

Mark is away on business. I miss him when he goes. Not just because he helps with my lung condition, above and beyond what the social workers on the NHS do. But also because he makes me smile. It's been a sweet 7 years of marriage.

Whenever he goes away, I ask for some ridiculous thing, he can never bring. When he was in Beijing I asked for dragon whiskers. When he was in California, I wanted jackalope antlers. I was going to ask for Mothman's home address next time he was in the states, but he was called away to some big conference in Ireland.

It's been a long time since I'd been to Ireland. I grew up there. I have vivid memories of the rolling green hills and fresh air. Of course it's not all like that, but I'm not above a little selective memory to cheer me up. I haven't visited in years. My lungs have gotten that bad, and there's no hope for a transplant.

This time I thought I'd be cheeky and ask for a gold coin from the end of the rainbow. You wouldn't know, but that's one of the few stereotypes that really rankles at me. Leprechauns and the like are just for tourists.

So when a heavy package arrived 5 days into his 2 week trip I was caught off guard.

Sure enough, wrapped in layer upon layer of protective packaging was a real good coin. Solid gold. Or at least I assumed as much. The last layer it'd been wrapped in was just business note paper and Mark's neat hand writing

Make a wish.

That was it. No context. No details, at all. I thought, "Screw it, what's the worst that can happen." I clenched the large coin in my hand, scrunched up my eyes and wished.

Now I think at the time my exact wording was "I wish for my chest to be filled with the air of Ireland". I dunno, I was being poetic and homesick. I was expecting a cool breeze from my memories of Ireland at best. Nothing more.

I lay down my head, already exhausted from the unusual strains of the day and clutched Mark's gift and fell asleep thinking of home.

That's when I had my dream, just like I described; rolling green hills and fresh air. And a little fella wearing green.

"Fuck, I can't believe it. Are you real?"

"Oh now, don't be like that. I'm either real and I've entered your dream, or I'm a figment of your imagination and this is how you remember Ireland. Which would be worse?"

"You tell me..." I say flatly, I can feel the Irish lilt entering my voice as my accent changes to match him.

“Well, like most things it’s a little of both. Now, I think you have something mine, and I’d like it back.”

And sure enough I’m holding his gold coin, it must be his, to my aching chest. Even in my dreams I can’t get any respite. I wait for him to ask again, not wanting to give up Mark’s gift.

“I can see it means something to you already lass, despite it being in your care barely an hour. Tell you what, would you exchange it for a wish?”

Slowly I nod. I don’t think this is real. But if it’s not real when I wake up I’ll still have the coin... So what’s the harm?

“I wish for my chest to be filled with the air of Ireland again.”

“Are you sure that’s what you want, lass?” I look at him as he asks, wondering if I’m being short changed or falling into a trap.

“Of course...?” Is all I can muster, and he’s clicked his fingers and there in his hand in an instant is the coin, and I am left empty handed. No breeze fills my lungs. Shit, short changed and by a short arse, I think to myself.

I wake up abruptly, eyes wide open staring at the ceiling, taking a big gulp of air. That’s ... That’s new. I haven’t been able to gulp air like that in over 10 years. And I don’t think I exhaled either.

Weird. I try and right myself, but I’ve got a heaviness in my chest. Nothing new there. Except. It is a new sort of sensation, not really a heaviness but a kind of pressure?

Sitting up properly this time I take another deeper breath. And then I notice.

Each breath I take is literally filling out my chest. It rises but doesn’t fall, pumping me up. I take a few more experimental breaths and look down watching a shelf of cleavage suddenly appear, straining the buttons on my pyjamas.

And then I notice, it wasn’t just in the dream, but the coin is gone. Mark’s coin is gone.

And as I think that, I take another deep breath to steady myself, and feel the pressure in my chest rising.

Catching me off guard, is that voice again, ringing through the house.

“It was never Mark’s coin! The thieving bastard took it! And now you fell for my trick!”

Panic sets in and I start to hyperventilate. I don’t care about the coin, I am just having the scariest trip of my life and this pressure in my chest isn’t helping.

“Now, swear to me, on yer mother’s tongue you won’t go stealing any more of me treasures.”

Heave, heave More sobbing breaths. No words come out. Tears are streaking down my face, but all I can do is suck in huge lungfuls of breath.

“Come on now, don’t let yer silence betray yer guilt.”

The pressure build and builds in my chest, buttons on my top clinging on for dear life. Not unlike myself. You could put a hand through the gaps now. And I claw and tear at them, hoping to break free.

But before I can properly get a grip, one of the buttons decides to free itself.

ping

“Ooh ho ho, that’s a fancy trick.”

And then a cascade of rips and snaps as more buttons fly loose. Fabric tears and I am suddenly aware not of pressure but *size*.

I make for one more, enormous gasp, before pronouncing my innocence.

“I SWEAR ON MY MOTHER’S TONGUE!”

And then there’s silence, except for my heaving *regular* breath, as I regain composure.

I look down at my chest and almost lose balance at the sight of my breasts. They are breath taking, no pun intended.

Each one sits pert but soft, the size of a large beachball, hanging by size alone near my naval. I stagger back onto the sofa, breasts swamping my lap.

“Oh do you not like them...?”

The mischievous voice was back, but my head was swimming with my new reality. I could barely focus.

“You can go back to how you were, but... Lungs and all.”

I hadn’t noticed in all the excitement that I was breathing normally now. Collecting myself I had to respond, because I was not going back to how things were.

“No... I’ll stay like this,” I manage...

Mark was in for a surprise, when he came home.