

"Pinx within a Dream!"

by

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In the DareDoll dressing room, Pinx stretches and does aerobics.

Inside the old, abandoned magic factory, Pinx contacts CrimeBase with her wristcomp.

PINX

Hey, Norman. It's me, Pinx. I'm at the old, abandoned magic factory and conducting the usual patrol.

CRIMEBASE

You sound a little tired, Pinx. What's up?

PINX

I thought some brisk DareDoll aerobics would perk me up, but I am still a little groggy.

CRIMEBASE

Insomnia? Indigestion? Loneliness?

PINX

My dreams won't let me sleep.

CRIMEBASE

What's that supposed to mean?

PINX

I keep having this nightmare that I'm a private detective, in constant jeopardy!

CRIMEBASE

Hmmmm. That does sound grim. Tell me more. I'm a little excited!

PINX

You sound a little anxious.

CRIMEBASE

Er, uh, I write amateur detective fiction on the side and I'm always on the lookout for a good story.

PINX

That's plagiarism!

CRIMEBASE

Only if you get caught.

Suddenly: electronic beeps.

PINX

Speaking of not getting caught, I'm going to have to sign off now, Norman. My anti-capture sensor just went off.

Pinx turns to find a blast of knock-out gas, right in her face!

We cut to an office, shabbily dressed. Pinx is now in civilian clothing, asleep in an office chair. She wakes.

PINX

Unhh. I keep having the strangest dream!

VILLAIN #1

(off-screen)

And you keep nodding off! Maybe you're not getting enough peace and quiet at home and you're bringing it to work. Maybe my simoleans would be better spent on some other private dick...er...detective; I don't care how succulent your gams might be.

PINX

Where were we again?

Pinx gets up and stretches while glancing about the room. She sits on the desk before this man.

VILLAIN #1

We were looking for the Malted Crystal. The grandly exalted Malted Crystal! You do remember the Malted Crystal? Maybe you need a refresher course: Once given as a token of undying love by a sheik to a simple harem girl, it caused a world war and looks great on a mantel place. It is now priceless in value.

PINX

Yeah. Yeah. You'd mentioned. But how much is it worth to me?

The man is surprised at her assertiveness, and taken aback.

PINX

I'm not just some private dick chick straight from the sticks. I wouldn't do it for less than ten *thousand*. Dollars.

VILLAIN #1
(gleefully eyeing her legs)
HMMMMMM. Done and done. Now let's
uncross our legs and get down to
business.

Pinx notices that he's ogling her legs, and gets up and
slaps him.

PINX
You pig!

He rubs his reddened cheek.

PINX
You'll get slapped and like it.

VILLAIN #1
Okay, but I'd feel a little better
about it if you let me give you a
nice little ankle massage.

PINX
That's it. Hit the road, Malarkey!

VILLAIN #1
You ain't seen the last of me, Marlowe.

He exits.

Pinx examines some letters on her desk, looking for clues to
her identity. Soon there is a knock on the door.

PINX
Come in.

The man she just kicked out re-enters. He looks exactly the
same, except for a moustache.

VILLAIN #1
I hope I'm not late for our game.

PINX
Uh, no.

VILLAIN #1
Let's see. Where did we leave off?

PINX
I...didn't touch a thing.

He demolishes the chessboard, as though this were simpleton-
rules checkers. Having reached the end of some strange
pattern, he violently finishes the game.

PINX
You play for keeps.

VILLAIN #1
Yes. And now, per our pre-existing agreement, it's time for you to pay.

PINX
Uh, what were the terms again?

VILLAIN #1
So coy! Again, you must either allow me to kiss you...anywhere I want...anywhere on your person...!

PINX
Or?

VILLAIN #1
(pulling an envelope out of his jacket)
Or accept the fate contained within this envelope.

PINX
(taking the envelope)
I guess I'll see what's behind door number two.

VILLAIN #1
I think you'll like it.

Pinx opens the envelope and finds that it contains a note that reads, "Share a bottle of wine with me."

PINX
"Share a bottle of wine with me?"

He turns his back on her to pour them both a drink. Pinx looks suspicious. He turns to offer her a glass. He holds one for himself.

PINX
Can I have the other glass?

VILLAIN #1
But why?

PINX
Sentimental value. It's a girl thing.

VILLAIN #1
Very well, then. Suit yourself.

PINX
Say, this isn't bad.

VILLAIN #1
And it's not drugged either. Oh, I know why you didn't want to drink out of that glass. It's because you thought I put some knock-out juice in there. That I was going to slip you a mickey. And then, you know, have my way with you in a very un-gentlemanly fashion.

PINX
That thought did cross my mind.

VILLAIN #1
You always were very crafty. But you overlooked one thing.

PINX
What's that?

VILLAIN #1
The bottle itself.

He smashes her over the head with the bottle. A POV shot shows him looming over her, as the screen blurs.

Pinx wakes on the couch, fully tied. She spies the phone on her desk.

PINX
(voice-over)
If I can just get to that phone, I can call for help.

Pinx bunny-hops toward her desk and manages to drop herself into the office chair. She swivels toward the phone and with great difficulty, dials. (Actually, it's a touch-tone phone!)

TELEPHONE
(v.o.)
Maintenance.

PINX
Hello? I'm having a bit of difficulty in my office. Can you lend a hand?

TELEPHONE
I'll be right down to take care of business. Sit tight.

He enters, with measuring tape and fedora. We can see right away that he's not quite "right."

VILLAIN #2

Well, it looks like you're in the
proverbial pickle jar.

He walks around her, admiring the rope-work, apparently.
Then he measures her...all over!

PINX

Aren't you going to untie me?

VILLAIN #2

This kind of job has got to be done
right.

PINX

What are you going to do?

NARRATOR

What *is* he going to do? This tale
to be continued...!