

CHAPTER 9

‘CABIN RULES’

Inside of the cabin on the hill.....

An elderly Henry Minnelton sat within his favorite antique smoking chair, ‘SNA’ ‘SNA’ ‘SNORING’ like a Grizzly bear- with a newspaper rested upon his lap. His ginormous feet hung suspended from the chair within a pair of worn out socks that allowed both his big toes to ‘WA’ ‘WA’ ‘WIGGLE’ freely within the air.

[*Suddenly*] A blinding red light illuminated the four walls of the cabin just as a ‘SPA’ ‘SPA’ ‘SPINNING’ star statically appeared within the room and touched down upon the floor- right next to a mop and broom!

Alexus stepped from out of the ‘DA’ ‘DA’ ‘DANCING’ stargate’s bright center, before it swiftly ‘SPA’ ‘SPA’ ‘SPUN’ back into nothingness. She quickly looked across the cabin in the direction of Henry- who continued to snore and sleep, before she ‘TA’ ‘TA’ ‘TIPPY-TOED’ across the room- careful not to make a peep. She crept her way over toward his chair, stopping before a table covered in a cloth made of red silk, where she quietly removed a plate full of sandwich scraps- and a half empty glass of whole milk. She carried the dirty dishes over to a bucket of water and took a seat upon a nearby wooden stool, which had the same design as her gloves upon it*the stool was pretty pretty cool!* She began to ‘SCRA’ ‘SCRA’ ‘SCRUB’ the dishes- and next she would sweep and mop the floor, because even though Alexis had magical powers- she still had to do her daily chores.

One hour later.....

Henry Minnelton’s eyes ‘BA’ ‘BA’ ‘BLINKED’ open and shut, as he awoke from his slumber and ‘SCRA’ ‘SCRA’ ‘SCRATCHED’ his butt. He looked across the cabin toward Alexis, who sat quietly upon her stool- ‘GA’ ‘GA’ ‘GAZING’ out of the window in a zombified trance. She appeared sadder than the gray clouds in the sky above and her pain was so visible that it even made Henry- ‘SIGH’. It was the sting of loneliness, of which Henry knew all too well- he did! **“Alexus my dear- come her for a spellI need to speak with you- I do!”**, spoke Henry, as he leaned up within his chair.

Alexus stood from her stool and across the floor she “DRA’ ‘DRA’ ‘DRUG’, her big black boots slowly like a slug on a rug. She stopped to the near right side of his chair, while Henry’s inquisitive eyeballs gave her a good ‘STA’ ‘STA’ ‘STARE’.

“Where are you returning from Alexis?”, he asked.

“From working Papa”, she replied.

“Since when do we wear school uniforms to work?”, he questioned- as he eyed the Saint Mary’s skirt uniform that she still wore with a frown upon his face.

With these words- Alexis’s shocked eyes lit up like bright emeralds, as she glanced down upon the uniform- of which she had forgotten to change. She was- **BUSTED**- she was!

[*Suddenly*] Alexis’s uniform quickly morphed back into her pink tutu and rainbow shirt like chameleon’s skin- it did!

“Alexus how many times must I tell you Gatekeepers don’t involve themselves in such mundane foolishness- they don’t!Gatekeepers have full-time duties- they doDuties to protect the balance of dreams and not a minute to spare on silly children’s games!Let your guard down for one second and everything in the world goes horribly wrong- it does!Do ya want to experience another one of those awful Global World Wars- huh-do you!”, he ranted.

“Certainly not Papa!”, she replied- as she gazed down at her boots in shame.

“Well that’s exactly what can happen when the balance of dreams come into question AlexusI shouldn’t have to keep explaining these things to you- I shouldn’tYou need to do away with these desires to involve yourself within these fruitless mundane activities- you must! I truly grow weary of telling you these things- I do!It’s time that you get your act together- or I’ll have no choice but to find a suitable replacement for you!Now is this what you want me to do- is it?”, he threatened *.....he had all he could stands of the play dates- and he could stands NO more!*

“No Papa!”, she tooted.

“Well promise me!Promise me that you will stop these mindless children’s games of your Your over eighty years old Alexus- time ta start acting like it- you must!”, he demanded.

“Okay fine!I promise- I do!”.

“I’m not telling you these things to be mean- I ain’tI just expect better of you- I doLearn from all my mistakesYou must understand that responsibilities come before anything else in this world- they do!Gatekeepers don’t make friends, play games, nor chase after the mundane things of the average man- we don’t!Such things create vulnerability- they doHow many times must I remind you of the story of my so called friend The Fiddler!That power hungry mongrel made me choose between the world and the woman I loved, and to this day I don’t even know if I made the right choice- I don’tI let my guard down for one secondIt ruined my life and damn near destroyed the world as we know itI remind you constantly of this story because it’s my testament to just how bad such mistakes end- I do!Do you understand now Alexus- do you?”, he chimed- with the fiery conviction of a preacher.

“Yes- PapaI understand- I do”.

“The entire world as we know it depends upon your every actions AlexusYou must keep it safe from the dark dream energy that manifests itself through all of mans’ bad intentionsIt’s all your responsibility now my child- it isI just pray for the sake of the world that you live up to your full potential- I doCause I won’t be here to help you forever”, he stressed- wondering if she truly could handle such vital responsibilities if something were ever to befall him *.....it wasn’t that he didn’t believe in his daughter’s capabilities; it was more her reckless curiosity that troubled him so!If she could just overcome her fascination with childish things; he knew that she would be the best darn Gatekeeper to ever have worn the bootseven better than him!*

Henry then eyed Alexis up and down from head to toe, before his bushy eyebrows frowned and he said- **"I wonder why it is that you still do not grow?You still don't look a day over nine- you don'tI think we've been duped- we have!"**.

"But I'm almost as tall as you PapaWe're small people with big flippers-we are!It runs in our genes- it does!", tooted Alexis.

"I hope you've been working on your anger, because that kinda stress isn't good for the old blood beater- it ain't ...Has it given you any problems?", questioned Henry.

"Not one single problem has it given meI got the best darn ticker in the universe- I do!".

"That's good to hear- it isBecause we need you nice and healthy- we do".

"I've been eating plenty of veggies and fruits just like you said PapaLots!"

"Excellent- that is!I'm proud of you Alexis We can't have ya losing all your teeth now- can weI can't understand why you don't grow anymoreI think it's about time for me to start asking a few questions- it is".

"But- I love being a kid Papa!I wanna be a kid forever!"

"That's the silliest thing I've ever heard uttered- it is!Now you stop speaking such nonsenseWe'll find a way to fix this problem- we will!" barked Henry- instantly knocking the smile from off her little face.

"But-but- but!....."

"BUT NOTHING!Now take yourself outside and collect some firewood for supperAnd make sure they're thick logs and not those little scrawny branches ya brought back last time", ordered Henry. *He was fed up with the Peter Pan talk- he was!*

"Yes- Papa", she replied- before she turned and headed for the door.

"One day soon Alexis- you'll blossom into the greatest Gatekeeper to ever liveI just know it- I do", he sang out- as she exited the door.

With these words spoken- Henry lifted the newspaper from his lap and **'SCA' 'SCA' 'SCANNED'** it for the latest headlining news.

[Suddenly] Henry's bushy white eyebrows took a low dive!

"THE KING OF POP 'DA' 'DA' 'DEAD' DDD!".

Outside the cabin on the hill.....

Alexis **'MA' 'MA' 'MARCHED'** through the thick bushes and towering trees, past the working ants and **'BA' 'BA' 'BUZZING'** little bees- until she came upon her thinking rock. She stepped over to the small boulder and upon it she sat atop, as the deer watched from the distance and the bunnies **'HA' 'HA' 'HOPPED'**. She placed her hands beneath her chin and slumped her shoulders down low, getting lost within discontentment- which increasingly began to grow. **"Stupid Papa!Why can't I have fun and make friends like a real kidIT AIN'T FAIR- IT AIN'T!"**, she cried- to herself.

The little golden heart deep within her chest began to 'BA' 'BA' 'BEAT', her face muscles did 'TWA' 'TWA' 'TWITCH' as her body did flood with 'HA' 'HA' 'HEAT'. Her rainbow shirt began to 'GA' 'GA' 'GLITTER' blue-it did. **"It ain't fair- it ain't fair- it ain't fair- it ain't!"**, she wailed- while 'SNA' 'SNA' 'SNIFFLING' and 'WA' 'WA' 'WIPING' tears from her eyes.

A little raccoon within the forest heard Alexis's sniffles, so it climbed down from a nearby tree, scurried over and placed a comforting paw upon her right knee.

"What do you want you stupid rac!Go away!Leave me be- you must!", she snapped- but the raccoon did not leave. It 'WA' 'WA' 'WAIVED' it's paws and 'SQEE' 'SQEE' 'SQUEEKED', as the tears began to 'RA' 'RA' 'ROLL' down poor little Alexis's cheek.

"GO ON YOU STUPID RAC!BEAT IT!", she barked out. Of the friendly little raccoon she just could not rid, it stayed knowing that she needed a shoulder to lean upon.....

.....*Oh yes it- 'DA' 'DA' 'DID'!*