

Ninja Janitor

By
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Denim adjusted his balaclava, then shoved the deadbolt into the worn brass lock. Clad in Ninja black sweats and combat boots, he appeared and was menacing. In measured strides he approached a shivering figure slumped in a musty, red theatre seat.

Breath vapors visible in the nippy, damp air, he rammed a rubber baton into the frightened man's ribs. "Hudson, you are one pitiful scumbag." Denim yanked the scrawny man from the seat and thrust his nose against his prisoner's. "Do you remember hiring that red-headed bimbo as Assistant Manager?"

"Huh?" Hudson squinted through bleary eyes, wincing from pain in his ribs.

"Three months ago you hired a red-head. Well I'm the guy you messed over to hire her. I had better qualifications and needed the money but you hired her based on cleavage and 'interviewing skills'."

Hudson felt a sliver of courage. "You kidnap me and torture me like some psycho terrorist because I didn't hire you? Are you nuts?"

Denim slapped Hudson's right ear with the baton. "Just answer the question!"

The bravado vanished. Hudson screamed. Denim kicked him in the kneecap. More screams. Denim grabbed Hudson's quivering chin. "Right now a messenger is delivering a DVD to your wife. Do you know what it contains?"

Hudson didn't answer, he kept whimpering.

"You and your red-headed tramp, Bayside Inn, room seven." He grinned "Camera phones take great video. You want to take a look?"

As Denim squeezed harder, Hudson blubbered. "What do you want?"

"What do I want? I want you to beg for my forgiveness. I want you to experience the humiliation I felt, having to be a janitor in a movie theatre to support my family because you decided to hire some tramp instead of me."

With one arm Denim flung the little man into the air. Hudson screamed as his head hit the stage. He slid to the sticky, stained, wooden floor and cried. He gingerly fingered a knot forming on the back of his head and felt blood drip onto his fingers. Trembling, he scrambled backwards, propping against the stage.

"I'm waiting."

Hudson struggled onto his good knee. As he labored to stand, Denim swept the legs from under him. Hudson tumbled, screaming and begging. "Stop! Please stop!"

Denim backhanded him twice. "Still waiting."

Hudson groaned. He rolled away and curled like a beaten puppy. As tears spilled down both cheeks and dribbled onto his shirt, he sobbed. "I'm, I'm sorry I didn't hire you. Please don't hurt me any more."

Denim squatted and twirled the baton. "Say it again, this time call me sir."

Hudson inhaled, winced, and spoke in raspy bursts. "Sir, I am truly sorry that I didn't hire you. I'm begging you, please stop hurting me. Please sir."

Denim's arm shook and his eyes snapped open.

"Daddy you were shaking and mumbling. Was it a bad dream?"

Denim cleared the cobwebs. "No Avalon, it was a good dream."

"I hope it comes true. You always say that good dreams come true."

"Honey, I hope so too." With a gnarled hand on his daughter's slender shoulder they navigated the rubber-matted ramp's slope. "Did you like the movie?"

A shrill voice spoiled the moment. "Denim, where do you think you are going?"

Denim turned and stared down at a small, wiry man. "Yes sir?"

"Free movie for the kid's okay, but you gotta clean up this mess. I mean you are my janitor."

"Sir, I need to take my daughter home. I promise I'll be right back to clean up real good sir." He tried to disguise his hatred.

Hudson snorted. "Make it quick. I gotta get ready for my date. I told you about it, didn't I?"

"Yes sir. The young red-head who wants to be Assistant Manager, right?"

"Yup. Third interview. This time at a motel by the bay." He leered. "She really wants the job and shows it. And you wouldn't want to make your boss late would you?"

"Definitely not, sir. I'll be right back, sir. Thank you, sir."

Denim tenderly squeezed his daughter's arm and whispered. "On the way home I need to visit the Military Surplus Store and pick up a few, uh, items."

"Like that fake grenade you got to scare mean old Mrs. Richardson when she kept letting her dog poop on our lawn?"

Denim smiled as he visualized the old lady fainting the day he rolled the hand grenade at her dog. "This will be even better, honey. Much better."