as Ruby rubbed her chin, feigning deep thought, and put the disk in the DVD player.

Tiffany nudged Trent as the show started to load. 'Changed your mind about helping me?'

Trent shook his head. 'Nah. It's alright! I saw it already. And it's not fair if you gotta be the one to clean up when you didn't make the mess.'

'I appreciate it, hon,' Tiffany said. 'Come on. Let's start in the bedrooms; keep it quiet for Logan.'

'Kay!' Trent chirped, following his mother into his room.

It was a mess, though not as bad as the lounge. And it wasn't even a hard mess to clean; just some slime-soaked clothes that had fallen victim to the antics of last

night, and half a bag of biscuits that had somehow been scattered across the floor.

Logan's room, on the other hand, and as another thing altogether.

The boys had rearranged it completely; moving all the furniture so they could barricade themselves in and make room for the summoning circle they'd drawn on the floor in… *oh thank god it was just dry erase marker*.

'I suggested that,' Trent bragged at his mother's sigh of relief. 'Logan wanted to use a sharpie, but I reminded him about how mad you'd be if we wrecked the floor and we used a whiteboard marker instead!'

'You have *no* idea how grateful I am to you right now,' Tiffany laughed, wiping up what she could and then examining the wax on the floor. She made a mental note to perhaps book Logan into some sort of break room so he could destroy things in a less-destructive way, and then snorted a laugh. 'Hmm… heh…. You know, I'm surprised! All this through the whole apartment, but you didn't leave a single fingerprint in my room.'

'Well, yeah,' Trent mumbled as he toed sheepishly at the wax. 'That's your space…. Should I get the spatula?'

'No, no,' Tiffany shook her head. 'I don't want to scratch the floors. Let me try Prestidigitation; if that doesn't work we'll get some hot water.'

'Okay!' Trent beamed, moving to crouch by Tiffany's side. 'Can I watch?'

'Of course!' Tiffany laughed. Then, she put her hand down on a patch of wax and took a deep breath.

She wasn't sure it was going to work; she hadn't ever used the spell for wax before. Or pen….

She supposed it was up to the magic what it considered "soiled."

So she ran her hand along the wax on the floor and summoned up the magic deep within her….

And let out a laugh of surprise and relief as the wax crumbled and dissipated into nothing.

'That's such a cool spell,' Trent said, his eyes all but sparkling in awe. 'What made you learn it?'

'You did,' Tiffany put an arm around her son and grinned. 'When you and Logan were very little, I learnt the spell to help clean up your messes.'

'Really? What kind of messes?' Trent asked.

'Well, once you threw up on my favourite shirt,' Tiffany chuckled. 'I used magic so it didn't stain.'

'Could I learn it? Asmodeus said me and Logan could be sorcerers!'

'Hm…,' Tiffany tapped her chin thoughtfully. 'I dunno. Do you think I could trust you boys to use magic after all this?'

'Aw, you can!' Trent exclaimed, standing up and bouncing in place. 'You really can! Promise! I promise!'

'Okay! Okay!' Tiffany laughed, motioning for her son to crouch back down. '*Just* this one spell though, okay? And you can *only* use it for cleaning. Not pranks. Alright?'

'Yeah!' Trent nodded and sat himself down next to his mother again. 'Okay. Okay. How do I do it?'

'Well, it's a little hard to explain, but for me it's a feeling,' Tiffany told him. 'Deep inside me. Like a laugh that wants to come out. Or a happy shout.'

‘Yeah?’ Trent leant forward. ‘I have lots of those!’

‘Hah, I know, hon…. Here,’ Tiffany tapped one of the remaining spots of wax. ‘Put your hand on the wax.’

‘Okay!’ Trent obeyed; grinning widely when Tiffany placed her hand on top of his. ‘So what do I do?’

‘*Feel* the magic,’ Tiffany told him. ‘I’m going to cast it, too, and hopefully you’ll feel it in your own hand as it passes through to the floor. And then you might be able to get an idea of what you need to feel to use magic.’

‘Ooh, that’s a cool idea! Will it work?’

‘I have no clue,’ Tiffany admitted with a chuckle. ‘Okay, now. Focus, Trent. Deep breath. Feel the magic.’

‘*Mhm!*’ Trent hummed, his eyes widening and his voice dropping to a whisper as Tiffany began to cast her cantrip. ‘*I feel it*….’

‘Yeah?’ Tiffany giggled.

‘Yeah!’

Tiffany pulled their hands away so her son could watch the wax disappear.

‘Oh, wow!’ Trent exclaimed. ‘That’s so cool!’

‘You think?’ Tiffany asked, her grin only growing as Trent nodded. ‘You want to give it a go on your own?’

‘Yeah!’ immediately, Trent leant forward to place his hand on the last patch of wax.

He took a deep breath, clearly focusing very *very* hard….

And then when he pulled his hand away….

The wax had vanished.

‘I DID IT!’ he shouted, leaping to his feet. ‘MUM! MUM I *DID* IT!’

‘You did!’ Tiffany cheered, clapping for her boy. ‘You did it! I’m so proud— AH! NO! TRENT!’

Tiffany didn’t have time to dodge her son’s monstrous hug; he wrapped his arms around her, squeezing her so tight it almost hurt, and lifted her off the floor to spin her around.

‘TRENT!’ she squealed through her laughter. ‘Trent! Hon! Put me down! Put me down- *AH!* Trent! *Put me down put me down put me down—*‘

Finally, after about another six or so rotations, Tiffany was dropped to the floor in a dizzy, cackling heap. She rolled to her back, trying to stop the world from spinning as Trent sat beside her; his excited laughter echoing her own.

‘Did you see that?!’ he exclaimed, shaking her with glee. ‘Did you *see?!*’

‘I saw!’ Tiffany managed through her laughter. ‘I did! I *did* see!

‘I did it!’

‘Yeah!’

‘Yeah! I did it!’

‘You did! You did…’ Tiffany let out a long breath. ‘Oh, my god! Trent! Don’t *spin* me like that! I thought you were going to send me into *orbit!*’

‘Sorry, Mum!’ Trent apologised; his excitement unwavering as he bounced around the floor. ‘I just— I *did* it!’

‘You did, hon,’ Tiffany managed. ‘And I’m so, so proud of you.’

‘I’m gonna go clean the *dishes!*’ Trent exclaimed; leaping to his feet and rushing out of the room.

He left Tiffany laying flat on her back on the floor, staring up at her son's roof as she caught her breath.

Gods….

'You okay, girl?' Ruby asked as she appeared in the doorway. 'You dead or what?'

'I want more kids.'

'Hah! No you don't.'

—END—

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