

The Stacked Deck

(a Jonas Silversmith story)

By Devin McTaggart

“In my line of work, being tense and nervous just sort of comes with the territory, being that making a mistake can cost dozens, if not hundreds, of people their lives. My name is Steve Hayes, also known as the Three of Clubs. I’m what’s known as a Sanitizer. The Head Sanitizer for North America, as a matter of fact, and, as you all know, I work for The Deck in support of The Veil,” I said into the mirror of my hotel room, trying not to read off of my notes.

In only a couple of hours, I was going to have to give this speech for real, so I wanted to be sure I had all the rhythms right. I’d been told a couple of weeks ago that I’d been selected to speak to a group of seniors at Liavek College, one of the premiere magical universities in North America, and to convince the students while Sanitizers, although certainly far from the most glorious job, was one that more students needed to consider getting into.

“Our job as Sanitizers is to ensure that the Veil, that is to say the protection keeping the general nonmagical public from becoming aware of magic, stays intact,” I said, leaning against the dresser like it was podium. “We are authorized to use any power in our arsenal to do that, and that also means that unlike the rest of the magical public, I’m authorized to kill anyone, anywhere, anytime, anyplace, if it means keeping magic’s existence from getting out to the general populace. For that reason, we’re the most selective of the branches of magical military service, and we reject a lot more applicants than we take in. But that should be something *encouraging* you to try, not *discouraging* you. We definitely *need* more people in the Sanitizers, especially as we’re having to deal with the encroaching power of technology and 24/7 surveillance state. So for the next hour and change, I’m going to walk you through what I do, how I do it, what I *don’t* do, why not and what things happen to me on a daily basis that you wouldn’t expect. I’ve left the rest of the second hour purely to answer questions, simply because I’m sure you’re loaded with them.”

I looked at myself in the mirror with a deep sigh. Normally I try to avoid these kinds of things, but three weeks ago, I got a request from the Dragonborn himself, Jonas Silversmith, the Red Joker, and he’s not the kind of person anyone in our field likes to tell ‘no,’ so I didn’t feel comfortable declining when he sent me the invitation.

It’d been a while since I’d set foot at Liavek College. I only looked like I was about to be turning fifty. Most of us mages have extended our lives through one way or another, and I was actually born on January 1st 1924, meaning I just turned a hundred years old a few months ago, but I’d been a student at Liavek College in the 40s and had gone straight from there to working in the Sanitizers.

Being a Sanitizer isn’t the sort of work that most magicians find they have the temperament for, because it requires an insanely attentive eye for detail combined with an utter sense of ruthlessness if things go south in a hurry.

A lot of Sanitizers crack after just a few years on the job, because at some point, the job is probably going to ask of them more than they’re capable of handling. We also find out when that moment comes, they’re going to linger on it for the rest of their careers, so we have to end their career right then and there. I usually get called in to erase their memories of all the work they’ve done with the Sanitizers, and they just have a professional hole in their minds, carved out by me.

The most recent Sanitizer we had to retire couldn’t handle the fact that they’d failed to convince a young mother that she hadn’t seen a werewolf attack, and because their enchantment

hadn't held, I'd had to come in and clean up the wreckage a bit more sharply. I was lucky in that I didn't have to leave any bodies on the floor, but I'd definitely done my share of mental damage to the people that hadn't been handled properly the first time.

It's lonely work, and to be honest, trying not to tell the students about that part was going to be the biggest challenge. I had to make sure the weight of the work wasn't enough to discourage any of them from moving into Sanitation. We were already short staffed as it was. But I also didn't want to look like a square, and no offense to Silversmith, I also didn't want to look like I was showing off. I put on an emerald green silk shirt and black slacks, but I also kept on my combat boots, a reminder that at *any* moment, Sanitizers could be called upon to clean up the mess of lesser wizards.

Frankly, I was hoping some kind of emergency would spring up in the middle of the presentation and that I would have to go and deal with it rather than answer questions from students about the worst things I've had to do as a Sanitizer.

I grabbed my note cards, tucked them into my pocket, pulled out my cell phone, called for an Uber to take me from the hotel to the campus and then headed down to the lobby.

The ride over I only had my thoughts to keep me company, and I sighed, wondering for a moment whether or not I'd wasted the last 80 years of my life. I knew the work was important, but I'd given up a hell of a lot to make sure that the Veil wasn't broken. Still, if I said it hadn't taken its toll on me over the years, I'd be lying.

Over most of the last century, I'd typically hire a lady of the evening once a season, sometimes for the sex, but mostly just to hold me for twenty-four hours, usually while I cried.

I always blurred their memories the morning after.

Dating, finding love, these are all complicated things for even the smallest magician, but for those of us in Sanitation, they're basically a write-off. It generally requires our partners be other magicians, and they have to be the kind of person who can handle dealing with knowing their partner could have come home from work on any given day and have committed a triple homicide in the service of the greater good of protecting the Veil.

Nobody comes out entirely clean when you work in Sanitation.

The car dropped me off at the main office of Liavek College, the entire university concealed within a very powerful enchantment north of San Francisco, off by a place called Bolinas Point, overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The Uber dropped me off at a turn off from Mesa Rd that had a sign pointing off to "Historic KPH Transmitter Site" and I realized I probably should've rented a car, but I swiped through the driver's mind just reflexively anyway, so he'd think of it as just another fare.

Standing outside of the office (which was invisible to any untrained in the magical arts) was Jonas Silversmith himself, dressed in his impeccable suit, all tans, his hand resting on his walking stick, his little goth Lolita demoness sidekick by his side, as she had been since his return a few decades ago. "Early, as ever," Silversmith said to me, offering his hand for me to shake, which I did. "It's good to see you again, Steve. We were a little worried you might decline my invitation."

"Jonas, I learned a long time ago that unless there was an *extremely* compelling reason to refuse you, one should never," I said with a chuckle. "Besides, you're entirely right. The number of people signing up to join me in working in Sanitation declines every year, so we gotta do something to start gettin' em in to consider the importance of what I, well, what *we* do. I don't want to be one of the last men standing on the wall when the Veil's under assault. Even I have to rest sometimes. I do appreciate you lending a hand with some of the more... exotic cases."

“Well, when it came to the other Dragonborn, how were you supposed to know what to do with our kind?” Silversmith said to me as we started walking down the pathway. “Besides, you’ve had loads of gigs when you could’ve called for help and nobody would’ve faulted you for it, and you handled it all by yourself.”

“I don’t like anyone thinking the old man isn’t capable of dealing with things on his own,” I told him with a slight smile. “I want anyone who joins the Sanitizers to be completely prepared to handle the biggest of challenges without flipping out.”

“You’re not *that* old, Steve,” Silversmith told me. “When you’re on your third or fourth century, maybe I’ll feel some sympathy for you. In fact, I’ve been told you haven’t been coming to do presentations to the student body for a while now.”

I frowned a little bit, wondering who’d been ratting me out. “I’ve taken a few years off, that’s true, but that was after the last time I got a complaint for how I answered the hardest day I’d had working as a Sanitizer.”

“It *was* rather a bleak story, Steve,” Silversmith said.

“But it was a true one, and I figured the students deserved to know how dark things can potentially get, at the worst.”

We were walking towards Moorcock Hall, which was the largest building on campus, holding the campus’s largest auditorium, a room which could hold a little over two hundred people, which was where visiting lecturers were brought to talk to a sizable number of students all at once. I didn’t notice any students heading into the hall, so I guessed they were all there waiting for me to arrive.

“Well, hopefully that won’t drive anyone away tonight,” Silversmith said, leading me into the building. “Now, regardless of how things go tonight, I’m hoping you won’t hold it against me.”

“Hold it against you?” I asked. “What are you talking about?”

As we entered the lecture hall, I noticed it wasn’t full – in fact the hall only held about a quarter of the number of people it could, and they were divided into 4 sections, and there were numbers in front of them. I probably should’ve been thinking more about the fact that every single one of the seats that was occupied had an absolutely beautiful woman sitting in it.

I glanced over at the podium and saw another familiar face, and felt my heart drop in my chest, realizing that I wasn’t here to give a lecture after all.

“Oh no,” I whispered beneath my breath.

“April Fool’s!” Jonas Silversmith said with a confident laugh that was far more terrifying than anything else I’d ever heard come from him. “I know we told you that you were here to give a lecture, but you’re actually here to receive an award.”

“An award?” I said, turning to look at him. “Then... why is *she* here?”

“Helen?” Silversmith asked me. “Well, she’s responsible for the part of the gift that we’re here to make sure you can’t *refuse*.” He grinned, and I immediately wanted to run, but knew that it was pointless – they had *plans* for me, and there was no getting out of it.

The woman standing by the podium was another member of The Deck, the Queen of Hearts, was one of the oldest magicians still around, supposedly the daughter of Zeus and Leda, but she was much better known as the face that launched a thousand ships, Helen of Troy. She was the most powerful master of love magic in the world. Always had been.

“You’ve been dealing with the messes of mages for a long time, Steve, handling the sorts of problems that none of us want to get entangled in,” Helen said to me. “But you’ve been so busy working that you haven’t taken any time to enjoy your life. Put bluntly—”

“Put *very* bluntly,” Silversmith interrupted, “you’ve not been *fucking*.” My eyes darted to the crowd before looking back to Silversmith again. “The strongest magicians in the world are generally descendants of powerful existing magicians. But you don’t have a wife. You don’t have any children. Even *I* have been leaving a few children in my wake. And yet, here you are, without so much as a single child to your name.”

“Finding a partner’s not easy when you do what I do, Jonas,” I said to him.

“That’s why I’m here,” Helen said with a mischievous giggle. She was incredibly gorgeous, but I’d known her for decades, and her husband was the kind of man nobody wanted to cross. “You have before you fifty-two *perfect* mates for you, all of whom right now are thinking about tearing off your clothes and getting you inside of them.”

“Good lord, finding *one* would’ve been more than enough,” I said to her. “After one, I’m sure I’ll be ready for a nap.”

She giggled again, rolling her eyes. “Well, it’s a good thing that you *have* to take at least a full poker hand of five, hm?”

“At... at least?” I asked nervously.

“That’s the fun part of this game,” Jonas said. “We’re going to determine how many of these women are going to be your partners by a bit of card fun.” He pulled a deck of cards from his hands and began to shuffle it. “What I’ve got here is a deck of cards. You’re going to leave here with at least 5 partners, maybe a lot more. Every one of the women here has been given a card, and we’re going to deal you out a five-card hand. Those are your first five partners, who’ll be with you for life. Then, if that hand has a pair or better, we’ll deal you another five-card hand. As long as there’s no joker in those five cards, you’ll keep those five as well. And again, if that hand has a pair or better, you’ll go again. So at the end of the day, you’re leaving here with somewhere between five and fifty partners, depending on where the jokers spring up and how good your poker hands are.”

“And... and they’re all okay with that?” I asked Jonas, glancing back at the crowd again.

“Are you doubting Helen’s magics?” Jonas asked me, arching an eyebrow.

“No! No, I meant no offense, Lady Helen,” I said suddenly. “I just didn’t want anyone to feel like they were obliged to do anything they didn’t want to do.”

“Oh, I think these women might cut one another to get a chance to *do you*,” Helen said. “They’ll get along in the long run, though. I planned my spell accordingly. We also took into account the sorts of things that turned you on and off, so you’ll notice they aren’t all human.”

“I... I don’t know if *I* can handle—”

“Not up to you, mate,” Jonas said with a sly laugh. “And you’re going to be on a forced six-month paid vacation starting today.” He held out the deck of cards to me. “Now, let’s draw our first five card hand and see who’s going to be your first five wives.”

I took the deck nervously and laid out five cards one at a time – Three of Hearts, Five of Diamonds, Four of Hearts, Two of Hearts and Six of Diamonds.

“Well, that’s got better than a pair in it, so will the ladies who heard their card called come on down?” Silversmith said with a chuckle.

“There’s no pair in there,” I said.

“No need,” Silversmith replied. “You’ve got a straight, two to six.”

I glanced up at the crowd and saw women from two sections stand up, starting to make their way forward, each holding a card matching one of the ones I’d laid out on the podium before me. The first one, holding up the Three of Hearts, was a tall blonde with her hair drawn back into two pigtails that were pinned to the side of her head, making sure her elvish ears were

visible. She was dressed in a plaid skirt and a white Oxford top that made her look like a particularly slutty schoolgirl, with long white stockings up to the middle of her thighs.

“You don’t remember me, do you human?” she said as she dropped down to her knees before me. “I’m Waterlily Elderflower. Seventy years ago, I was but a tiny elvish child, and you rescued me and my parents from hunters who had stumbled across us.” I felt myself gasp as she reached in and pulled out my cock, right in front of everyone, tugging on it before she wrapped her lips around it, suckling on it.

The Five of Diamonds was an Asian woman who looked to be in her mid-thirties, but I could tell from the look in her eyes that not only was that not a good estimate of her age, she wasn’t human either. She was dressed in a long black slinky dress. “That’s it,” the woman said to me. “Every good household needs an elvish slut willing to get down on her knees at the drop of a hat. I’m Constance Steele, and I’m looking forward to having your child swirling around in my belly, Master.” I swallowed a deep breath, knowing I was now going to be bonded to both an elf and a dragon. I saw as Constance shoved Waterlily’s head down harder onto my cock. “Now don’t be shy, slut. We want our Master to know exactly all the wonderful delights he’s being given. Take that cock like a good little elven whore.” Her fingertips held Waterlily’s head down near the best of my cock for a moment before I felt the elf coughing a little bit on my cock, drawing her head back.

“He’s much bigger than elvish men are,” Waterlily moaned as she pulled her mouth off my cock, a slightly whimper escaping her lips.

“Then let me have a go,” a redheaded dwarvish girl said as she moved to kneel down next to Waterlily. “I’m Ruby Reed, and you should never send an elvish slut to do a dwarven whore’s job.” She was dressed in a frilly scarlet peasant’s blouse and leather trousers, but as soon as she got down on her knees, he pulled the blouse down to expose one of the largest and most impressive sets of tits I’d ever seen in person. She grabbed Waterlily’s head and pulled her over to give her a hard kiss, the elf whimpering before moaning into the hungry liplock the two were engaged in on their knees right before my exposed cock. A second or two later, she broke from the kiss and immediately depthroated the entirety of my hard cock, swallowing it as everyone looked in excitement.

As she held it there, the fourth girl, a human brunette in her early twenties, maybe an actual student at Liavek, grinned at me, bending forward over the podium, slowly drawing up her black pleated skirt to show me her pussy on display, already dripping eagerly awaiting me.

“Don’t you want to do more than just get it wet, baby?” she said to me. “I’m Riley La Fae, and I’ve got a nice tight little pussy with your name on it.” She reached behind to make sure I could see as she pulled her pussy lips apart invitingly.

Ruby chuckled, sliding her head off my cock. “Go on, then,” she said with a smirk. “I’ll get mine one way or another.”

I turned to get lined up to push my dick into Riley’s snatch when I felt a new set of lips on my ear, whispering into it. “I’m Sally Wyllt, Riley’s roommate and your fifth partner,” she said breathily just loud enough so only I could hear her. “She likes it rough, so you’d better fuck her like you own her... because you do. It’ll only get her off harder, you railing the shit out of that little bitch. *Your* little bitch. C’mon, daddy, lemme see you balls deep in your bitch...”

I couldn’t deny it, glancing over my shoulder to see that Sally was a tan-skinned, dark haired woman of no small beauty herself, a wild look in her eyes. When I glanced at Riley, it was almost as if I *knew* she wanted it rough and hard.

My hands slapped down onto Riley’s ass, making her jump a little before they slid up and

latched onto her hips, holding them steady as I lined up the tip of my dick and just jammed the fuck out of it, slamming it as deep as I could make her take it, hearing the filthiest, most satisfied squeal of pleasure I'd ever heard from a woman as a welcoming response.

"Fuck yes, Master!" Riley howled. "Pound the fuck out of me!"

My hips started to batter forward, shoving my cock as deep into Riley as I could make her take it, and I started to wonder if she was simply very tight or if I had grown as a result of Helen's spell, because it almost felt like I was having to *force* Riley's cunt to stretch to accommodate all of my dick each time I plowed into her, our sweaty bodies colliding, my dick punching inside of Riley's warm, inviting snatch.

"God yes," Sally moaned into my ear. "Listen to how much she fucking loves it, loves feeling you drilling her tight fucking cunt... I'm so fucking jealous... I can't fucking wait for my turn to be your dick holster, Master..."

"Not now, Sally," Riley whimpered. "He's fucking *my* brains out right now... fuck, I feel so fucking *full of dick*, oh my god, oh my fucking god... slamfuck me harder... drill it... drill your little bitch... pound her pussy so full of your fucking cum... oh my god, breed me, daddy... I wanna be a good little fertile slut for you... I wanna feel you creampie me, baby... I wanna feel you knocking me up, making me your first baby mama... breed my little teenage pussy, sir... please... fucking nut inside my tender young pussy... oh fuck, I can't stop fucking cumming... cum in me, sir. Please! PLEASE I'm losing my fucking mind! I fucking need it! Give it to me! Cum inside me! CUM!"

I was about to try and pull back and out, but I suddenly felt three sets of hands on my ass, pushing me forward, and a final set cradling my nutsack, and I knew there was nowhere for me to go, so I just stayed with my dick hilt deep inside of Riley's cunt and let loose the kind of orgasm that I imagine everyone in the auditorium heard in perfect clarity. It had been quite some time since I'd let go, and I'm almost terrified to think of how much cum I must have poured inside of Riley's pussy, but my own suspicions were confirmed when I slowly pulled back and slid my cock out, and I could see a large rivulet of my cum running down the inside of her thigh before Ruby and Waterlily moved over and fought to lick it up, Ruby finally settling on tonguing Riley's pussy for any more that leaked out while Waterlily licked up Riley's thighs, the brunette still trembling and quaking hard against the podium, as Sally giggled into my ear. "I can't fucking *wait* to cum that hard when you're breeding *me*, daddy," she said to me. "But I know I'll have to wait my turn..."

It was at that moment that I suddenly became aware again of my surroundings, and looked out into the auditorium, seeing there were still close to fifty beautiful faces looking on at me in intense lust, many of them with their hands on either one of their tits or between their legs.

"Time to draw the next five, Steve," Silversmith said to me with a wry smile. "I'm sure you'll be able to put up as good a showing even if your next five don't include more royalty."

"Royalty?" I asked before it dawned on me. 'Oh shit,' I thought to myself, looking at the five women chosen to be my first five partners. 'La Fae. Wyllt. Morgana La Fae's descendant and Merlin's descendant are college freshmen, roommates, and now both my lovers. That's what one might call a portentous start.'

"It'll be excellent to see those bloodlines matched with one of us such untapped power as yours, Steven," Helen said with a smirk. "Now go about drawing more cards."

"Remember, pair or better means you'll go again," Silversmith said.

"What if my constitution gives out first?" I asked them.

"Oh we're here to make sure that doesn't happen," Silversmith told me.

I drew the next five cards of the deck, honestly hoping that I'd hit a joker, meaning the number of partners I had would be capped right there. I flipped them over one at a time – Nine of Hearts, King of Spades, Three of Spades, Four of Diamonds and... Four of Clubs.

It was at that point that I realized that face cards were people I had openly lusted after at some point in my life, even if I'd never told them. The King of Spades had been in the audience in attendance the last time I'd given one of these speeches, a redheaded member of the fae community from England, one who'd been teasing me when I'd been trying to lecture them, flashing me the fact that she didn't have anything on beneath her skirt, and her copper-furred pussy was on open display for me any time I dared to look her way. Alexandria. I'd thought about trying to find her after that class, but had found out that she was from the royal family of elves in Britannia, and hadn't wanted to get into that level of political mess. None of that mattered now. She'd volunteered into one of Helen's spells and that meant she was mine now, and that she was going to not only be my wife, she was going to bear my children. Last I had heard, she had become a Sanitizer in Europe.

I only had to fuck one of the five while we were at the lecture hall to make the acceptance of all five official, so when the five of them made their way down, I nearly had to reattach my jaw but I knew exactly who is was going to be. I pointed at her, Alexandria Albion, and pointed to the podium. She was dressed exactly as she had been the last time I'd seen her, in that red and black tartan skirt and white button up top that was partially undone. Alexandria moved to smirk at me, leaning the small of her back against the podium as she reached down and lifted one of her legs like a ballerina, bringing it up up up until it was pressed against her chest, her legs almost a perfect vertical line, turning to make sure I could see her wet pussy pointing straight at me. "Go on then, Master," she said to me with a voice like molten honey. "Sully my royal pussy for your pleasure..."

There was no need to ask me twice. I rammed my thick dick into her slippery snatch like I was trying to see just how much of my cock she could handle, as she let out a sultry groan of pleasure, like it surprised her just how much she enjoyed feeling my thick cock prying apart her tight elven walls. When I glanced down, I noticed there was a bit of blood on my shaft, and I didn't know if it was because I was her first or if it was simply that time for her, but I didn't care.

"Oh you wonderful fucking brute," Alexandria moaned. "You feel so fucking good... destroy me... fill up that virgin tight pussy... make me fall from princess to just another of your bitches, master... I can't wait for you to breed me... to cream inside my naïve little cunt and make me cum my mind away... god, I think I'm fucking cumming already... fuck it... fuck me... fuck me, Master... fuck your good little princess whore... fill her up with cum and claim her as your very own... please, Master... I've never wanted anything so much in my life as I want to be your owned little slut... Fuck fuck fuck fuck I'm cumming! I'm fucking cumming!"

As I felt her clenched velvet walls clinging to me, trying to hold me still while her orgasm crashed through her body like a tidal wave onto a beach, I found myself giving way to my own release, pouring even more cum inside of her body, as the other four newest members of my family held her up.

It took a moment or two longer this time for me to recover, although the crowd of beautiful young women licking at my cock to taste my cum had gotten much more packed, and the sea of hands on my body made my shaft start to throb again much quicker this time.

"You've been denying spreading your bloodline around, Steve," Helen said. "We realize it's been in the service of The Deck, but we can't afford to lose you, Steve, and you've been running on empty for the last twenty years or so. So we're going to fix that. We're going make

sure you're tended to, and happy and satiated. Let's look at your next five cards."

I drew another five cards from the top, again hoping I'd see a Joker. Don't get me wrong – the gift of all these lovers (wives?) was incredibly generous on behalf of The Deck, but I didn't want to be gifted *too* much, more than I could handle. So I turned over the next five cards one at a time.

The Ace of Clubs, the King of Clubs, the Jack of Hearts, the King of Hearts and the Ace of Hearts. Better than a pair, certainly, and full of face cards, as five more beautiful women started walking down from the crowd. The Ace of Hearts was, in particular, a shock to me, as she was a spellcaster of some renown, and one whose beauty always seemed to have her pursued by most of the lotharios in the magic community.

As it turned out, her fantasy was to straddle my lap, and saddle fuck me until I came inside of her while surrounded by other women. So we did that in front of the auditorium, and she squealed like a chipmunk when I came inside of her.

The next five after that? The Three of Diamonds, the Jack of Diamonds, the Six of Spades, the Eight of Clubs and... the Eight of Diamonds.

Another pair, and the count brought me up to twenty beautiful partners, none of whom were fighting or arguing with another, all of whom seemed incredibly excited about being a part of my life for the rest of theirs.

The five after *that*? I realized that even just using basic probability, my chances had to be running out soon, and I would see a Joker that would give me relief, so I started turning over the cards a bit more eagerly, looking forward to finding my end point. The Ten of Clubs, the King of Diamonds, the Queen of Spades, the Nine of Diamonds... and the Jack of Spades.

Another *goddamn straight*.

At this point, I now had nearly half of the options paired up with me, and even if I was fucking three women a day, I couldn't get to everyone in a single week. I looked at Jonas, who was grinning like I'd never seen him smile before.

"You're enjoying this, aren't you?" I asked him, wiping sweat from my forehead, having shorn all my clothes, my heart still galloping like a racehorse.

"You've been in need of a good fuck for *ages*, Steve," Silversmith said to me. "Even *before* I went into hiding, you were in need of having your pipes cleaned. To me, this seems only just karma, you needed to spread your seed among so many beautiful women whom you've denied the pleasure of your company for so long."

"I didn't think *any* of them wanted to fuck me, Jonas!" I said with a weak laugh. "Much less *all* of them."

"I made my intentions *quite* clear," Alexandria said to me with a smirk.

"Mmmm," I said in agreement, "but I suspected your family might've objected."

"Well, they can fuck off and die now," she purred. "I belong to you, and I'm *quite* happy about that. Now draw your next five cards."

"If I die in this room, Jonas, it's on you..."

The next five cards – the Seven of Hearts, the Five of Spades, the Seven of Spades, the Ten of Diamonds and the Queen of Diamonds.

Not only was I defying the odds of how long it should take me to find a Joker, I was *well* beating the odds of what it would take for me to draw a dead poker hand. But five more gorgeous women came down to join my pool.

The Ten of Hearts, the Two of Spades, the Queen of Clubs, the Seven of Diamonds and... the bloody *Two of Spades*.

I'd made another fucking *pair*.

I now had more than half of the women they'd introduced me to an hour or so ago.

I turned over the next five, wondering if this could be my escape route.

The Six of Hearts, the Eight of Spades, the Ten of Spades, the Ace of Diamonds... and...
the Nine of Spades.

Forty women.

Forty partners.

FORTY!

What was made even worse was the fact that remaining twelve all looked *genuinely disappointed* that they couldn't get into this collection of women that was so overwhelmingly full of beauty that I didn't even know where everyone was going to stay.

As if in answer to my question, Silversmith handed me a large envelope, filled with papers and what felt like some keys. "You now own a vineyard up here in wine country, and it's got a full fledged mansion attached to it with twenty-five bedrooms, so some of the women will have to double up and share rooms or live elsewhere and simply come and visit," Jonas said. "But remember, you're on six month enforced break, and if you don't have at least five of these women knocked up before the end of it, that break will be extended beyond that. So you might as well just used to fucking them all the time for those six months, to make up for the lack of intimacy you've had for the last century."

I laughed a bit, gathering up my clothes, trying pull them back on with some bit of dignity left, but not having much in the way of it. "I'm not sure if I should be thanking you or cursing you, Jonas," I told him. "But one thing I'm certain of... I doubt I'll ever be lonely again."

Jonas put his hand on my shoulder and smiled at me once more. "Choose happiness, my friend. Choose enjoying life." I wasn't entirely sure how I was going to get this sea of beauty to my new home, but as I was looking around, I saw Jonas smirk. "There's a bus outside waiting to take you all to the new manor," he said to me.

I nodded. "Seems like you've thought of everything."

"That's why I'm the Red Joker, my friend."

I was nearly out the door when I noticed right next to the doorway, a small bit of white poking out from behind the trashcan. I stopped and crouched down, taking it into my hands before looking back at Jonas, a bit of annoyance on my face now. "Really?"

He walked over to me, reached out and took the two cards from my hand. "Oops, April Fools, I forgot to include the jokers. Too late to change it now! Have fun!"

The sound of him laughing as I walked down to the bus surrounded by forty beautiful women, all of whom intended to bear my children, is going to be the last thing I hear before I die, I just know it.

And people say he doesn't have a fucking sense of humor...