

Double Entry [WORK-IN-PROGRESS]

by Smiley McGrouchpants, Jr-Esq-III

Until I stumbled across an article about him in the paper, I never realized how much Walter Dodge and I are alike. We have the same job: insurance adjustor. We have the same initials. We have the same build — stocky, about 5'8". We have similar hair coloring — although, come to think of it, *his* may be dyed. (You can't really tell from the photograph, as rendered in newsprint — all those black and white dots.)

But — wait a minute — that watch looks an *awful* lot like the one I lost two months ago. I thought I had left in the . . . does that say “Helbros,” or . . .

Naaah. I'm being silly. “*Walter Dodge, recent transplant from San Diego—*” (Wait a minute: how did I miss *that?*) “*. . . wanted for charges relating to the recent disappearance of a Faberge Egg*” (yeah yeah yeah, shoot-out with police, nine dead, ten injured, high-speed car-chase down the L.A. Freeway, where's the part about—) “. . . *last seen boarding a plane at LAX with forged identity papers (see photo from security camera, below) with a women in a nurse's uniform, wearing the nametag 'HELGA'—*”

Wait . . . *what???*

I rushed back to my boudoir (*no no no — IT CAN'T BE!*) vaulting over the ottoman in front of the T.V. (*Jesus fucking Christ I am SO SCREWED!*) and fumbled with the keys (*dropped them — GODDAMMIT!*), picked them up, and shakily opened the door to find—

Behind the “French Maid” outfit, behind the stiletto heels,

behind the—

Yup, sure enough: my “Nurse's” outfit with the nametag “HELGA” was *missing!*

I collapsed in a heap, dragging my bare feet in a semicircle around me on the carpet. *God, if any of my colleagues at the office ever found out I lived this “Double Life” . . .*

A thought struck me. I started pulling out drawers, looking through the bras, pairs of panties, halters, g-strings, and chastity belts to find the ones that matched with “HELGA” . . . *all gone!*

Geez, I thought, not only is this daredevil felon fellow my EXACT height and build . . . his co-conspiring gal-pal must be, too!

I exhaled what felt like a gallon's worth of air through my nose. *This is just getting too fucking weird . . .*

CAMP-town-RA-ces sing-THIS-song!!! DOO-dah! DOO-dah!
CAMP-tow-

I dropped the friggin' thing on the floor as it continued to “ring.” It clicked open as it landed — just my luck — and I heard my boss's voice emitting from it on the floor.

“Roger? Hello? Hello, Roger, hello—”

“Yes, Dan, what is it? I'm here, I'm here,” I added, nervously, hopping on one foot to avoid stepping on my boudoir keys and whatever else I had apparently strewn about the floor in my haste, thinking *I am so fucked. Shit, I am so fucked . . .*

“Did you see the news today?”

Oh boy . . . here it is.

Wait: did he mean the newspaper, or the televisi—

“WELL?”

Either/or, I guess . . . “Yeah, yeah, I caught a glimpse of that—”

“You CAUGHT a GLIMPSE, you say?”

Jesus, jump all over it . . . shit shit my nervousness is showing, better get it together: “Yeah, haha, I guess, um—”

“You GUESS?”

Hmm. This wasn't going at all well. Better let him take the lead.

He paused, and, hearing no more for me (I was waiting to see what he'd offered next), he cleared his throat, gathered his thoughts, and offered me this:

"I've convened an emergency meeting with top management for 9:00 a.m. this morning," he said, as gruffly as I'd ever heard him, "Can I count on you gracing us with your presence to assist in sorting this whole mess out?"

That sort of brutal, *faux-polite* sarcasm could only mean one thing: *you're whole job's hanging by a string, pal! Time to kiss-ass and kowtow in ways you never previously imagined could be necessary or possible!*

"Yes yes — of course — I'll . . ."

"Please do."

The line cut out.

The phone was dead.

I looked out the window and immediately saw an 11-year-old girl from the apartment complex directly across the way gaping openly at me in horror.

I looked down.

My penis was hanging fully out the fly in my boxers, and, apparently, had been the whole time I was on the phone.

[CAUTION -- UNDER CONSTRUCTION!!!]

