

**Chapter Eighteen in which Magnus checks in, Val checks him, and a bum is smacked a little too hard.**

By the time Magnus Anderson and Val had arrived at the reception desk at the Atlantis hotel on **Paradise Island**, Val had invented a female friend that she was to meet and share a room with later. She asked the bellhop to store her bag for just a few hours, pretending the reservation was under her friend's name and that she would rather wait for her before checking in.

Turning to Magnus, she asked if he would be willing to entertain her for a bit while she waited, proposing drinks in the **casino**. He readily agreed and Val hung on his arm as he was checking in, paying close attention to the process. When Val saw the name and address on his identification she almost choked, but managed to hide her confirmed suspicions by once again dropping her purse. This was too much ... he really was the father of that idiot that they were looking for. She had begun to wonder in the limo, but the **address in Toronto** was familiar from their recent search for Andy.

Frank and Val, Vinnie not being much of one for internet searches, his skills lying more in the practical arena, had gotten as far as finding out that Andy hadn't been home to see his father in over a year and that they had a strained relationship. They were also well aware of the \$10,000 dollar reward Magnus had offered, despite being worth upwards of \$50 million, if the papers were to be believed. Real estate can be a profitable business, as she and Frank had discovered, and now this magnate, Magnus, was right beside her. Magnus the Magnate, Val thought to herself and almost burst out laughing. She had to tell Frank and Vinnie and take a minute to figure out how to play this. Val also knew Magnus was currently single, a detail she thought she would leave out when talking with Frank.

After waiting to make sure she heard Magnus' room number, not that she had much doubt he would give it to her later if not sooner, Val melted away having asked the receptionist where the ladies was, and promising to meet Magnus at the black jack table in 15 minutes. Turning to wave, but actually watching for him to make his way towards the elevators, she ducked into the ladies and quickly checked her phone. 203. Whew, they had managed to

get a room on a low floor and she could take the stairs and avoid awkwardly bumping into Magnus.

"Vinnie, let me in," she whispered when she got to the room as if someone were watching, and then caught herself feeling nervous and shook it off. She rapped more loudly on the door, and heard Vinnie growl, "Who's it?"

"Just me, who are you expecting? The Holy Ghost? Open up."

"Room service," Vinnie replied. "I was hoping for my steak."

"Steak? You already ordered? We just got here."

"I was hungry. Why are you here? Magnus a dud?"

"No, not at all my ravenous friend. Oh, there you are." Val turned as Frank came out of the bathroom, and walked over and gave him a kiss. "You will never guess who he is."

"Then why are you making me wait?"

"No need to be so snarky. He is Andy's father! But I didn't react ... just excused myself and came straight here," Val replied in a more conciliatory tone.

"Straight here?" asked Frank, always cranky when she was the bait, but always agreeing to it, which made Val a little cranky too.

"After a little diversion to the ladies," she quickly added having anticipated him. "No worries. And I am meeting him for a drink in," she looked down at her phone, "7 minutes. So you can look over his room, if you wish, number 735."

Frank looked at her with undisguised admiration, his crankiness evaporating as he started to scheme, greed managing to wash all other emotion away.

"You better get down there then. And make an impression," he added, smacking her a little too smartly on the bum as he hustled her towards the door.

