

My Bloody Laundrette

By

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Interior of a Laundrette.

A retired Princess Leia, resembling Dot Cotton, puts on a service wash. She is wearing earmuffs. She looks around and finding the place empty produces a bottle of whisky, a shot glass and a cigarette from her tabard which she lights. She downs a shot and pulls on the cigarette. Juliet Capulet enters.

Juliet: Excuse me, do you work here?

Leia: Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Juliet: It's Wednesday.

Leia: Then I'm working. How can I help hun?

Juliet: I'd like to do a wash please.

Leia: Help yourself.

Juliet produces a period Elizabethan frock from an Ikea bag and attempts to cram it into a machine. The door won't shut. Frustrated, Juliet gives up and goes to the washing powder vending machine.

Leia: Do you need some help?

Juliet: No no, I can do it.

She tries to select a powder called STAIN VADER. Leia intercedes.

Leia: This is not the powder you're looking for.

Leia hands her a dusty box of powder from the shelf called OUT DAMNED SPOT.

Leia: That's what you want for that.

Juliet returns to stuffing the dress in the machine.

Leia: Let me have a go, I'm a dab hand at this.

Juliet: Thanks.

Leia: Nice dress. Is that hand stitching?

Juliet: Yes, my Nurse made it.

Leia: Oh I'm sorry, aren't you well?

Juliet: I've been better.

Leia: Oh dear, there's a terrible stain here...

Juliet: Yeah...It's a long story. Do you think you can get it out?

Leia: Depends what it is. (*examining it*) This can't be wine – you're far too young to be drinking.

Juliet: No no, it's not wine.

Leia: Oh, I see. Don't worry hun, it happens to all of us. You're a woman now!

Juliet: Can you tell my parents that?

Leia: Oh families, tell me about it. You should've met my father.

Mona Lisa enters, splattered with red paint. She goes to the machines, strips to a white vest and a pair of boxer shorts, and places the dress into the machine. Juliet and Leia watch her, nonplussed.

Mona: Anyone have change of a pound?

Juliet: Is that...blood on your dress?

Leia: My my, it seems we have a theme of the day! You're not hurt are you?

Mona: It's only paint this time...

Juliet: Only?

Mona: You should've seen me after the acid attack.

Juliet: Oh my god!

Leia: Are you with the rebels?

Mona: No darling, it was just a crazed fan.

Leia: I would've choked the life out of him!

Mona: It was a woman actually.

Juliet: Oh.

Leia: Oh I see. I just assumed...

Mona: ...everyone does.

Juliet: Probably jealous. You're very beautiful.

Leia: Yes hun, you have a wonderful smile.

Mona: I get that a lot. Did you have change?

Leia: Yes in the till hun, I'll get it for you.

Leia goes to the till and Juliet returns to cramming the dress into the machine. Mona goes to help her and notices the bloodstain.

Mona: Oh god, did she get you too?

Juliet: Oh no, nothing like that. Self inflicted.

They are still struggling to shut the door. Leia returns.

Leia: Just use force!

The door closes. Leia puts coins in both machines and starts them.

Leia: Cup of tea while you wait ladies? Or maybe something stronger!

Mona: Why not. I'm sick of the virtuous act.

They sit on the bench and Leia passes Mona the whiskey bottle. Mona chugs from it.

Leia: *(to Juliet)* Not you.

Juliet: I guarantee you I've drunk worse. I once passed out for two days.

Leia: Seriously? What happened.

Juliet: I was talked into it by an old man...

Leia: Pervert!

Juliet: He was a priest.

Mona: Well that says it all...

Juliet: No it wasn't like that. He made him do it.

Leia: He? You mean...God?

Juliet: In a way. He wrote me.

Mona: He wrote to me.

Juliet: No, he literally wrote me. I woke up one morning and I was thirteen!

Leia: Me too! Well, I got to start with being born, he was pretty thorough my guy.

Mona: You're both lucky – I was painted. In some ways not much has changed!

Juliet: How are we lucky?

Mona: At least you get a backstory. I just sit in same stupid position all the time, right hand on left hand, right hand on left, right on left! How does he think that makes me look virtuous? I couldn't have just had a wedding ring?! Sitting and staring, that's it. It's so fucking boring.

Leia: I was anything but bored! It's outrageous what he had me doing – he could've written ten women instead of just me, but no no, I had to do everything myself. While you were sitting around smirking I was running a rebellion, standing in the senate and fighting the force! On top of that I've been enslaved, tortured, seduced, betrayed, rescued, and paraded around in a ridiculous gold bikini!

Mona: Oooh, gold bikini!

Leia: I strangled the last person who said that!

Juliet: You aren't the only one who had a lot on their plate! In less than a month I was betrothed, beloved, betrayed then deflowered, disowned and drugged.

Mona: My god...

Juliet: But that wasn't enough. After all that he widowed me!

Leia: Bastard!

Juliet: Oh yeah, and then he made me top myself! Dagger in the guts.

Leia: The bloody dress!

Juliet: The dress is the least of my problems.

Mona: At least you've both lived! For gods sake you're a child and you've done more in a month than I have in 500 years!

Leia: Bloody hell, you look good for your age.

Mona: Thanks, I've had some work done.

Juliet: How do you get your eyebrows so thin?

Mona: I have a guy...

Leia: That's the problem though isn't it, it's always a guy.

Juliet: I know, isn't it boring? We've all been created by men, what are all the women doing?

Leia: Sitting in laundrettes!

Mona: The most exciting thing that ever happened to me was the time I was kidnapped by a guy – most people would have been scared but I was just so delighted to have a change of scene! Unfortunately all I did was stare at the inside of a cupboard door for the next two years. Then no one even looked at me!

Leia: That's why it's so great that we're all here now, together. I was never given any female company – it's so nice to finally have a drink with the girls!

Juliet: Me too, I only ever had my mum and my nurse to talk to, never any women with real character.

Mona: Me neither. I know it sounds glamorous to be hanging around in Paris, but it isn't what it's cracked up to be. I've had plenty of people gawking, trying to understand me, but no one ever saw the real me. No one knows what's under the surface...

Juliet: I could've been hanging around Paris!

Leia: I'd love to be you. I was so busy being everything to everyone that I never had a moment's peace. Even when the war was over there was my brother, or my fella, or the kids. That's why I'm here. I'm opting out.

Juliet: At least you've had a life! I had four measly weeks and now what? I've been killed off. I don't know what to do with myself.

Mona: The grass is always greener I suppose.

Leia: Girls, I'm knackered. I am, I don't think I can take another prequel. Maybe I'll just freeze myself in carbon and be done with it.

Juliet: Are you kidding? I'd love to be you. You're strong and independent, and I bet everyone fancies you!

Mona: Beauty's only canvas deep.

Juliet: I tried to rebel and do things my own way, and if I'd been given the chance I hope I would've been just like you.

Leia: It was great, but now I'm tired out, I just want a quiet life.

The machines beep.

Leia: No rest for the wicked.

Juliet: I'll get them.

Mona: No, I'll go.

Mona goes to the first machine and takes out her dress. The paint is still on it.

Mona: This is ridiculous. We all think each other's story seems so great, why don't we try them on for size? (*beckoning Leia*) Here, take mine. You can rest as much as you want, no one will ask you for anything. Someone else can save the world.

Juliet: I will!

Leia rises and crosses to a machine with an out of order sign. She ceremonially pulls out the gold bikini and hands it to Juliet.

Leia: You're my only hope.

Still ceremonially, Leia removes her tabard and earmuffs and hands them to Mona.

Mona: Finally, I get to spend time with people who don't care what I look like!

All three slowly put on their new attire. They smile and embrace.

Mona: Well, I can't hang around all day – there's work to be done!

She begins unloading the service wash Leia put on earlier into a basket. Juliet starts to exit and then turns back to look at Leia.

Juliet: I...I love you.

Leia: I know.

Juliet exits whistling a tune from Star Wars. Leia slowly sits on the bench, folds her right hand over her left and smiles.

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