

The Curious Case of Abbott Pendleton

By Chrono Eclipse

Part 3: Early Childhood

A few years went by and Abbott's mother took an extended mental health vacation on Ibeza. She didn't say goodbye to her son in person, opting instead to wave at him from the safe distance of the back seat of the car taking her to the airport. Ms. Whitechapel found a note in her office from Cassandra simply explaining the sudden departure as wanting to enjoy her 20s without any fear of suddenly waking up in her 80s.

Jennifer Whitechapel was once again alone in running the Pendleton estate and the sole caretaker of the precocious young heir to the estate and all of the chaos the boy brought. The now 39-year-old woman was starting to develop deep frown lines on her once flawless face. A few months ago she had discovered her first gray hairs in the long wavy brown hair and had convinced herself that it was because Abbott was somewhere nearby. But when they greys didn't go back to their natural color even on her few days off when she was miles away from the estate and the age-shifter child she reluctantly accepted the fact that it was a sign of stress and that she was naturally getting older, so she proceeded to start dyeing them.

Her approaching 40th birthday didn't bother her the way it seemed to bother many of her peers on social media. When you've spend time in your 70s, 80s and 90s the prospect of turning 40 lost a bit of its bite. Still, she was feeling a bit depressed at entering into a new decade of life still being single with the job consuming every aspect of her waking life.

Case in point - this morning she was meeting with the house staff over the fact that the east wing was in complete shambles. The section of the house that young Abbott had free rein over looked like a warzone of toys, dust and clutter with crayon marks on the walls and broken knickknacks littering the carpets.

“It looks like none of you have cleaned that section of the estate in months!” Ms. Whitechapel lamented as she address the line of maids and housekeepers.

“We’re sorry miss... we’ve tried but... it’s so strange... we go down the hall to clean and the next thing we know we’re back here in the foyer and hours have passed!” One of the senior housekeepers explained.

She left of the part where often they had found themselves in various states of undress having come-to - missing shoes, skirts, shirts etc. - one house keeper, Marta had even found herself the other day with chocolate smeared all over her mouth, hands and chest as if she had been shoving a fudge cake into her gob by the fistful.

Jennifer took off her glasses and pinched the bridge of her nose between her eyes, furrowing her brow in frustration.

“Okay... I can’t monitor every room of the house every minute. Now that Ms. Pendleton is... on holiday I need everyone here to step it up and be alert. We all know that this isn’t a normal job and there’s a reason that you’re all paid very generously to work here. But just because... strange things may happen in the East Wing doesn’t mean that we can neglect it. The young master of this house need a clean tidy enviroment to grow in so... How about some strength in numbers all right? Why don’t you four all go over and clean it up together, that way if something strange starts happening with one of you the others can handle it. Okay? Okay.” She said pointing to the 4 most senior staff members.

The housekeepers nodded in solemn agreement and turned to grab their supplies and head over to clean those room. Ms. Whitechapel turned to address the young woman dressed in a mini-skirt and tank top looking more like she was ready for a night out on town then a day of work.

“Excuse me. Hi... who are you? I don’t recognize you.” Ms. Whitechapel said looking at the young woman skeptically.

The young latina girl played with her straight dark hair nervously and bit her pouty lip like she was afraid that she was in trouble.

“Um I’m new... this is actually my first day.... My name is Julieta. Kyle hired me.” The beautiful brown-skinned girl said with a hopeful smile holding out her smooth pedicured hand that looked like it hadn’t done a day of hard work in its life.

“Kyle...” Ms. Whitechapel grumbled. Her assistant and default hiring manager for the estate was really getting on her last nerve with all of the giggling would-be bikini models he sent over to the house to replace the steady stream of house staff that quit after finding themselves dramatically older or younger than they were supposed to be.

“He’s really nice... we actually met at a club over the weekend and he said that you had an opening so like, here I am!” Julieta said with a cheery grin and a shrug.

Ms. Whitechapel snorted and rolled her eyes.

“Of course he did... how old are you?” Jennifer asked the girl sizing her up from her long tanned toned legs to her belly button piercing on her slender flat navel to her large gravity defying breasts, a twinge of jealousy hit her - Ms. Whitechapel wasn’t even this stunning on the rare occasions that Abbott brought her back to her college years.

“I just turned 18 ma’am.” Julieta replied and then gulped after using the term ‘ma’am’ hoping that didn’t offend her older boss.

“And did Kyle explain any of the... unique challenges of this job?” Ms. Whitechapel asked raising an eyebrow.

“He just said that it involved like cleaning, dusting and some light yard work... oh and that there was a little kid who like ran around the house and was kind of a handful. But I have 4 little brothers so I’m pretty good with kids!” The teenage latina girl said confidently.

Jennifer stifled a laugh.

“That’s all he said? He didn’t tell you anything else?” She asked the new girl.

Julieta shook her head and shrugged.

“Nope. I guess he thought you’d give me all the deets.” The girl replied.

Ms. Whitechapel grinned wickedly.

“Well how fun it’ll be for you to discover all of that one your own. Fine you can start in here vacuuming the entry rug and washing the front windows. Marta and the other housekeeping staff will be back shortly to get you a fresh uniform and tell you your next set of duties. If you have any further questions I’ll be in the monitoring room upstairs.” Ms. Whitechapel said in an officious tone, gesturing to the vacuum closet.

“Okee dokee ma’am!” Julieta said enthusiastically.

Jennifer rolled her eyes and sighed.

“And stop calling me ma’am. Ms. Whitechapel is fine... I’m only 39...” She grumbled as she turned to march upstairs.

A while later Ms. Whitechapel was leaning in her chair with her shoes off and her aching feet propped up on the counter as she held her cellphone up to her ear.

“Hi my name is Jennifer Whitechapel and I have an appointment scheduled for a full body massage on Wednesday morning and I’m just calling to see if it would be possible for the masseuse to um... be a male masseuse?... Not for anything um- I just feel like they may be a bit firmer with their hands? Like a man might really be able to get the knots in my back out... okay this is sounding bad... but I can change the time of the appointment if there’s better availability for one of your more muscular men on staff...?” Ms. Whitechapel said into the phone, blushing awkwardly at how desperate and thirsty she sounded.

There was a knock at the monitoring room door.

“Whoops I’ve got to go. Just uh, you can change the new appointment to my card on file. Thanks bye now!” She said quickly as she hung up.

The 39-year-old sighed and slipped her shoes back on, walking to the door. She opened it and found a haggard-looking latina woman of about 60 standing there with mostly gray straight hair and an apple-shaped saggy figure stretching out her skimpy top. Her chunky cellulite dimpled thighs and big lumpy ass was pulling her mini-skirt to its very limits and threatened to burst the youthful garment any minute.

“Hello? Ms. Whitechapel?” The frumpy older woman asked in a throaty voice.

Jennifer looked at the jowly cheeks and the sparkly belly button ring lost in the puffy folds of the matronly lady’s muffin top. She couldn’t for the life of her recognize who this ridiculously dressed older woman was by the sight of her.

“I’m sorry, who are you?” Ms. Whitechapel asked in confusion.

The gray-haired latina lady put her veiny hands on her wide hips and looked at the younger woman sternly showing off how creased her 60-year-old face was.

“Girl, I’ve been working in this house for over 40 years – since you were still in your mama’s belly. You could at least give me the respect of remembering my name.” The aged woman replied in frustration.

Ms. Whitechapel cupped her hand to her mouth trying not to laugh.

“Oh my god, you’re Julieta.” She gasped and chuckled.

The aged Julieta raised a gray eyebrow.

“What’s so funny young lady?” The former teenager asked in an unamused tone.

Jennifer shook her head grinning and waved her hand in the air.

“Nothing - nothing. I’m guessing you went over to the East Wing?” She asked the heavy-set older woman.

Julieta nodded.

“Yes I did. Marta and the others were supposed to be back from cleaning over an hour ago and I hadn’t heard from them so I went to check on them. But I couldn’t find them anyway, and you know its hard for me to get around very fast at my age but I searched every room for them and all I found were Abbott and his little friends...” The 60-year-old woman groaned.

Ms. Whitechapel blinked at her aged new girl.

“Little friends...?” She asked with a pit in her throat.

Jennifer didn’t wait for Julieta’s response she just hurried over to the monitor and pulled up the play room where 4-year-old Abbott was running around laughing with a gaggle of little kids all giggling and playing toys with him.

Ms. Whitechapel rubbed her hand down her mature face and took a deep breath.

“You uh, go sit outside for a bit - you’ll feel a lot better in a little while. I’ve got to go down and deal with ... er, Abbott’s ‘playmates’.” The estate director said pushing past her saggy staff-member.

“Okay Ms. Whitechapel. That sounds good... my cackles are awfully sore from walking up all these stairs... hey do you have time later to discuss my retirement benefits?” Julieta asked waddling behind the younger woman.

Jennifer rolled her eyes as she marched down the stairs to the foyer.

“Julieta it’s literally your first day. Wait until you’ve been here a week before we start making a plan for you to retire, babe. Okay? You’re lucky that I’m too busy right now to snap a pic of your 60-year-old ass in that ridiculous outfit... ma’am.” Ms. Whitechapel shouted without looking behind her.

“How rude. You should respect your elders girl!” Julieta shouted after her younger boss as Ms. Whitechapel pushed the doors open and stormed into the east wing.

“Abbott!!” Jennifer shouted in a stern voice as she entered the hallway to the East Wing.

In the distance she heard the creepy sounds of children giggling.

“Marta? Ingrid?... Come out here right this minute! I mean it. I’m not joking around.” Ms. Whitechapel demanded stomping her foot to show that she means business.

The regressed housekeepers, now all precocious toddlers came running down the hall laughing flying toy airplanes followed by Abbott who was chasing them holding a dinosaur toy.

“Watch out! He’s gonna get you!” Little Marta squealed as she ran toward Ms. Whitechapel.

When the kids saw that the adult woman was frowning at them in disapproval with her arms folded across her chest they stopped abruptly and looked down at their shoeless feet bashfully.

“Marta! I sent you over here hours ago to clean this wing of the estate not run around half dressed playing with toys!” Jennifer yelled.

The little girl pouted and sniffled a little.

“Sowwy Ms. Whitechapel...” She blubbered, not really even fully understanding what she was being yelled at for.

“You were all supposed to be keeping track of one another. Where’s the accountability? Where’s the professionalism? If this is how you’re going to conduct yourselves then maybe you ought to be employed elsewhere because I don’t have time for this foolishness around here. Do you hear me young lady!?” Jennifer shouted in frustration.

“Yes Ms. Whitechapel!” Marta nodded puffy-cheeked and crying.

The other regressed housekeepers began to bawl as well, upset and fearing that they were going to get a time out. Ms. Whitechapel sighed and shook her head.

“I’m yelling at a bunch of toddlers like they’re grown staff members... god what is my life these days... Abbott?” She asked kneeling down to the childrens level.

The boy stepped forward smiling at the adult woman.

“Hi Ms. Jennifer.” He said leaning over to give her a hug.

“Awww thanks sweetie. Now listen - did you turn my housekeeping staff into little kids?” She asked him seriously.

Abbott paused to consider the question and nodded.

“Have we talked about this before? That you need to try to not do things like this - adults are adults, babies are babies...” She began reciting a little lesson she had clearly said to Abbott many times.

“-And old people are old people. So I shouldn’t mix ‘em up...” He finished her sentence for her.

“That’s right. Now how about you age Marta and the others back into grown ups so that they can finish doing their jobs okay?” Ms. Whitechapel asked patiently.

Abbott looked over at the sniffing toddlers and shrugged.

“Can’t. Don’ know how.” He replied matter-of-factly.

Ms. Whitechapel swallowed hard and gritted her teeth.

“Well surely Abbott, if you can make them kids then you know how to put them back to normal... I know you can make people older, I have the spare dentures in my desk to prove it.” Jennifer said a bit insistantly as she put her hand on the boys shoulder.

Abbott shrugged again and gave a mischievous smile to his adult caretaker.

“Can’t. It just happens... wanna play?” He asked happily putting his dinosaur toy in Ms. Whitechapels hand.

Jennifer was at the end of her patience. She had an estate to run and she couldn’t do it on her own with half her staff barely potty trained.

“No I don’t want- Abbott! Listen to me. I need you to make these staff members adults again *right now!* Do you hear me mister?” Ms. Whitechapel snapped in a stern voice.

Abbott just smiled at her and turned around.

“We’re playing! Hahahaha come play!” He giggled running down the hall.

The other children turned and followed him gleefully. Ms. Whitechapel scoffed at the insolence of her young charge and stood up stomping her foot again and clapping her hands to get the kids attention again.

“Abbott! Don’t you run away from me young man! You’re in big trouble! If you don’t come back right this second and age my staff back to adults I’m going to give you a spanking! Do you hear me! And you’ll be in a time out-” She began to shout down the hallway.

The next thing Jennifer Whitechapel knew she was curled up under an antique 18th century oak desk drawer in the guest bedroom. She felt a draft on her lower body and as she looked down at her pale bare legs and wiggled the unpainted toes of her barefeet she realized that she was missing her pants and shoes.

As she crawled her aching 39-year-old body out from under the furniture she realized those weren't the only things she had lost. She looked at the clock and realized that two hours had gone by since she had gone down to the East Wing.

The estate director slipped out of the guest bedroom discretely, wanting to get back to her own room and find a replacement pair of slacks before any of her staff caught her in just her blouse and panties.

Once she was dressed again she went back to the monitoring room and replayed the video from the East Wing for the past two hours. She witnessed herself youthening in the hallway down to her childhood and proceeding to play hide and seek with Abbott, Marta and the rest. She assumed that the rest of her staff had similarly gone to hide in other parts of the house and were finding themselves awkwardly back in adulthood.

She'd have another staff meeting tomorrow morning to discuss new guidelines for cleaning the East Wing - but a more pressing matter at the moment seemed to be reigning in her unruly toddler. It was time to hire Abbott a full time nanny.

And she didn't want just any flighty babysitter who would let Abbott walk all over her - no Jennifer wanted to hire a reeeal battle-axe of a nanny who would whip the boy into shape and get his abilities under control!

"Kyle... I need you to send me hiring files for anyone over the age of 50 with a 'spare the rod, spoil the child' vibe... I'm talking Nurse Ratched; Frau Farbissina... Whose that headmistress in Matilda?" Ms Whitechapel said into the phone as she looked at her reflection in the mirror and realized that her long brunette hair was a crazy mess.

"Miss Trunchbull?" Kyle offered.

"Yes! Find me the real life Miss Trunchbull and then send her over here immediately. We'll pay any rate she wants." Jennifer said eagerly as she attempted to fix her hair.

NEXT: Childhood continued...