

# EVENT GRANDEUR

**EVENT #40: DID NOT GO AS EXPECTED**

EDITED AND FORMATTED FOR ENGLISH (USA)

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## Chapter 1: Pre-Departure | Natters head office.

“The Event is over once a death has taken place!” John, my *Editor in Chief*, repeated as he placed both his feet on his pristine mahogany desk, avoiding his many vulgar and crass memorabilia.

Had to stick his legs up ridiculously high in order to do so.

I glanced at my friend, donning a solid blue pinstripe suit, yellow tie and suave brown leather shoes. The shoes that I’d gifted him on his fiftieth birthday and upped his style drastically.

It made me briefly wonder who he was trying to impress.

“The Event is over once a death has taken place,” I echoed to keep this pointless meeting of ours flowing.

“Come one, come all... I like the sell, I really do.”

“Honestly... I’m not quite sure how they’ve managed to attract all. Barring the cost to get you to the Island, you still need to pay an additional \$1000 to line-up for the Event and another \$4000 to get into the Event...”

*And that was if one had been deemed ‘worthy’ for entry.*

“...Let us not forget that you, yourself, could be the one that ends up dying. Those prices and risk alone shouldn’t be attracting all. This is quite baffling, John, quite baffling.”

“Obviously for those that think like you,” he replied, placing his arms behind his full head of grayish-silver hair. “Which is a small margin, considering folks drop 10,000 big ones on a simple booth at some farce excuses for disco clubs that are nowhere near as extravagant as this Event is made out to be.”

“I think it’s brilliant,” Jill, John’s latest assistant, decided to join in on the conversation.

Turning to face this former cheerleader, as John had made mention upon ‘enlightening’ me about her, I noticed her physique. Couldn’t help it.

She certainly knew how to dress for her body type. Donning a short flowy skirt, tight black shirt and knee-high boots, she also had bleached blonde hair and was only twenty-three.

It sometimes irked me as to why John’s ego needed these types of women constantly surrounding him.

Then again, I wasn’t one to talk...

“It is undoubtedly brilliant!” John hollered as he threw a rapid fist into the air. “It’s fantastic, prestigious and also a constant sellout with near impossibility of attaining a ticket... So, I’d say they’re doing more than fine with the management.”

“Eat like royalty, drink the finest beverages known to man and party like there is no tomorrow as there could be no tomorrow for you,” I was glancing at the advert again. “I mean... Why are people so intrigued by this?”

I could remember my shock when she initially told me about her interest. The sudden remembrance caused me to gulp and quite hard.

“Hey, I’m intrigued. The experience sounds regal,” Jill gasped.

“For \$5000 plus whatever it costs to actually get the ticket to the Island? Let’s also not forget the chance that you could end up dying,” I queried, staring at her directly.

“I mean, I don’t see the problem...” She fluffed her hair.

“You wouldn’t want to use the \$5000 and the additional money on... Say... Payments for a new car? A home deposit? College education? Et cetera and Et cetera...”

*Such a ‘responsible’ old chap you are.*

“All I’ll say to that is Y-O-L-O. You know,” she offered a slight dance.

“That’s right, You Only Live Once,” John added in his attempt to desperately show that he was still with the younger generations’ times.

Slapping the advert, I turned to face John fully, “this is such simple marketing... Yet from what I’m hearing there are people taking out loans, mortgaging their properties, selling their assets and, hell, even prostituting their bodies just to try and experience the Event.”

John simply chuckled.

“And how prestigious could it really be? It happens once a week... Every Saturday... John, my friend, I honestly don’t see a story here,” I played him.

It was a tactic he always fell for, which in turn ended up with me having anything I required, including full investigative resources at my disposal.

“You don’t... See... A story?” He cried in overdone agony, mimicking my prior slow delivery and taking his feet off the desk to spring upward. “Just like you didn’t see a story at *Club Metro*?”

“O-M-G! *Club Metro* is the BOMB! The exclusivity is crazy. What happened there?” Jill was curious.

“Oh, nothing much,” he scoffed. “It just turned out to be another award-winning piece for Mr. Writer over here, involving a HUGE scandal. No big,” now rolling his eyes in an exaggerated manner, he made sure that I’d seen him.

“What happened? Tell me,” she bounced up and down and I noticed her bust within the tight black shirt. I caught John’s eye and like a hungry frat boy, he gave me that grin of his.

*Really, John!*

I caught myself from shaking my head.

“I’ll let you fill her in, good sir!” He retorted, rubbing his desk where his feet had been prior. “After all it was your journalistic piece.”

“In a very quick version,” I began, still glancing over the advert. “I went to *Club Metro* to interview Cristian Armaducci.”

“Ohhhh,” Jill squealed as she adjusted her skirt to reveal it was an *Armaducci* itself. “I love, LOVE his clothes and his shoes are to die for!”

“Honey, don’t be interrupting the man!” John cut in and thumped the desk for some added ‘irritated’ effect.

“I’m so sorry. I have a tendency of doing that. Really, I am sorry. Please continue,” she stated quickly and rather wide eyed.

I got the impression that she felt she had made a penitent mistake due to the interruption.

Poor woman!

John and I did not care one bit. It was all a game to him and part of his bravado; which up until a while ago, I admittedly did enjoy.

“It was a typical interview, like you’d expect with a high-profile persona...” I noticed “**Dickhead!**” written subtly across John’s carpet. Crassly, “**Mr. Asshole**” had been written on mine in the same cursive.

“...The Scotch was endless; *The Dom* was flowing and the stories Cristian shared were truly remarkable. Interview finished, we decided to enjoy the night to the fullest and explore what *Club Metro* had on offer.”

Changing my tone, I now focused on Jill, “this left our booth unattended. The PERFECT TIME for a member of their security to swoop in and strike! Or so they thought...”

John began to laugh.

He always enjoyed the way I recollected, especially when I added panache.

“...As I returned to the booth, I saw a guard pouring powder into our drinks. Rushing over, I startled them, which caused them to spill their supply of Rohypnol all over the table.”

Jill gasped in horror, “Rohypnol... As in roofies! O-M-G! That’s crazy.”

“Yes, quite. You see, Jill, security ran their own scams at the venue. They tracked the high rollers, particularly those with valuables, and gave them ‘free drinks’ and other luxuries, or incentives.”

“That’s nice of them.”

“Not really, they’re all laced with the aforementioned Roofies...”

“Ohhhh yes, right. Silly me.”

She caught my eye mid-eyeroll and I noticed her give me a crafty smile.

“They’d tried this tactic on Cristian and me earlier that night. We, however, turned them away as the beverage wasn’t to Cristian’s liking. When that attempt of theirs would fail, their next course was to then try slip Roofies into drinks the guests already had; doing so when said drinks had been left unattended. Luckily, I noticed the heinous exploit, otherwise we might have been... Well... You know.”

“Eee,” she moaned as she bounced once more and let off another sly smile.

“Eee, indeed.”

John was eyeing her, hungrily.

*John, you fool!*

*Jill isn't the floozy she's leading you on to believe.*

*She is playing you. Just like that last 'assistant' of yours.*

*She's most probably a 'spy' for our biggest rival, The Confabs Agency!*

*But, whatever. Your problem, John, not mine.*

“You see, Jill, security would like to make it seem that their victims were far too intoxicated and therefore needed to be escorted out of the club. They would take their victims out back to an area with no surveillance and once there they would rob them of everything they had. Rings! Watches! Wallets! Cash! Phones! Even their shoes if they were deemed valuable.”

“Savages.”

“Undeniably. And the sheer brilliance of it... They would dress up someone from their team to match the victims' clothing.”

“Why?”

“In case they were ever inspected by authorities. On their camera system the dressed-up member was indistinguishable and appeared to be the victim themselves. Rather uncannily actually,” I let off a quick chuckle. “To further the brilliance of their schema they would have the team member stumble out to a pre arranged taxi.”

“Why?”

“Well, Jill, when viewed on their camera system it appeared like the victim themselves was the one stumbling out to the taxi and leaving the club.”

“Ohhhh.”

*Yet another seductive type of squeal!*

“The taxi driver, of course, is also in on the scam. They would drop the team member off at an unscrupulous part of town, swearing up and down that, that is where the 'victim' requested to be dropped off; in case they too were ever audited.”

John was now looking intently at Jill's backside and was on the verge of a full-blown drool. Those squeals had rendered him moronic.

I shook my head and continued, “the security team would then dump the actual victim in the same part of town a little later on in the night with none the wiser. The victim would wake up in the morning robbed, badly hungover and thinking they'd brought this on themselves.”

*Was truly a brilliant schema if you were to ponder...*

“Oh my, were there many victims?” She bounced again, no doubt noticing John's hypnosis.

“Surprisingly, quite a few,” I made my way mere feet from her and blocked off John’s view. “Not enough, however, to be brought to attention as they weren’t just doing it at *Club Metro*... They switched between clubs throughout downtown.”

“And you cracked this open?”

“I did.”

“Wow, you’re like a Super Detective, or something,” she bit her lip and placed a hand on my arm, giving it a light squeeze.

*Easy there, Jill.*

“HERE!” John interrupted, throwing the article to draw her attention back to him. “Hey, good catch! Anyhow, after you pick up my lunch, enjoy the read. Like I said, Mr. Writer over here won an award for it.”

“Thank you, sir. I will be back with your lunch at 12:30pm,” she stated as she began to exit the office and close the door behind her.

“You!” John began, appearing to be stern, which I now rolled my eyes to, making sure he had seen the over exaggeration. “Don’t you be fucking her or anything, you here me?! No matter how good her ass looks in that skirt she’s got on.”

*She will most probably be fucking you, John... And not in the way you think.*

“Come now,” I shrugged. “You know I don’t shit where I eat.”

This was a rule I followed strictly.

*I mean, ever since...*

*Stop!*

*Focus!*

“Then why did I have to fire my last two assistants?” He asked, breaking my thought.

“You really want to go there?” I laughed.

“We shall skip it. Anyhow, back to this Island.”

“Grandeur Island,” I felt ‘respect’ was owed.

“Right, Grandeur Island... What were you saying before? You heard people were selling their assets? Prostituting their bodies? To name a couple?”

“Weirdly enough, that is correct.”

“Then how lucky are you!?” John grabbed a stress ball and squeezed away. “Not only do you not have to prostitute yourself, we even got you a first-class ticket!”

“Business class.”

“My ‘apologies’, Mr. Asshole, business class,” he gave me the finger. “Not to mention you’ll be staying in their so-called finest suites.”

“Joy!”

“You should feel joy. As always, we will be providing you with the big bucks to cover all the entry fees and footing any other expenses you make, or incur. I mean, chap, how have you not got it made?”

“And before you start...” He was determined. “Don’t get ME started on all the blowjob offers I’ve been receiving from everyone. And when I say everyone, chap, I mean everyone! Female staff, male staff, mothers, fathers... FUCK ME! Even grandmothers...”

He threw me the stress ball and began to imitate a blowjob.

“...They all wanted to be considered for this Event. Not to mention us actually managing to secure a ticket for you, which from what I’m being told is fucking hard to do! It, apparently, took some intern being on the computer for four whole weeks... Four whole weeks to get you a ticket to Grandeur Island. Literally non stop on the computer is what I’ve been told...”

I would notice her constantly glued to her laptop, or tablet during this enigma of Grandeur Island.

“...Little fucker is asking for a wage increase, or a full-time position for this so-called deed,” he scoffed and thumped the desk. “Anyhow... You’re the one with a *‘Willy Wonka golden ticket’*.”

“Gee, thanks,” I threw the ball back to him. “That is if I even manage to get into the actual Event.”

“Come on, chap, look at you, you’re prime for this. There is no way, I repeat, NO WAY that you won’t be allowed entry to this Event. They’ll take one look, take the money required and wave you on through without a second’s hesitation.”

Look at me?

I shifted, so I could see myself in Johns’ rustic full-length mahogany mirror, that he was anal in making sure matched his desk.

Having just turned forty-one, standing a near six-feet-tall with darker side brown hair... Admittedly dyed... And matching eyes... Those were still natural... I was built larger than the average athlete, though not as buff as a competing bodybuilder. My robust frame showed nicely through my off-white V-Neck T-Shirt and accentuated a somewhat youthful demeanor.

Finally, the dark navy jeans, loose fitting silk scarf... Which was more so for protection, you’d be surprised with how many ways one could smother an attack with a scarf... And brown cap-toe shoes served to finish my stylish look.

Oh-yes, I appealed to one’s eyes, if I were to pay compliment to myself. Women, men and whomever they proclaimed to be got drawn to me like your cliché’ moth to a flame.

But was this enough though? Enough to enter what was being pegged as the most epic Event in all of existence... If placing my reputation aside.

“So, I have two days before you ship me out?” I shuffled back to face my friend. “Two days to try organize and find people to interview. The Owner and Event organizer of the Island is obviously a given. Attaining this interaction will be my NUMBER ONE priority...”



*For other reasons.*

“...Unfortunately, I have yet to see, or hear anything about them. Nor anyone having a way to contact them,” I found I had scrunched my face.

“They’re that well hidden?” He threw back the ball.

“That they are, John. I want to get Rocco looking into seeing what he can find.”

Rocco was a wizard in finding out information about individuals, particularly with those who didn’t want anything to be known about them.

He was one that fell within full investigative means and resources.

There was simply none better than Rocco!

He did, however, come at a moderately hefty price.

“Rocco is expensive,” John was dismayed.

“The expense is required,” I argued. “And don’t you worry... I will guarantee you an award-winning piece,” I promptly added for his reassurance.

“Fine... Do it. Get Rocco.”

I had actually already paid Rocco myself to see what he could find. The fact that I could now reimburse was an added bonus.

“I was also thinking of trying to organize an interview with their *Chief of Security* as it will be fascinating to know how they keep an Event like this in check. I’ll also throw in the head of *Public Relations* as it will be interesting to know how they managed to get the word out on a global scale. You think you can swing these connections for me? Being such a high-profile figure yourself?”

He did love to be buttered up.

“Consider it done,” he waved and continued to squeeze his ball, no doubt still pondering over Jill’s ass.

“I’ll also speak with any other workers, or hosts that seem interesting, any possible celebrities I might encounter and any Tom, Dick and Harry that fit the bill. Yadda, Yadda, Yadda. Do you concur?”

“Chap, you’ve brought me great story after great story after great story, so I trust you,” he nodded.

“Correction... The entire magazine and everyone here at *Natters* trusts you. Not to mention your journalistic pieces helping build *Natters* into the powerhouse we are today,” he then jolted slightly.

“NOW DON’T YOU BE QUOTING ME ON THIS and no... You ain’t getting an even higher pay raise.”

I gave him another of the eyerolls.

“Some, obviously, are going to be scorned and probably spit in your protein shake when you’re not looking. But deep down, for some it might be really deep down, they know you’re the right man for this job and they’ll be over their scorn pretty quickly.”

He was darn right; I was the right man for the job...The ONLY man for the job!

Especially with the mission I'd be carrying out...

"I'm blushing," I feathered my hand to animate.

"So do what you always do... Go kill."

*Interesting choice of word there, John, poetic actually...*

I smiled.

"Now," he wasn't done. "Get out of my office and be sure to shut the door nice and tight when you leave. My new hot, sexy wife is about to video call me and will probably give me a striptease."

"Is that why your credit card is always maxed... How much does she charge per minute?" I jested.

"Out! You!" He tossed the ball at me, which I dodged, causing it to bounce around his office.

I did not close his door upon exiting, instead ignored his cusses and roars as I checked my *Armaducci* watch for how long I had to dwindle until the upcoming happy hour.

My sudden thirst for a drink had made me need to get out of *Natters* HQ and fast!

A minimal of three shots, as John had said 'not to mention' three times throughout the meeting, would be consumed. Surprisingly, it was rather low this time round as John usually said the 'famous' abovementioned in the near tens.

Quelling my disappointment, I came to the internal agreement that I'd make the shots a form of super strength liquor for this twisted drinking game of mine that I'd only recently began to undertake.

Unfortunate for me, getting super drunk was the only way I could sleep soundly without those dreams.

*The only way, ever since...*

*Stop that!*