



*And He Called Him Macaroni*

*By Jessica Freely*

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Paul tried to quell the excitement roiling in his stomach as he adjusted the powdered wig on his head and examined himself in the men's washroom mirror. He was all decked out in eighteenth-century dress, complete with frock coat, knee britches and hose. He even had shoes with buckles. If

he'd had to make his own costume, he'd have been lost. Thank gods for Campau's Costume Rental.

But it wasn't his detailed period costume that had him excited. It was the prospect of tonight's party and the chance to get to know a certain somebody a little better. Paul had been working at the Ferndale GLBT Community Center as a volunteer coordinator for about two months now, and he'd had a crush on his boss, Edmund Raines, since his second day on the job.

Edmund was everything Paul wasn't. Educated, classically handsome, refined. He had a master's degree in master's degrees. Paul had dropped out of high school and come up through community service from the inside, starting out as a teen runaway in an outreach program in Toledo, then taking odd jobs at first one glbt center and then another, and finally at the age of thirty-two, gaining

enough experience to be a coordinator. Paul was fascinated with Edmund's dark good looks, his sophistication, his sense of entitlement.

But so far Edmund had been scrupulously polite... and remote. Though they worked closely together every day, Edmund had yet to give Paul a single sign that he was picking up any of the signals Paul was sending him. At first Paul had thought Edmund just wasn't interested. His curly red hair and snub nose were not everybody's cup of tea, though he had an ass you could bounce a quarter off of. But then he discovered that Edmund didn't date at all.

In fact, he was rumored to be straight.

Could it be? Paul didn't believe it. But something was holding Edmund back from enjoying a full social life and Paul was determined to help him past it, whatever it was. Starting tonight. That's why Paul had

chosen a period costume for tonight's fundraiser -- a masquerade ball to raise money for their new arts program. Paul had mentioned in passing that he enjoyed a recent PBS documentary on the Napoleonic Era. This get up would be the perfect conversation starter. Paul hoped.

The main foyer of the GLBT center was packed with men and women in every kind of getup imaginable. There were four different Rosie the Riveters, easily six cowboys in assless chaps, even one brave soul in a Sponge Bob Square Pants costume. Paul scanned the room for Edmund, but didn't spot him. He made his way to the punch bowl for fortification.

Sipping Seven-Up and cherry juice, Paul circulated. "Paul! Paul! Over here!" It was Andy, standing with Darnell and Vivienne, all three of them sporting blue velvet evening gowns and updos.

"Let me guess," said Paul. "The Supremes?"

Andy cackled and slapped his shoulder. "You got it sugar!"

"We're going to do a song later," said Vivienne.

"Oh, I can't wait."

"Liar," said Darnell. "You'll be in the men's room with you know who if you get half a chance. We know... we know."

Paul blushed. He'd tried to keep his crush on Edmund a secret, but that was easier said than done. No point in denying it now. He cleared his throat. "Have you seen him?"

"You look like a macaroni," came a voice from behind him.

Paul knew the voice, but even if he hadn't, the frozen looks on the faces of the Supremes would have told him who it was. He turned and saw Edmund standing there, his face, as ever, bland and unreadable. He wore a dark suit, and a white shirt, and a thin black tie. The outfit suited his trim, broad-shouldered build.

He looked pretty much like he always did, his thick dark hair -- a little grey at the temples -- combed neatly, his clear, grey eyes piercing beneath straight brows, his high cheekbones, slightly thin nose, well-shaped lips...

These observations did nothing to calm the thoughts tumbling about in Paul's confused brain. Had Edmund heard them talking? Why wasn't he in costume? Macaroni? It was this last that finally found expression. "M-m-macaroni?" If Paul's voice had broken in an adolescent squeak, he couldn't have been more mortified. Edmund must think he was a total moron.

Edmund nodded. "Yes. In eighteenth-century Britain it was a slang term for young men of fashion suspected of indulging in the unspeakable vice."

Paul wasn't sure what Edmund was talking about but it made him hot. He swallowed another mouthful of punch and

dared to step closer to Edmund.

“Unspeakable vice?”

“Sodomy, as it was known at the time. Both parties were subject to death by hanging if caught. Even if the act was not consensual.”

“That’s not fair.”

“The world does not tend to be fair to those who live outside its conventions.”

Edmund talked like that all the time. Paul loved it. “Can I get you a drink?”

Edmund shook his head. “I’ll just get a bottle of water.”

“Let me,” said Paul. “And you can go change into your costume.”

Edmund blinked. Paul sensed he’d made a mistake. The corners of Edmund’s mouth curled in a rueful smile and he looked down at himself. “I’m afraid this is my costume.”

Oh shit. Way to go, Einstein. “I’m sorry. I should have...” Paul’s voice trailed off. He couldn’t quite muster the gall to

pretend he knew who Edmund was supposed to be.

“It’s okay. He was before your time. Rod Serling. Host of a television program called--”

“The Twilight Zone!” Paul couldn’t help it. Joy at actually getting one of Edmund’s references just burst out of him. He even bounced a little on the balls of his feet.

It seemed that his exuberance even affected Edmund. He smiled, a real, genuine smile. Paul stared, memorizing the expression. “Yes. The Twilight Zone. It’s a favorite of mine. I have all the episodes on DVD.”

Paul nodded. “My older brother used to watch it.”

“Your older brother.” Edmund nodded. For a moment there, he’d loosened up and Paul had dared to hope he might be getting somewhere, but now, he was tense again. What had Paul done to

make him uncomfortable? Whatever it was, he'd probably never find out. "I'm going to go get that water," said Edmund. "Excuse me."

Paul watched Edmund walk away, hope dying inside him. He might as well just go home, he thought as he drifted back toward the refreshments. All around him, people were talking, flirting, laughing. There'd be a lot of hookups tonight. If he just wanted sex, he could connect with somebody else here, sure. But it wasn't that. He wanted Edmund, damn it.

Suddenly he felt like a prize ass in this costume. What had he been thinking? He knocked back the rest of his punch.

Tilting his head back unbalanced his wig and it slid off. It struck Sponge Bob on the shoulder and bounced into the punchbowl, where it floated like a bloated swan. Margaret, who was in charge of refreshments, gave him a look. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry," said Paul, fishing the wig out.

It had a big pink splotch on it. Stray white hairs floated in the punch. "I like your Annie Oakley outfit," he said lamely.

As he fled for the men's room, he heard Oscar, dressed as Oscar Wilde -- *that* much Paul knew -- say, "Time to switch to beer."

Furious, disappointed and humiliated, Paul opened the door to the men's room as quietly as he could. The last thing he wanted now was to attract more attention. As he stood at the sink, trying to get the pink punch out of the wig and only succeeding in spreading it around, he heard a voice in one of the stalls.

"You idiot. What were you thinking?" The voice was quiet, barely more than a whisper, but Paul recognized it just the same. "A macaroni? Why are you always trying to impress him? Face it. You're too old for him. It's pathetic."

Paul swallowed. The wig, forgotten, slipped from his hands and fell to the floor.

Feeling as if he were wading through Jello, he approached the stall door. He tapped on it softly. "Edmund?"

Silence.

What should he do? What if he was mistaken? What if Edmund was talking about somebody else? Macaroni? No. He could not possibly have called two people a macaroni in the short time he'd been at the party. "Uh... Look, Edmund. I think... I don't think... You're not too old for me. The macaroni thing was interesting. I like..."

Suddenly the door swung open violently. Edmund, fully clothed, red-eyed and breathing hard, glared at him. "I don't want your pity, Paul. I'm easily fifteen years older than you. You're a nice guy, but don't make this worse by pretending. Just go."

One thing Paul had learned about himself was that when pushed, he pushed back. He put his hands to the sides of the

stall door and stood there, blocking Edmund in. "No. Don't tell me how I feel. I picked this costume out because I wanted an in with you. I've been trying to pick you up since my second day here. I don't care about any age difference. I don't care if you know stuff I don't, and, by the way, vice versa. I like that. I like hearing about macaronis and the Twilight Zone. I like you."

Edmund, his carefully maintained mask of control shattered, just stared at him, mouth open. Paul didn't give him a chance to argue any further. He took one step into the stall, pulled Edmund to him and kissed him.

Their lips crushed against one another, hot and wet. Edmund gasped and then, just as Paul feared being pushed away, Edmund brought his hands up to cradle Paul's head and deepened the kiss between them. "I can't believe it," Edmund gasped. "Really?"

Paul hugged Edmund closer and reached down to squeeze his hard, lean ass. "You're not so smart about everything."

Edmund swallowed and ran an exploring hand beneath Paul's frock coat. He stroked Paul's back, then swept around to the front, tunneling beneath layers of lace to find Paul's nipple and pinch it. Paul gasped. "So I take it you forgive my truculence?" Edmund asked.

"Mmm. I love the way you talk. You make me so hot." Paul ground his hips against Edmund. He was already so hard. Pulling back and looking down, he saw Edmund's erection tenting the front of his black straight-leg slacks. He kissed Edmund again and then got to work on that fly.

Edmund had his work cut out for him with Paul's costume but before long, lace and velvet lay scattered all over the stall floor, and Paul was on his knees, sucking Edmund's cock. Edmund ran his

fingers through Paul's curls, and moaned. When he came, he clutched Paul's head, his hips jerking. Paul greedily swallowed every drop.

Edmund drew him up to kiss him again. "It's been awhile since I've tasted myself in another man's mouth," he admitted.

"People around here thought you might be straight."

Edmund snorted. "Hardly. Just... rather a geek I suppose, would be the current vernacular."

"I don't know anybody else like you," said Paul. "That's what makes you so exciting."

Edmund smiled, warmth touching his cool blue eyes. "Do you have protection? I'd like you to fuck me but I hadn't expected--"

"Yeah. Wait."

Paul picked his frock coat up off the floor and fumbled through it until he found

the right pocket. He pulled out a condom and little tube of lube.

“Oh,” said Edmund with a tone of pleased surprise.

Paul grinned up at him. “I had plans for you.”

It was spectacular to see Edmund, normally so restrained, tousled and blushing and grinning.

“Turn around.”

Edmund leaned over the toilet, braced his hands against the back wall of the stall and spread his legs. Paul kissed and bit at the back of his neck while he worked lube into Edmund’s hot channel. Edmund shuddered and groaned. Paul worked one finger into the hot body, twisting and curling it until he found the prostate. He worked the gland, not caring if Edmund’s shouts alerted the entire party to their activities. He just hoped Edmund didn’t realize it.

Paul got another finger into him and scissored them, stretching the now-relaxed muscle. Unable to wait a moment more, he tore open a condom with his teeth and rolled it down his straining shaft. Edmund looked over his shoulder and gave him a reckless grin. "I don't suppose there's any chance they haven't noticed."

"It's too late now," Paul agreed.

Edmund nodded.

Paul guided his hard cock between Edmund's ass cheeks and nudged at the rosebud of his hole. He pressed in, gasping at the hot, tight sensation. Edmund moaned and breathed, "Yesss."

Once fully seated inside him, Paul paused, giving Edmund a chance to acclimate. Sooner than he would have expected, Edmund pushed back against him. That was all the encouragement Paul needed. He grabbed Edmund by the hips and pumped in and out of him in a steady rhythm. The exquisite feeling of being

surrounded and squeezed by wet heat sent his head reeling and his balls clenching. With all this anticipation and drama, he wouldn't last long. He reached around and grasped Edmund's revived cock in one hand, pumping it. "God, Edmund. I've wanted you for so long..."

"Yes. Yes, Paul. Me too. I-- ahhh!" Edmund shot so hard it hit the wall in front of him. The ripples of his orgasm milked Paul's cock and pulled his own orgasm out of him. He came hard, slamming into Edmund one more time and holding him there as he pulsed.

When they separated, they looked at each other, both a bit sheepish. "What now?" said Edmund. "We have to work together."

"Let's see how it goes. First, we have to go back out there."

Edmund swallowed.

They gathered the scattered bits of their costumes together and got dressed

again as best they could. Taking a deep breath, they left the men's room.

To find all their co-workers lining the hallway outside.

"It's about damn time!" yelled Margaret, raising her toy pistol in the air in celebration.

"Macaroni indeed, sir," said Oscar.

The Supremes launched into their rendition of, "You Can't Hurry Love."

*xxx*

*Prompts used to write this story:*

*macaroni*

*tie*

*truculent*

*chaps*

*Sponge Bob*

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