

"Of course" said Sharon in a disappointed voice "it's entirely possible that nobody will recognize me. After all..." she eyed the cartoon rabbit quizzically "...I'm merely a thinly disguised pastiche on one of literature's most famous women." She walked towards the grassy knoll in the center of the grounds, still wondering where on earth she'd seen the rabbit before. He wasn't wearing a top hat this time. And shouldn't he have been a real live rabbit? It made little difference to the puzzle...

"What did you say your name was?" she demanded irritably. "I didn't actually introduce myself" replied the rabbit tearfully "but as you ask, I'm Roger, and I'm looking for Jessica." Adding, somewhat enigmatically "And that makes two so far."

Sharon twisted her ponytail absently. She didn't know a Jessica... But she did know a Sandy, worse luck. They had been best friends at Rydell High until Sandy stole her boyfriend. Danny was such a rat! She sighed in remembrance. It was a world away from this mysterious garden and the cartoon rabbit. (How did she get here? Last thing she remembered she'd been in a Chrysler, as big as a whale, heading down the Atlanta highway, looking for a love getaway.) She was puzzled by the rabbit's reply. "Two what? Are there more rabbits in this garden?" She thought of Lenny. If only he could be here. He liked Rabbits, and loved hearing George talk about them. "There may be more rabbits, but I was referring to clues and titles." said the rabbit, helpfully.

Sharon and the rabbit kept walking. It was very peaceful, and the sun was setting gracefully behind the shock of trees at the far end of the grounds. There was still plenty of light, and the whole scene had a balmy, late summer quality to it that filled Sharon with a serenity she rarely experienced, as if she'd never been outside in her whole bookish life. She looked around, but the garden was empty. Perhaps nobody else knew about it? (In fact, there was another rabbit in front of her, but she could not see him because he was a six foot tall invisible rabbit.)

"Exactly how many clues are there to solve?" she asked the rabbit gently. Roger hesitated. Before he had time to reply, a large lion leapt out in front of them. "Hey! Stop right there you two!" shouted the lion, who, despite his fierce tone, looked particularly warm and friendly. "It's good to see you." He looked puzzled... "You came through the Wardrobe again, didn't you?" Sharon thought carefully. Perhaps it was a trick question? No, it was slowly coming back to her "My memory is a little hazy, but, yes, I think I did. But don't worry, there was no witch there."

She allowed herself to think back. It didn't seem possible that a wardrobe could be so... so different. And why were those dark horsemen chasing that harmless dwarf fellow? It certainly was a strange day she was having. Next time she wouldn't drink that little bottle. Come to think of it, she probably shouldn't have accepted that lift with that weird, high-strung guy in the red convertible. He'd given her something to eat, and that's where it had all started. She knew now that she should have flown to Las Vegas rather than hitchhiked, even though she was scared of flying unless her good friend Erica came with her.

The lion continued "I didn't mean to frighten you. But I had to stop that pesky rabbit from answering your question. After all, there are those famous Tiger Tee-Shirts at stake here, and we can't make it too easy." The rabbit jumped up and down. "Yes! Yes! You're right. Last time it was way too simple and those nice folks at the Serif Institute for Desktop Publishing Research had to send out thousands of XLs all over the world!" Sharon was mystified. "What ever are you talking about, rabbit?" she inquired, hoping to gain an insight into Roger's tortured mind.

"Well, it doesn't matter now" said the rabbit "but, it was something to do with backwards text. And even though it had Latin phrases (like Carpe Diem) in it, it didn't fool them! This time, it's a book, film, and music reference quiz. And I don't care how many live poets there are in the PagePlus users society." He continued. "Oh no, I've said too much, I haven't said enough. I thought that I heard you laughing, I thought that I heard you sing..." The rabbit was losing it. "Oh, I think I get it now" said Sharon (ignoring Roger's outburst of song) "you're saying there are some titles to be found, and that the first fifty people to spot them will get to hang out in a trendy T emblazoned with the cuddly PagePlus Tiger?" The lion nodded "A few more. We're going to be really strict this time, and limit the number of these free shirts to the first five hundred PagePlus users, and give free Tiger posters to anyone else. But they have to get all the titles, and specify whether it's a book, film or music."

Sharon thought that sounded fair, but how many titles were there? She thought about it for a moment, and then realization hit her. The lion didn't want her to give the actual number... But another clue would be fine! She counted the clues in her mind. "So, the number of titles to be found is exactly seven times the number of PagePlus Assistants in version 3.0? And the number of songs is the same as the number of main menus. And half of what remains are books... uh, nearly (there's three less books than films)." This was easy. Maybe she should start setting crosswords too! She started humming "I'm too clever for this story" to herself quietly.

Sharon considered the number of T-shirts. It seemed like an awfully big number. She didn't know the price of good quality cotton tees, but it must add up. Even for a company that sold the world's favorite DTP... "Have you checked this out with Gwyn?" she demanded "He's such a tightwad where money's concerned! He doesn't even celebrate Christmas! He doesn't even let his assistant Tim (the really short one) have any time off!" She hoped Roger really had checked it out. Pull a stunt like this and he could end up as a boiled rabbit, while she and the lion close-wrestled a psycho in the bathtub...

The lion seemed relaxed, even though Sharon's clues were about as subtle as a flying pan-galactic gargle-blaster to the side of the head. "Don't Panic!" he added, getting adjusted to another hitchhiking clue. "It's cool. You know he really enjoyed all the letters he was sent last time. Anyway, it's done now, so it's too late. He can't even fire me because I'm just a figment of his imagination!" Sharon thought the lion's logic was irrefutable. This lion definitely had a brain... Perhaps it was his heart that was missing? Or maybe his courage? The lion seemed to sense what she was thinking. "That's very unkind. Both Dorothy and Elton would object to you saying that." He was just about to ask Sharon "have you ever danced with the devil in the pale moonlight?" when they were interrupted by an Elvis Alert...

This was no ordinary alert. It wasn't just the spirit of Elvis that had entered the garden, but the man himself. "We're not worthy, We're not worthy" said Sharon, the lion and rabbit together. It was good to see the King, again. They were tired of seeing the strange naked Indian. "I'm hungry" said Elvis "Any fast-food places in this garden?" and began singing a ballad about tender, true love.

Sharon began to think this was all getting too much for her. Like a Lynch film. Weird on top. And in the middle? She felt funny, like she was standing in a strange, swirling multicolored dissolve. She pictured herself on a boat by a river with tangerine trees and marmalade skies. Oh, boy, it really was time to get out of here, but she couldn't move, her feet felt like lead. Perhaps that stairway appearing in front of her would lead her to freedom. (That was three!)

Sharon passed out. As she did, one last random thought struck the most beautiful actress in the world (we're not worthy). "I wonder if I make it home if Nick the detective will return my ice ax and raise rug-rats with me." Hasta La Vista, Baby... Next time she should just phone home.