

Lost Man  
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From an open building framework, third story view, young Winston swiped his sweaty forehead as his work day trudged on. It was his first construction job that he worked on for the past two months, and with his new spotty blond beard, Winston did his best to learn the trade, fit in, and bury his fears. Working hard wasn't an issue, but it seemed like such a drag compared to the carefree lifestyle that he once had. Hair grew out of his body in all manners of spots that it hadn't grown before. Parts of his body itched more, ached more, and he had to wash his clothes weekly and put on deodorant every day. None of that was necessary back in Neverworld. Winston was ill accustomed to the adult metamorphoses that overtook his body, and each day brought on new unwanted discoveries and frustrations.

The only day of the week that he truly enjoyed was Fridays when he could depart from his so-called work buddies and seek the refuge of Clancy's Diner, a nearby restaurant where a waitress had captured his attention. He walked in and occupied his usual metallic booth by the door. The smell of greasy diner food immediately immersed him as Winston took in a big whiff. Settling into his favorite booth that perfectly encompassed his bottom, the ticking of the clock above his booth unnerved him. Cold shivers climbed his spine as he began to sweat. Tick-tock. Tick-tock. Back in Neverworld, that sound meant only one thing: be wary of an approaching alligator, but here it was just a painful reminder of how time clutched him now. Tick-tock.

A young, brunette waitress who went by the name of Daisy soon emerged. Her perfect oval face and beautiful smile caused Winston to seek her out whenever he could. She reminded him of a mermaid back in Neverworld.

"Winston, I haven't seen you in two weeks. Where've you been hiding?" She leaned over to scrub the table clean attempting to reveal more of her pretty legs and upper breasts before she stood upright inches away from Winston, playing with her hair with her right hand.

"I wish I could come here more often, but I'm saving money, so I can get back." Winston knew that the destination of Neverworld would freak her out, so he kept that to himself. "I may be leaving soon, and I wanted to see you one last time. Make me a Philly cheese steak with all the fixings."

Daisy's smile gave way to a frown as her bottom lip covered her upper one. "So you're leaving us?"

Several of Winston's coworkers abruptly barged into the diner and sat a few tables away. They noticed the boy-man and elected to watch him from a distance. Winston gaze moved from Daisy's face to the coworkers, causing Daisy to glance over her shoulder to see what had interrupted their conversation.

Winston sighed. “I want to get back to a care free place where I’m not a slave to money or time, where I can frolic away the days and nights. I want to be happy and gay.” Unaccustomed to his muscular adult body, Winston longed to get back to Neverworld. Tick-tock.

Winston’s eavesdropping coworkers snickered at that comment. They would use it for fodder later that afternoon to tease the boy man who sought fairies. For them, Winston’s comments and mannerisms often provided fuel for their entertainment.

Daisy glanced over at her boss. “Dad, can I have two minutes?”

A middle aged, hairy man nodded and while looking down to a hot, sizzling grill replied, “Ok honey, but only take a minute or two. We’re busy.”

She sat next to Winston who gloomily stared at the table top. “It sounds like a lovely place. But this place isn’t so bad. All you need are friends and people to love. That’s what makes any place special.” She snuggled up next to him and placed his hands in hers. Winston smiled as her warm fingers wrapped around his causing his heart to flutter. Then Daisy took in a deep breath before suddenly turning Winston’s face toward her and kissing his lips. It startled him as he backed away as he became aroused for the first time in his life.

“What the hell! What did you do to me?” Winston glanced down to his growing crotch as he readjusted his position in the booth. *It never did this before*, he thought. Tick-tock. Tick-tock.

Daisy noticed the rise in Winston and said, “It’s supposed to do that.” Looking into Winston’s bewildered eyes, she added, “Don’t you know anything?”

Not knowing what to do, Winston just sat there. He had never experienced the sudden rush of sexual adrenaline before and took in a hefty gulp of air to calm himself. Tick-tock. Tick-tock.

Shaking her head, Daisy wrangled out of the booth. She stood and tried to regain her composure. “I’m sorry if I offended you, but I had to satisfy my curiosity. Despite what your friends say, I know you’re not gay. Until you work out whatever you’re going through, consider me a friend.”

A roar of laughter broke out from Winston’s coworkers as the young waitress retreated to the kitchen.

Winston gently thumped his fist on the table and shook his head. “If only.”

From that point on, Daisy brought Winston’s food and kept the conversation pleasant. She lightly smiled at him, but there was a decided chill to her demeanor for the remainder of his meal.

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After a particularly difficult afternoon of persistent coworker teasing, Winston entered a favorite local dive near the construction site. Today was the day that he would spend his entire two-month savings to either find his way back to Neverworld or to tragically fail when his funds ran out. The blinding, setting sun shined across the bar clientele capturing them in its wholesome light. This was the place that his new-found coworkers talked about and went to after every work day. If he could not find his way back, he hoped this bar would enchant him as much as it did them.

Bob's tavern was your typical, run down bar with green booth seat cushions bursting from the seams, a rough wooden bar surface surrounded by swiveling chairs, and a flat bar foot surface. Televisions were always on at blaring volumes, causing bar customers to cheer or curse depending upon how their team fared. Music and loud chatter filled the air accompanied by the smell of spilt beer, cigarette smoke, and overused perfume and cologne.

Winston elected to sit at the bar by himself because he wanted to have a conversation with Bob, the bartender. His coworkers were at a distant table consuming beer and attempting to hit on any women that mistakenly wandered in their direction. They were nothing but wolves compared to Winston's Prince Charming image.

Because his new colleagues had told him that the bartender was wise, Winston headed to the bar. Perhaps the bartender was wise enough to get him back in contact with Tink, another fairy, or even a fairy godmother. What Winston longed for was to return to the place where he never aged, could fly the night away, put that upstart Pete in his place, and fight with his favorite band of pirates, especially Jim who Winston had personally broken Jim's left index finger over a gambling dare—that damn pirate was a sore loser and never could be coerced into repaying his gambling losses. Yes, that was where he belonged. But how could he return without spotting a fairy? Tink was nowhere to be found. He couldn't blame her considering the environment. No self-respecting fairy would be caught dead in here.

Winston often despised his coworkers when they teased him about his fairy request, labeled him as gay, or when they called him a fag. The boss told them that they had to ease up and accept Winston due to new laws, and none of them wanted the boss to come down hard on them, so for them it was easier to pretend to be nice to Winston during work hours, at least when the boss was in ear shot. There was a second time that same afternoon when Winston's body reacted to a beautiful woman that smiled at him when she noticed his six-pack abdomen with his blond hair waving in the wind. Winston was amazed how his body reacted. *What the hell is going on?* Winston thought. Winston was deep in thought considering his new existence when the bartender approached him.

“What'll you have?” the balding, old bartender barked out.

Winston looked up into the wise bartender's eyes. "Water and contact information."

The bartender leaned on the bar and bent forward with his dark eyes peering into the soul of his customer. "Son, we don't serve water without a food or beverage order. If you don't order something, you'll have to leave."

"Beer then." His coworkers were always smitten by this beverage, and Winston had to find out what motivated them.

The youthful, light scrubby beard that Winston carried caused the bartender to exercise caution. "I'll need to see some ID first."

Winston whipped out his wallet and pulled out his new driver's license which was furnished by his employer's friend. It said that he was twenty-two, but he didn't feel a day over ten.

The bartender turned and poured Winston a lager that was on tap. "That'll be three dollars."

Without hesitation, Winston handed over the money. If there was any time to get the information that he sought, now was the time. With his fingers grabbing the edge of the bar, Winston quickly muttered, "Sir, could you tell me where I might find some fairy dust? I want to fly to a place that exists just over the clouds at sunset."

"Fairy Dust?! That stuff will rot your brain." The bartender frowned and shook his head. "Let me give you some free advice, kid. Lay off drugs."

Now Winston shook his head. "Sir, it wasn't drugs that got me here. It was a poisoned apple from an old hag and a drink and meal combination from another old lady with a flying crow in her backyard. I found myself here just two months ago." Winston gloomily looked down onto the bar countertop. It didn't shine as much as it did when he had first entered Bob's Tavern.

The bartender picked up a few dirty glasses and began to clean them in a sink behind the bar. "Sounds like a bad trip to me." He reached into his back pocket. "Here's an AA card. They might be able to help you. Maybe they can arrange a psychiatric visit. Sorry, but I can't spend any more time with you, kid. I'm going to do you a favor by looking the other way. Do me a favor by not bothering my other customers."

Beer foam had partially overflowed from Winston's glass onto the bar top. He took a sip and pushed the foul-tasting beverage away. *What on earth would cause anyone to drink this bitter stuff?* he thought. Perplexed, Winston just sat there. He took a few more sips of his beer only to spit them out in disgust and down a water chaser.

A small man wearing a worn green army fatigues laughed to his right. "Aye, it seems that beer disagrees with yea, laddy. Do ya mind?" The miniature man climbed onto the top of his chair and moved Winston's beer before himself. Just then the door opened, and the final remaining rays of angelic setting sunlight shined through the door opening and shimmered around the small man.

Winston turned to the smaller man and asked, "Are you a leprechaun?"

"Name's Ralphie. I'll be whatever ye like, for the right price."

It was money that young Winston possessed and advice that he desperately sought. Winston removed two fifty dollar bills from his wallet and put it on the bar top.

"Here's one hundred dollars. Would you use your powers to lead me to a living fairy?"

"One hundred dollars! Jumpin Jimminy. Kid, I'll take you to a place where there be fairies, but I never suspected a young lad like you would swing that way." Ralphie shrugged. "To each his own, I suppose."

The twosome was about to leave the bar when Bob's tattooed arm reached over the bar counter and grabbed Ralphie's tattered green vest by its collar. "Not so fast, Ralphie. I told you not to come in here until you payed your tab. You owe me one hundred and three dollars."

Ralphie sneered. His small nose wrinkled upwards as if he had smelled a pile of burnt, dog manure, and he indignantly pushed the bartender's hands off his shirt. "That's nee way to be treatin a customer. Here." Ralphie transferred the two fifties and three gold dollars onto the bar counter.

Satisfied with the payment, Bob relinquished his grip.

Winston spotted the three gold coins and exclaimed, "You are a leprechaun. I knew it. No one else has gold coins like that."

The bartender shook his head and chuckled. "Him a leprechaun? Good one kid. That's just the coins he gets from running a parking lot across the street."

Indignant, Ralphie hopped down to the ground and said, "We best be going, Winston. There be better places than this downtown." He shot the bartender with an up yours gesture and an extended middle finger on top before he departed with young Winston following closely behind. Wrinkles in Ralphie's little forehead remained pasted in place for almost their entire journey downtown.

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A short time later, the duo of Ralphie and Winston had arrived to their destination, The Purple Fairies Parlor. Winston noticed the kind of clientele that entered this establishment and asked, “Are you sure this is the right place?”

“You’re not getting cold feet are ye? It took a lot of courage for me to go through with this me first time.”

Winston boldly retorted. “So it’s a test. I’ll have you know that I once took on twenty pirates in a single night!”

“That’s mighty impressive, laddie. They shut down Pirates Cove a few years ago. If you could handle that place, this place will be no trouble at all. Let’s go inside.” Ralphie stuck out his arm to hold Winston back and looked into Winston’s virtuous eyes. “You’ll cover my bar tab and expenses, of course.” Ralphie’s lightly nodded his head up and down encouraging Winston to accept his terms.

“They’ll have magic wands like you promised?” Winston questioned.

“I swear. Everyone one of them has a concealed magic wand.”

As they entered, Winston paid two ten-dollar entrance fees. Then he looked around the place. His jaw dropped. These fairies looked like husky, hairy women. Even his new adult body didn’t react the way that he had expected to from earlier that day. Lights shined onto stages where the husky women used poles as men eagerly gazed upon their bodies. Loud music pounded into Winston’s ears.

Ralphie had already spotted a free table and asked for two beers. Winston soon caught up with him as they watched fairies strut their stuff around vertical poles until Winston finally drew up enough courage to ask him a question: “Which one of these fairies can sprinkle me with the most pixie dust?”

“Ask for Ginger.”

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Winston approached one of the dancers leaning against the bar after another dancer pointed him in the right direction. Loud music thumped into his ears as the dancers disrobed and strutted their stuff on the three stages. He yelled out, “Are you Ginger?”

The tall, smooth legged transvestite with blond hair replied, “Honey, I’ll be your Ginger. What would you like?”

Winston smiled. “I want you to sprinkle me with your magic wand. Could you do that for me?”

Ginger looked both ways. “That costs extra. We’ll need to go back to a private VIP room, and I’ll make sure my manager is distracted. Do you have enough money?”

Grabbing his wallet, Winston showed Ginger three fifties to which Ginger smiled and said, “Follow me.”

“Could my friend come too?”

Ginger smiled. “That will be another twenty.”

Winston shrugged and followed the transvestite dancer to the back-VIP rooms. *It won’t be much longer now*, Winston thought.

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Ginger closed a dark curtain after Ralphie and Winston entered a darkened room. Ralphie sat at the side of a cushy, sticky couch and grinned from ear to ear, while Winston sat, smiled, closed his eyes, and prepared for his pixie dusting. At long last he would return to his friends in Neverworld. Ginger started to sway to the music. First the bra was removed revealing opulent breasts. Winston took several swallows. *What does this have to do with getting sprayed with pixie dust?* Winston glanced over at Ralphie who couldn’t sit still as his miniaturized erection became pronounced.

Soon Ginger began to remove his tight shorts and panties revealing a firm male member. The transvestite turned and began to stroke his male member. “Hold still. This won’t take long.”

“That’s not a magic wand!” Winston exclaimed as he stood up.

Ginger stopped stroking. “Opinions vary. You still owe me one hundred and seventy dollars.”

Ralphie had removed his pants and began stroking his own male member.

“I don’t know what you are, but you’re no fairy, and you’re certainly not my fairy god mother. You lied to me. I’m not paying you a cent!”

With that comment, Ginger swung a roundhouse leg kick at Winston who adroitly ducked the blow just as he had avoided so many errant pirate leg swings in the past.

Ralphie wasn’t as lucky. “Ow, me lucky charms!” Ralphie rolled to a fetal position on the floor grabbing his sore scrotum.

Meanwhile Winston moved towards the door as Ginger shouted after him. “Stop him. He owes me money.”

Bouncers soon intercepted Winston, and with lightning fast reflexes, Winston created an immense bar brawl. His fighting maneuvers were the faintest glimmer of his prior abilities. The brawl soon encompassed the entire parlor, and the cops were called in to break it up.

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A young, black female cop named Officer Fay took Winston away in handcuffs to a remote police car. Winston noticed several officers carrying the cantankerous leprechaun away. Ralphie struggled and barked out, "It's not me fault. Winston promised he would pay for everything." Ralphie's eyes angrily glared over at Winston as Officer Fay took Winston away.

Officer Fay began to interrogate Winston behind her police car. "What did you think you were doing at The Purple Fairies Parlor?"

"Ralphie tricked me. I was looking for fairies, so I could return to Neverworld. This body doesn't belong to me."

Officer Fay shook her head. "Winston that time has passed. You're needed here." She nodded lightly at him.

"I don't understand." Winston looked down to the ground.

"This is your home now. Find out what you're good at, keep out of trouble, and get a girlfriend."

"What are you saying?"

"In the near future, many others will owe you their very lives. When that time comes, you'll protect them, won't you?"

With a tear in his eye, Winston nodded. He had always wanted to play the hero. "How do you know this?"

"Don't ask me that. Trust me."

Winston was unsure how to respond to the self-assured officer. He awkwardly glanced away.

"Good." Officer Fay undid Winston's handcuffs. "I've been instructed to let you go with a warning: Move on with your life. I'm sure that there's a special girl waiting for you somewhere." Officer Fay smiled at Winston.

Winston walked away from Officer Fay and headed home. Saddened that he would never return to Neverworld, Winston realized that he needed to stay now to protect others. He decided to move forth with his life. Tomorrow he would bring Daisy a bouquet of flowers and ask if she would go out with him. *I still don't know what to do with this thing between my legs, but Daisy*



*seems to have a few ideas. It may take several tries to appease her, but Daisy deserved no less. Maybe Daisy was right all along, all you need are friends, and any place could be home.*

Once Winston vacated the vicinity and the other police cars cleared the scene, Officer Fay pushed the com button on her remote. “Thanks for the tip central. I’ve sent him on his way.” She listened intently by placing the remote against her ear and then answered, “No, I don’t think he’ll be any more trouble.”

Officer Fay got into her car and drove around a corner. She used her nightstick as a magic wand to vanquish the police car before transforming herself into a bright fairy. Giggling over her successful mission, Fay flew away leaving behind a trail of magic pixie dust. Despite mankind’s best efforts, hints of magic remained deeply hidden in their realm.