

The Adventure

Wallace, the curator at Château de Lumière Estate, was lying down in the library staring at the ceiling. He had been doing things all day at the house, but had run out of things to do. And, to be honest, he really couldn't think of anything more that he could do.

He had already danced around the house, tidied his room, catalogued a heap of paintings, and written a wish list of things that he wanted to purchase for the estate.

He was just completely over it. He had gone into London the night before to try to meet a nice man, but he had met a complete smarmy ass-hole. He had been trying to find a decent man to have as a companion for ages.

Maybe that was the problem, he thought. He was trying too hard. Wallace sighed deeply, and stood up. Time for a cupper, he thought.

He walked into the kitchen where he saw Arthur reading the newspaper at the table, having a cup of coffee. Arthur, the estate manager, was Wallace's arch nemesis in the greater scheme of things. Their relationship could be described as strained at the best of times.

Finally, thought Wallace – some entertainment! “Hi Arthur,” Wallace bounced over to the table, and sat down opposite him.

Arthur was trying to do his best impersonation of the invisible man. Wallace noticed that Arthur appeared to be uncomfortable in his presence, and felt a sudden jolt of delight.

“Hi Wallace.” He mumbled uncharitably, continuing to read the paper.

“So,” Wallace continued ignoring Arthur's black mood. “What are you up to today, old boy?”

“Work.” Arthur replied sharply. “Which – might I add – is what you should be doing.”

“But,” Wallace whined, “I've done everything.”

“Really? You did your dusting?”

“We have cleaners for that, Arthur.” He retorted.

“Really Wallace – When will you grow up?” Arthur asked grumpily.

“Well – that's the pot calling the kettle black.” Wallace threw his baby-blue eyes towards the heavens, and deeply sighed. He aggressively picked up his coffee, spun on his heel, and walked out the kitchen door - and headed back to the library.

He had never had a good relationship with Arthur. Arthur had always held it against him that he was gay. He had never appreciated him, and Wallace suspected that Arthur was actually a closet homophobic. But then again, maybe he was just being dramatic.

He gazed out the library window, looking towards the maze, and noticed the weather was closing in. He could see the children attending the riding school having lunch in the courtyard. He watched Arthur cross the courtyard towards the school. He looked as though he was still in a foul mood.

Wallace sighed. He wished that the twins - Kathryn and Lizzie were at home, they were always so much fun. They were the women who owned the Château de Lumière, and he worked for. He'd moved in with them years before when their Mother had passed away. They were his best friends; they listened to music, dressed up, threw ideas around, and they always made him feel like he was at home and part of the family.

It started to rain outside. He walked slowly down the hallway, slowly drinking his coffee. He eventually ended up back at the kitchen, and made himself another cup, and continued to wander his way around the hallways of the enormous house. He eventually stopped in the armoury.

He was admiring some of the armour, when he suddenly had an idea.

He could dress up in it. He grinned to himself.

Oh you naughty boy, he berated himself. This would amuse him for hours! Always better to be a naughty nurse – than just a nurse he thought.

He did a wee dance on the spot. He stripped down to his underpants in the armoury, and climbed into the largest piece of armour he could find, since they were all rather short back then.

Jesus – it's a bit tight, he thought. He shoved the helmet on over his shaggy blonde locks, and decided that he needed to go on an adventure to celebrate, and since he was in full medieval paraphernalia, he knew he should make the most of it. He looked around the room, and his eyes fell on a shield and sword.

Nice, he thought smiling to himself, the perfect accessories.

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Wallace bounced down the garden path. It was still lightly raining, but he wasn't worried since he was covered from head to toe in metal.

'Clunk, cluck, clunk'. Damn, he thought. This is bloody loud – it was amazing that the real knights could have ever been inconspicuous!

He arrived at his destination. The Maze. He grinned to himself. Well, he might not have a noble steed to ride astride, but he did have the armour, shield, and big shiny sword. He was in fine form.

He entered the maze, sword out, shield up – and moved quickly forward.

"On Guard," he jumped, he dramatically poked the maze wall with his sword.

He cracked up laughing at himself, as he imagined what he must look like to an observer. This was fun! The most fun he'd had in a long time. He'd been going on a few dates with a couple of men, unfortunately they'd turned out to be horrid.

He performed his way through the maze, jumping around, doing war cries, and pirouette's while stabbing his sword into the maze walls. He definitely wanted to be a medieval knight in his next life.

He reached the enormous cast bronze statue of King Henry VIII in the middle of the maze, and tried to approach it silently. This, he decided, was going to be the great assassination of King Henry VIII.

"OFF WITH YOUR HEAD" he screeched, and charged at the statue. His sword connected with the bronze head, and much to Wallace's shock, it fell off! He thought he heard something behind him.

"Oh heavens. Oh dear..." he said under his breath. He quickly looked around, praying that no one had seen it. His helmet was impairing his vision, and as he looked around, he stepped back, and fell into a hole, which had mysteriously opened behind him.

He went tumbling, banging and skidding at an extreme pace through the dark tunnel. He felt very scared, but was also thankful that he was wearing armour throughout this ordeal, or else he really wouldn't be looking that attractive any more. He crashed into a wall, and came to a grinding halt. Bruised, he went to pick himself up, and realized that he was still holding his shield and sword. He sighed a sigh of relief, as he thought that he may have lost them.

He was feeling a little light-headed, and saw that he was in one of the numerous tunnels under the Château de Lumière Estate. There was a lot of dust and grit surrounding him, which had been stirred up from his escapade down the tunnel, but he could vaguely see a door in front of him. He clunked towards it, wincing as he felt his ankle had been tweaked, and to his surprise found the door was unlocked.

He stepped into a long narrow hallway, which was dimly lit with something iridescent on the ceiling, and he saw another door in the distance. He limped towards it thinking that it was possibly a way out. That door was unlocked as well, but the door was jammed shut. He jimmied the sword in between the door and the frame, and put his weight against it. He huffed and puffed, Wallace fell flat on his helmeted face when the door swung open.

He looked up, and could see the outline of an array of objects. He felt around for a light switch, and delighted in the sight of what lay before him when he switched it on.

What filled Wallace's vision had him hyperventilating. In front of him, was an enormous room, filled with old furniture, paintings, sculptures, artifacts, and soft furnishings. He stood there in awe of the room, and knew immediately that none of the items in front of him were on his asset register for the Estate.

"Oh heavens," he squealed excitedly to himself. This was quite the discovery. He fumbled about and eventually got his armoured trousers off, and fished his mobile out of his sock. He knew that it was a high probability that Kathryn and Lizzie's father had hidden all these treasures under the Estate, as they had found other things that he had hidden before he died. It was like being on a permanent treasure hunt.

Maybe I should change my job description, he thought as he dialled Kathryn's number. Estate Curator, to Treasure Hunter Extraordinaire - he sighed dreamily, as Kathryn picked up the phone..

"Oh-my-god, oh-my-god, oh-my-god," he said excitedly down the phone, "I have hit the mother-load."

"What do you mean – the mother-load, Darling?" she asked him.

"I mean – the absolute MOTHER-LOAD!" he squealed, almost hyperventilating. "I Wallace; have made the most enormous discovery." He quickly explained to her what had happened, and what he had discovered - ignoring her when she berated him about trying to chop the statue's head off.

"Well then, Wallace, I suggest that you get it valued - immediately for insurance purposes," Kathryn instructed him. "Bloody Daddy," she muttered, knowing that it would have been her father who stashed everything secretly away.

"Ok, ok – I'll give you an update as soon as I know more," he replied. "Talk soon." He snapped his mobile shut to end the call, and quickly reopened and dialled another number.

"Wallace Deveraux speaking – could you put me through to your Historical Artefacts department please?" he waited impatiently to be transferred through. Finally, someone answered the line, and he quickly arranged for someone to come out and do an emergency evaluation. They assured him that they would be there within the hour.

He pulled his armour trousers back on after tucking his mobile into his sock, picked up the sword and shield, and ran out of the room, back down the hall way, and up the tunnel and out into the bright sunlight. As he climbed out of the hole, he noticed a couple of people had surrounded the hole. Arthur stood with his hands on his hips, peering over his glasses at Wallace who was trying to emerge from the hole.

He looked up at him sheepishly. "I can explain," he said, grinning at him.

"Yes... I gather that you probably can," Arthur retorted. "I just had a call from Kathryn."

"Oh good – so you got the whole story?"

"Huh, apparently," Arthur sniffed, and gestured to his students. "These girls insisted on coming to see the treasure you have supposedly discovered. I pray that this isn't another one of your escapades."

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Half an hour later, Wallace had changed out of his armour. He was pacing, impatient from waiting for the evaluator to arrive.

After a few minutes, he saw a pink BMW Mini pull up in front of the house, and he watched in appreciation as a tall, slender, well-dressed, young man unfolded himself out the car.

Wallace admired the young man's taut backside as he bent over to pick up some files from the passenger seat.

"Hi, I'm Gareth." He said introducing himself, his voice silky, and accent refined.

"Hi, I think I'm in love." He replied shaking the Gareth's hand. He slapped himself on the head, shocked at what just come out of his mouth. "Oh-my-god, did I say that out loud?" he asked Gareth sheepishly. "I apologise."

"No need," the man says and gives Wallace a look of interest. "But how about we discuss that later."

"Over a glass of wine?" Wallace asked cheekily.

"Absolutely." Gareth replied, as his eyes swept over Wallace appreciatively. "Now – show me the treasure." He asked. "And later you can show me this fabulous house."

Treasure and a date. Life just could not get any better than that; he thought feeling chuffed with himself, and silently thanked the armour for saving his good looks.