

Flamboyant Juice: Melissa Hickey

I swung open the fridge door and emitted a loud scream. A solitary, sparkling flask stood on the middle shelf. "Oh, Phil," I mumbled, "you nasty, condescending little man." I shut my eyes, hoping I'd imagined the bottle, but when I opened them again, the shimmery decanter was still there. Holy heck, not the blasted Flamboyant Juice.

Twin pharmacists Herbert and Cedrik Nerdy were the inventors of the juice. Characterless from birth, the brothers had gone through life being ignored in social settings. Fed up with their dull ways, they concocted a mixture that turned a person from drab to vibrant in a matter of seconds. And VOILA! The Flamboyant Juice was born. The two realised they were on to a good thing, and so, marketed their product globally.

I once attempted the potion at a party. For the next eight hours, I was outrageous, dramatic, and brassy. Dressed in phenomenal garments of sequins and feathers, I flashed about in the spotlight. At least that's what I thought. The following day, however, I realised my error. I, along with many others, had drunk the concoction, and instead of distinguishing myself as an extrovert, I simply became another animated and showy wannabe.

My husband, Phil, not a flamboyant drinker himself, often joked about the excessive users, saying how ridiculous they looked. Then a week ago, after thirty years of marriage, Phil picked a fight, accused me of being predictable and colourless, and suggested I drink a daily dose of flamboyant juice.

And now this, this identity changing muck, in my fridge, my house, that Phil put there. Startled by a noise, I pivoted around and discovered my traitor spouse behind me. He smiled. "That juice is for you," he said.

I banged my fists against my legs. The gall. I reached down, pulled the gleamy flask from the shelf, and threw it across the room. Slam! It collided into Phil's forehead. The bottle exploded and juice sprayed everywhere, all over Phil. With a pop and fizz, he lit up like a Christmas tree. Sparkly, sweet fumes drifted towards me, and I leaped out of the way, lest I be consumed.

In a whirlwind of glitter and flashy lights, Phil whirled around in circles. When he came to a stop, he was adorned from head to toe in an attire of gold sequins. He removed a top hat from his skull and flung it in the air. "Darling," he shouted.

Bloody hell. I rolled my eyes. "Well, Phil," I said, "you're right about one thing. Flamboyant users really do look absurd." And with that, I walked from the room, leaving him to it.