

A Certain Fashionable Esper (Inanimate TF, A Certain Magical Index)

Carmine strolled through the streets of Academy City like she owned the place, which wasn't too far from the truth: her business empire accounted for a sizable portion of the city's real estate. Of course, that wasn't the only reason she was so confident...

As she marched, her handbag swinging at her side, Carmine scanned those she passed and found her frown growing deeper and deeper. *Tch, ugly. Tcht, tacky. Tcht, kitschy trash.* Combining to a stop beside a certain river, she leaned on the railing and looked over the edge into the water, wondering if she'd ever find the perfect material she was looking for.

No sooner had she had the thought than the sound of a young woman's voice. "Touma! Where are you goooing?!"

"I just need to run to the toilet!" cried the young man accompanying her, all but hopping on the spot and covering his groin. "I'll be back in a minute!"

He hurried off, leaving the young woman he'd been accompanying all alone.

Carmine didn't have high hopes, but she sized her up anyway. Merely as a matter of course, of course.

What she found, however, made her freeze in surprise. *This girl... this girl is...*

The girl was the perfect material. Carmine had never seen anyone with such potential. She had to have her. She *had* to. To let her escape would be the greatest crime of fashion seen in a century!

Biting her lip, she flicked her eyes left and right. Could she do it...? Could she take her right now, without anyone noticing? Her heart thudded—a woman like her could get away with a lot, but that didn't mean she could do *anything* she pleased.

Fortunately, she didn't have to worry for long. Just as she started to think she'd never be able to take her, the girl wandered out of the open and into the shadow of a nearby kiosk. Carmine's heart leapt in her chest—the only one who could see her was *her*.

Closing her eyes, she drew in a deep breath and forced her to focus. This was it. She had to do it. Now or never.

Lifting her eyelids, she sized the girl up, removed her glasses, and activated her ability: Objectifying Gaze. Her eyes flashed, and with a squeal that cut off almost before it started, the girl rose into the air and curled in on herself, arms bending to form a loop while her legs rose to join them. Her face pale in startled shock, and the wave of whiteness spread rapidly over the rest of her, leaving only her hair untouched. Finally, with a small pop, she vanished, replaced by a small piece of cloth, which fluttered down to the ground without fanfare.

Replacing her glasses, Carmine wasted no time scurrying across the street into the shadows of the kiosk—she certainly didn't want anyone else stealing her latest masterpiece.

Bending down, she picked the former girl up with a growing smile. The girl had become a small pair of panties, bright white with a golden trim and a slate blue ribbon woven out of her former hair. Other than that, there was no sign she'd ever been human.

Carmine couldn't keep herself from grinning. She'd done it—she'd finally produced a perfect piece of clothing! Hugging the girl to her chest, she squealed in delight, giggling like a schoolgirl.

"Index? Index?" The young girl's companion threw her a strange glance as he passed her.

Coughing, Carmine stuffed the new pair of panties into her handbag and resumed her marching with a smile of satisfaction. Perhaps her quest wasn't hopeless after all...

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Despite the hope inspired by her early success, it took over an hour she encountered someone else worthy of her attention.

"You looked so desperate while scrambling for it, but I don't see any change at all! Or is it that the power of your flat-chestedness is so strong the card didn't have any effect on you at all?"

"Shut up! You think these pudgy lumps of flesh are so special—"

"M-Misaka!"

Watching them from a distance, Carmine found her heart pounding in shock. She couldn't believe it. *Two* perfect pieces of material at once? She couldn't stop herself from removing her sunglasses and marching towards them, eyes ready to fire on command.

As she grew closer, however, she got a better look at their faces and realized her mistake. She wasn't looking at any two random individuals, but at Misaka Mikoto and Shokuhou Misaki—Railgun and Mental Out—two of the strongest espers in Academy City.

Falling back, she flushed with irritation, her face turning as red as her dress in embarrassment. How could she have been tempted to make such a foolish mistake? If they knew what she was planning for them, they could ruin her entire business.

Slipping into an alleyway, she breathed hard and struggled to calm herself. Should she overlook them? No, no, she *couldn't*—they were two of the finest pieces of material she'd ever seen. A chance like this came back once in a lifetime, and she had to take it. She had to take *them*—the only question was how?

The answer, as it turned out, was surprisingly simple. Poking her head out of the alleyway, Carmine squinted at the two and frowned as she realized just how perfect the situation. Not

only were the pair standing alone in a secluded spot, hidden from any prying eyes that might happen to catch her in the act, but they were also completely focused on each other. No, she wasn't going to get a better chance than this.

Taking a breath to calm her nerves, she stepped out of the alley and removed her glasses, her eyes already flaring with the scarlet light of her ability.

Railgun's and Mental Out's voices cut off as her power struck them, snapping them upright, legs together and arms against their sides. With a pair of stifled squeaks, they rose slowly into the air, where Railgun raised her head and opened her mouth, while Mental Out's legs curled back to form an 'O' behind her, and her arms curved over her shoulders to meet up with them in turn.

What happened next happened very quickly: firstly, Misaka's mouth spread inhumanely wide, and her legs crumpled into her vagina, which widened to match her mouth. The rest of her body flattened around it, leaving her floating in the air as a bizarre human tunnel.

Meanwhile, Shokuhou's head collapsed into her neck, while her boobs exploded in size, growing truly enormous. Her limbs, on the other hand, shriveled as if she were on a starvation diet, ending up barely thinner than a pencil.

Misaka's hands collapsed into her arms, which were sucked up in turn by her shoulders, and her entire body rippled like a piece of cloth in the wind. When it stopped, she had collars and creases and a thin line running down her front, complete with creases. Carmine had never seen a more beautiful blouse in her life.

Shokuhou, on other hand, had started to shrink, her badly twisted body compacting to less than a tenth of its former size. By the time she stopped, she'd become nothing more than a small, golden-laced bra, exquisite. Carmine cooed in delight, unable to stop herself.

As her power's effects faded, the two dropped from the air like the inanimate objects they'd become, and Carmine hurried to snatch them up before the dirt could despoil them. Hugging them to her chest, she squealed in delight. She couldn't believe she'd actually gotten away with it!

"Wh-what did you do to them?"

With a gasp, Carmine spun to find herself facing a short girl with tawny hair in pigtails.

Carmine hissed. *Where did she come from?!*

Snarling, the young woman grabbed her bag and pulled out a string of darts. "Turn them—!"

With a pop, she dropped to the ground as a pair of ugly-looking sneakers.

Carmine replaced her glasses with a tut. "Honestly," she said, kicking the sneakers aside, "how tacky."