

The Mischievous Mayor

By Lily Coutre

The day started off as every other day did. I woke up next to the empty bed where my wife sleeps, I heard her making me breakfast downstairs, and I got up to start my repetitive day. As I make my way downstairs I hear my wife, Hayley, humming delightfully. This was one of the mornings where she wasn't annoying me immediately after waking up - she seemed joyous.

I walked into our kitchen smelling fresh bacon and pancakes. She had already set up everything on the table for us and was about to sit down, but the phone rang. She said "I'll get it honey, start eating," smiling as she walked away to the phone. I noticed something weird in the edge of my pancake, a pill? I took it out of my food and pocketed it, thinking it was another one of her tricks to try to get me to take vitamins. Hayley was always saying how I had to live longer considering our age difference. She sat down politely and started to eat, we never talked much during breakfast because there was nothing to talk about. I mean we live together and she basically has nothing to do all day besides pamper herself with my hard earned money. "How are things with the town?" she questioned me.

I responded with "Good. Nothing new since we previously talked about the smog thinning." She gazed at me with her big brown eyes as if I was lying, which of course I was. I only lied to her about the town stuff because she was too intrigued by it, almost obsessive at this point. I was the mayor, not her.

As the weeks pass on, Hayley continues to try to hide the pills in my breakfast. I continue my daily routine except every Thursday I stop in the coffee shop to grab a coffee before heading to my office at the town hall. I stopped into Courtney's Coffee Shop that she took over from her brother a while back after he passed. "Good morning, Courtney," I said, "How's business today?"

She looked more tired than usual this week, "Still slowing down, but hopefully will pick up soon. Do you want the usual today?" she questioned.

"Yes please and thank you," I said as she started pouring my coffee. I wonder why business is slowing down these days, maybe she could start advertising more. I grabbed my coffee and headed into the office where the rest of the council was probably waiting for me.

As I walked through the foyer of the beautiful townhall I remodeled a few years ago, I heard loud chatter from everyone. "Thank god you're here, Ervin," she said, "the smog thinning starts soon." I had completely forgotten about that, it was all starting tomorrow. I wouldn't say I'm scared but I'm definitely concerned, but I would never tell the rest of the council that.

"There's nothing to worry about, we've been planning this for months and we need to see if we can fully lift the smog from the town," I said. They all nodded and looked reassured that I said I wasn't worried. I mean there really isn't a reason to be worried because when we remodeled the town hall we made it a safe house for us for a time like this. We all adjourned the meeting, and I moved to my office. I loved

my office more than my own home: it was the only space where my wife couldn't interrupt me, and I was respected here.

As I sat down in my big office chair, I pulled out one of the pills Hayley had been putting in my breakfast to research what it was- just out of curiosity. As I typed in "thallium" into my computer, hundreds of articles popped up... "prisoner's poison" as it was also referred to. It was a slow painful type of drug that is used. I sat back, appalled. Who do I go to about this? Am I supposed to report her? There were a million questions that were scattering my brain. I felt powerless and used. After all I gave her and everything I've done for her, she tries to kill me? I walked home that day still unable to process what I discovered that morning. I walk in the front door, and she greets me as she usually does, hugging me and a kiss on the cheek, god I need to push her off! I couldn't take it anymore, so I started yelling. "What is wrong with you?!" I screamed. She looked at me frightened and confused, until I pulled out the pill and put it close to her face.

Her eyes grew wide and her face sank deep into her bones. She looked at me and began to speak, "I-I don't know what to say, I didn't think you would notice."

"You didn't think I would notice you trying to kill me??" I yelled. There was nothing she could do to fix this.

This is when she became too confident, "You never deserved to be the mayor of this town, you don't even care that you're basically drugging thousands of people," she yelled back. I grabbed her by the arm and took her out the front door

to my car. I started driving towards the police station and neither of us had anything to say, there's nothing to say to your wife when she's been trying to kill you. At this point I'm speeding towards the station when I hit a huge bump and- BOOM!- there's a loud pop and the car slows. Of course a flat at a time like this I think. I get out of the car and slam the door shut. As I start to fix the tire Hayley gets out of the car, "Honey I'm so sorry, I never wanted to do it, but it was the only way I could run for mayor. You needed to die for me to fulfill what I needed to do," she cried. "These people don't deserve this, they need REAL help," she pleaded.

I got up off my knees and stared. "You think these types of people deserve freedom, to be put back into regular society?" I said, "These types of people can't be fully trusted until they prove themselves to us and the rest of the council." I finished fixing the tire, and we got back into the car. Silence, again, until we got to the station. I parked the car and looked at who I thought was my wife and said, "You're going to go in there and admit to what you've done. You're going to prison and you deserve nothing more." She looked at me and without saying anything got out of the car and walked into the station. From my car, I watched the Sheriff, my good friend, put her in handcuffs and take her to the back.

As I drove home, I couldn't decide what to think about. My wife attempting to murder me or how when the smog lifts we won't know what will happen. Is this the life I wanted for myself, would youthful me be proud of what I've accomplished? I think he would be, I think that the town we've mended will soon be healthy again,

and I think that since now that I'm a free man I will be much happier. For now, I will continue to be the leader this town needs.