



The Weekly Man

Episode 68: Friday - Jacques

The rumbling emptiness in Jacques' stomach almost hurt.

I need to eat.

He leaned over to the table by his bed, opened a drawer and took out a granola bar.

Why have I been waking up so hungry lately? Active dreams? New persona needs more food?

As he chewed, he remembered feeling a female presence in his sleep but he shrugged it off to his new persona manifesting herself in his writing psyche. Sunlight beat against the curtains covering his bedroom window. What sunlight penetrated the blue material of the curtains spread a bluish hue throughout the room that relaxed him. After finishing his granola bar, he lay in bed for a while, past the time he normally rose to slip into his female persona and write. He didn't feel like writing. At least, not just yet. He just wanted to lie in bed and think about nothing in particular.

He was happy with The Insufferable Bitch's first novel. It was kinky, light-hearted, kinky, speculative fiction at its finest, kinky, and the entire story had simply jumped out of his head as though it were a memory.

A thought suddenly jumped into his head.

I think I'll publish Jasmine's last book today. And to go along with the publication, I think I'll announce that Jasmine Jackson, illustrious creator of the laundromance and author of numerous books set in laundromats, has passed away.

Because she fucked up an email.

Oh well...change.

He sat at his writing desk with fingers over the keyboard, smiling, satisfied; in fact, happy. Jasmine's last novel was published and available in both print and ebook versions. He loved the ease and speed of online publishing. He had tools that automated every step of the publication

process from converting the manuscript to both print and ebook formats to distribution to the online bookstores and distributors. Some went directly to readers who subscribed to his books, straight into their digital libraries. They didn't even have to order them.

He had an automated marketing system for his books. He filled in a few fields with information about his latest novel and the software drew from previous marketing campaigns to build a whole new campaign. It sent copies to reviewers, announcements to readers' groups, media releases to news and social media sites and a variety of other marketing devices that would insure blanket coverage of the book by the end of the day.

Now, it was time to release the announcement of Jasmine Jackson's unfortunate passing. This would also fly out into the world through templated programs that would have word of Jasmine's death reaching around the world within an hour. Jacques let his right index finger fall onto the Enter key and press.

And that was the end of Jasmine Jackson.

Time to eat. Again.

Jacques loved Chinese dumplings. There was a dim sum restaurant on the far side of the park. He'd just barely scratched the pantry today. He'd slept in, published a book, killed off the author and now he was walking through the park on his way for dim sum. Busy day.

He smoked a cigar as he walked. It was unusually warm for this time of year, some kind of freak thing with wind currents according to the weather network. Even with a light jacket he could feel a buildup of sweat under his arms. But his mind was elsewhere. He wondered how Judy Armstrong was going to take Jasmine's death. Given that she felt that all of Jasmine's novels were coming from her imagination, would she have to start writing her own books? Or would she blame some other writer for stealing her stories? Would she experience some kind of psychic death? Or would she just have another glass of wine and order a copy of Jasmine's last novel?

He wondered how many news sites would run his media release? How many of them would contact his automated agency for more details? How much of an impact would Jasmine Jackson's passing have on the civilized world?

A group of three joggers heading his way stared at him with what looked like distain. One of them shook his head as he passed Jacques.

What's their problem?

It crossed his mind as strange that they were the only people he'd seen so far and he was almost halfway through the park.

Must be an off night for the runners. Maybe they all switched to Pilates.

He felt a little sad about Jasmine's passing. She'd been a part of him for years.

Or had I been a part of her?

He didn't think it mattered. She'd written some wonderful laundromances.

A couple holding hands walking toward him looked at him with the same seemingly distaste as the joggers. They looked him up and down, frowning, as they passed him.

What's wrong with everybody tonight?

He shrugged it off.

Their problem.

He wondered how his first novel as The Insufferable Bitch would sell. He'd have to come up with a whole new marketing approach to feed into the templates but he already had a website and a blog. Now it was just a matter of filling them with content and building some hoopla before the debut novel from the world's next big erotica sensation.

He wondered what a laundromance written by The Insufferable Bitch would be like.

All those machines. All that soap.

He was nearing the far end of the park. He could almost taste chicken-filled dim sum. Another couple passed by him, frowning. Looking him up and down.

What? What?

He looked down. Black nylons. Straps. Black see-through bodice.

Oh shit.

For the first time in his life, he was thankful that he didn't have an erection.