

A Coat of Many Souls

By

J.E. Clarke

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Janetgoodman@yahoo.com
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FADE IN ON:

INT. PSYCHIC SONJA'S SALON - NIGHT

Purple and gold furniture. "Gaudy" doesn't even start to describe. A WIND CHIME of Zodiac symbols CLINKS in an window's breeze.

SONJA FUTTERMAN (50s) lounges at her desk, shuffles Tarot cards. Glittery clothes match her makeup perfectly - a resting bitch expression on her face.

She glances at a *Men's Fitness* magazine in her lap, open to a "Bare-Naked Firemen" display.

The entrance door creaks open. Sonja jumps - guilty.

SONJA

A customer - now? What a surprise!

HENRY (20s) lingers in the entrance - thin with Dumbo ears - but still handsome. A dimpled ski coat pads his scrawny chest. He's no "Fireman Fred". At all.

Henry giggles.

SONJA

Do you have an appointment? What's funny?

HENRY

You said, "What a Surprise!" The sign on your door reads "Sonja The Psychic". Surely my coming was... foretold?

Sonja arches a penciled brow.

SONJA

Everyone's a comedian. You think I haven't heard jokes like that before?

(waves at Henry)

But don't dawdle. Come on in.

Henry waddles over and plops down. His thick coat POOFS and squashes in the chair.

SONJA

Aren't you hot in that nasty thing?

HENRY

I like my coat. It suits my tastes.

(beat)

So what's your answer?

SONJA

The answer to *what*, My Dear?

HENRY

Why you didn't know I was on my way?

SONJA

(snaps)

My Gift of Vision is not meant for
Mundane Life. Only Special Occasions.
Plus the power... comes and goes.

HENRY

Good answer. You use that lots of times?

SONJA

I'm no Green Genie. What do you think?

Henry and Sonja take each other's measure. Two snarky
souls, instantly at odds.

SONJA

My fee is fifty dollars for a thirty
minute consult. No freebies. And I charge
overtime.

She toggles a stop-watch app on her cell phone.

SONJA

Okay - go. First things first. What's
your name, Son?

HENRY

Henry.

SONJA

Henry what?

HENRY

Do last names really matter in your
business?

SONJA

(chuckles)

Honestly? The answer's no. "Henry", what
brings you here?

Henry's eyes dart around. He takes in the open window.
The Zodiac chimes. The velvet drapes.

HENRY

I want to talk about auras. Have you ever
seen them, Sonja?

SONJA

Of course.

HENRY

I have, too. Lots of times.

He leans close to her, nose to nose.

HENRY

I don't sense such power... in your face.

Psychic Sonja huffs, annoyed.

SONJA

Did a disgruntled customer send you here?
Enough bullshit. Is this a sting? Do you
know anyone named "Jack?"

HENRY

Jack? Nope. Doesn't ring a bell.

SONJA

Well, let's start your session, then. If
not - you'll skee daddle. Moving on...

Sonja slaps Tarot Cards into place - her fingers flick
with lightning speed.

SONJA

Are you trying to contact a relative?
Perhaps a loved one - dead and gone?

HENRY

I want to gaze into your soul.

He looks deep into Sonja's eyes. That creeps her out,
even more.

SONJA

My soul? That'll cost you extra.

HENRY

I can already see it. Faintly. It's got
character and colors. Like a prism,
filled with light.

A smitten look floods the young man's face.

HENRY

It makes you look... so pretty.

SONJA

Young man, I'm twice your age!

HENRY

And fascinating to me. You know, I've seen you lots of times. Mostly after hours, when you close. I've followed you home, down Hull street.

Sonja fumbles in her robes, grabs a can of mace. She aims the nozzle, poised to strike.

Until her eyes fall on the Fitness Magazine. The smile on Naked Fireman Fred's face resembles Henry's... a bit.

SONJA

(mutters)

Well, you've got less muscle. But you're young. So I guess you'll do.

She locks eyes with Henry. The cards are on the table. Both literally and metaphorically.

SONJA

You're into MILFs?

HENRY

(grins)

Young girls are so boring. Women like you are experience personified. A spectrum of stories, lots of shades. Just like rainbows truly are.

He glances at Sonja's gold and purple earrings.

HENRY

Those are shiny. And your neck is soft. Can I touch them both... please?

Sonja makes her decision; she submits to the fantasy.

SONJA

If you must. But make it quick. It's almost midnight. Girls like me need beauty rest.

Henry caresses Sonja's face. Sonja smiles and closes her eyes. Henry's breath ruffles her hair. His hypnotic voice whispers in her ear.

HENRY (O.S.)

I can tell, you've never seen a soul. If you could see yours, you'd be amazed. I could look at it forever. Its beauty must be preserved.

He reaches behind Sonja's ear. And strikes. Sonja SCREAMS and sucks in air.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. PSYCHIC SONJA'S SALON - MOMENTS LATER

Sonja's limp body decorates the desk - a small burn mark on her neck.

That breath of air was her last. But something reflects off her open eyes.

Henry stands over her, a tiny vial in his hand. Inside the glass, something GLOWS - a spectrum of pulsing light. It flutters like a trapped butterfly.

Henry holds the vial up and smiles.

HENRY

"Psychic Sonja", you should have seen this coming. But I promise - I'll take care of you. Very well.

He slides the vial into one of the countless dimples in his coat. Glass clinks against more bottles - unseen.

HENRY

You'll be great for my collection. My Coat of Souls will keep you safe.

Henry reaches over Sonja's corpse, and stops the cell phone timer. Only five minutes have passed by.

Henry digs into his jeans, extracts ten bucks.

HENRY

Keep the change.

He slips out the door, into the shadows. Footsteps TAP and fade in the hallway.

The Vials of Souls WAIL faintly. Then clink in chorus with Sonja's tarnished wind chime.

FINAL FADE OUT: