

The Onesie Adventure

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The Bet She Didn't Think She'd Lose

Cassie was known among her friends for her confident, go-big-or-go-home attitude. At 26, she worked in marketing, ran a snarky meme page on the side, and never backed down from a dare. Especially not during “Challenge Week”—an annual tradition among her tight-knit group that turned inside jokes into hilariously escalating dares.

This year’s theme? “Reverse Childhood.” Everyone had to complete one challenge that involved doing something distinctly childlike in public.

The group met at a local brunch spot to reveal each other's assignments, each sealed in a little envelope. Cassie opened hers and groaned. It read:

“Spend a full afternoon dressed like a toddler—including stroller ride. Bonus points for a back-zip onesie.”

“Come on,” she laughed, “this was obviously a setup.”

“You *did* tell us to make them outrageous,” her friend Jamie said with a grin. “Besides, you swore on your meme page that you never back down.”

Cassie rolled her eyes, but the challenge was on. She scoured the internet for a onesie that was adult-sized but convincingly silly—eventually settling on a pastel zip-up outfit with a back zipper, designed for cosplay or novelty pajamas.

To complete the look, her friends borrowed a medical transport-style adult stroller from a theater company they worked with. The whole thing was absurd, but Cassie was committed. She suited up, got zipped up, and let herself be wheeled through the local park with a juice box in hand and sunglasses shielding her face.

Passersby stared. Some laughed. One person snapped a photo—but Cassie owned it. “This is what peak adulthood looks like!” she shouted, raising her juice in the air.



They stopped for ice cream, took pictures on the swings, and even played with chalk on the sidewalk. Despite the embarrassment, Cassie had to admit—it was freeing. Strange, yes, but freeing.

The day ended with sore cheeks from laughing and a sense of bizarre pride. She hadn't just survived the challenge—she made it legendary. The onesie stayed in her closet, a reminder that taking yourself too seriously is the quickest way to forget how to have fun.

The Onesie Returns

A few months had passed since Cassie's stroller stunt, and life had returned to normal—or at least as normal as it ever was with her friend group.

One Friday night, she and her closest friends gathered for a cabin weekend upstate. Phones were put away, playlists made, snacks stocked. It was supposed to be low-key: wine, board games, and a lot of nostalgic nonsense.

On the second night, as the fire crackled and the group played a chaotic round of charades, someone brought out a box labeled "*Challenge Vault: 2.0.*"

"No way," Cassie said, immediately suspicious.

"Oh yes," Jamie grinned, holding up a folded pastel fabric. "You didn't think we'd forget about this, did you?"

Cassie's face went blank. "You kept the onesie?"

"We didn't. *You* did," her other friend Michelle said, pointing to Cassie's overnight bag. "We may have borrowed it on the sly."

Cassie groaned but laughed. "What now?"

"Well," Jamie said, "we decided tonight's game is *Reverse Charades*. If the team loses, the person giving the clues has to wear... this." He held the onesie up like a trophy.

Cassie, of course, went first. She gave it her all—but her team tanked spectacularly.

The room exploded with cheers. "Suit up!"

Cassie gave them her best deadpan glare but, with a sigh of dramatic resignation, went into the bathroom and zipped herself back into the pastel onesie. She emerged to raucous applause.

But then Michelle, sipping wine, smirked. "We're missing one crucial element."

Cassie narrowed her eyes. "No."

Five minutes later, she was sitting—reluctantly but laughing hard—in a foldable wagon the group had brought for hauling gear. A pillow and blanket had been thrown in to make it more "authentic."

"You people are menaces," she muttered, being gently wheeled to the kitchen for popcorn like some regressed royalty.

"Tell that to the juice box you're about to drink," someone teased.

Cassie raised it like a toast. "To the weirdest friendships in the world."

That night, as the fire died down and the laughter faded, Cassie curled up in the absurdly soft onesie and thought about how, weirdly enough, it had become a symbol of trust—a signal that she could lean fully into fun, be a little ridiculous, and know her people would love her for it.

Even if they did push her around in wagons.

Zippers and Trust

Cassie didn't expect to miss the onesie.

After the cabin weekend, it sat folded in her closet like a prop from a strange dream—pastel clouds on soft fleece, the long back zipper neatly tucked in. She didn't tell anyone, not even Jamie or Michelle, but she'd taken it out one rainy Sunday, just to feel the fabric.

She hadn't put it on that time. Not yet.

But over the following weeks, something tugged at her. Maybe it was the softness, or the way the onesie stripped away the pressure to be composed, clever, "on" all the time. Inside that ridiculous thing, she was just... Cassie. No roles. No edge. Just comfort.

The problem was the zipper.

It was a long one, running from neck to lower back. Awkward at best, impossible at worst. When she tried to zip it herself one night, she twisted and strained for ten minutes before giving up.

She sat on her bed, holding it in her lap like a puzzle she couldn't quite solve.

She realized two things then:

1. She wanted to wear it again—maybe not publicly, maybe not for show, but just for her.
2. She couldn't do it alone.

That was the hard part.

She had friends who would help, sure, but asking them would mean explaining that this wasn't a joke anymore. It wasn't a dare. It was something she wanted—a kind of ritual, almost. Comfort and surrender wrapped in fleece and pastel colors.

She started thinking about who she could trust. Who wouldn't laugh. Who wouldn't ask too many questions.

Jamie came to mind first, of course. He had been the ringleader of most of her ridiculous adventures, but he was also surprisingly gentle when things got serious. Once, after a bad breakup, he'd driven across town just to sit on her floor with takeout and not say anything until she was ready.

So one evening, after they'd spent a few hours hanging out and watching old movies, Cassie hesitated at the doorway as he grabbed his jacket.

"Hey," she said, casually. "Weird question."

Jamie raised an eyebrow. "Those are your specialty."

She smiled faintly. "You remember that onesie? From the challenge?"

He nodded. "Hard to forget."

"...Would you mind helping me zip it up sometime? Like... actually zip it up. Not for laughs. Just because I like wearing it."

He paused—just for a second. No smirk. No teasing. Just a quiet nod.

"Sure," he said. "Whenever you need."

Cassie exhaled a breath she hadn't realized she was holding. "Thanks."

"And hey," Jamie added, slinging his bag over his shoulder, "if you ever need help getting out of it, too—same deal. I'll be your zipper guy."

Cassie laughed, the kind of laugh that shakes off layers of guardedness. "That sounds like a weird job title."

"I wear it with pride," he said, heading out the door.

Cassie started wearing the onesie now and then, on quiet evenings. Jamie would come over, zip her in, say nothing unless she wanted to talk. And when the evening ended, he'd unzip her just as gently.

It wasn't about regression or nostalgia or anything she could fully explain.

It was just... peace. Wrapped in fleece. And shared in trust.

Zipped In

Cassie's evenings in the onesie had quietly become a ritual.

It was no longer a novelty. It was comfort, safety—like putting a protective shell between herself and the noise of adulthood. On stressful days, she found herself staring at the folded fleece on her dresser with a mix of longing and quiet dread, wondering how many times she could text Jamie to make the trip without it becoming a burden.

He always said he didn't mind. And she believed him.

But still, it felt unfair.

So she considered someone else.

Mrs. Ellison, her next-door neighbor, was in her late sixties—retired schoolteacher, widow, quiet but kind. Cassie had helped carry her groceries once, and in return, the woman had offered her banana bread and neighborly advice.

They weren't close. Not yet. But there was something gentle about her, a patience in her eyes that reminded Cassie of her grandmother. It took three days of deliberation before Cassie knocked on her door, onesie folded neatly in her arms.

Mrs. Ellison didn't flinch when Cassie explained, haltingly, that she sometimes wore the onesie to sleep, but couldn't zip it herself.

She just smiled and said, "Of course, dear. Everyone needs something soft now and then."

From then on, their arrangement was quiet and simple. Around nine in the evening, Cassie would knock gently. Mrs. Ellison would help her zip up the back of the onesie—always careful, never judgmental. In the mornings, she'd knock on Cassie's door around eight to unzip her.

It was strange, yes. But kind. And it worked.

Until one Saturday morning, when the knock didn't come.

Cassie sat by the door in silence, wrapped in fleece, hands folded in her lap. She waited another ten minutes. Then twenty.

Then she knocked on Mrs. Ellison's door.

No answer.

Her chest tightened. She knocked again, louder. Still nothing. Her mind raced with possibilities, none of them comforting. Mrs. Ellison wasn't forgetful. She wasn't the type to break routine.

Cassie ran back into her apartment, fumbled with her phone, and called the building super. "I think something might be wrong with my neighbor. She didn't answer her door, and that's not like her."

The super arrived within minutes. Cassie stood in the hallway, arms crossed over the soft fleece, trying to stay calm as he unlocked the door.

Mrs. Ellison was inside, conscious but pale, sitting in her armchair.

"I think I stood up too fast," she murmured. "Felt dizzy."

The paramedics arrived quickly, helped Mrs. Ellison onto the stretcher, and just before they wheeled her out, she reached for Cassie's hand.

"I'll be okay, dear," she whispered. "Just a little scare."

Cassie nodded, but her heart was pounding. She watched from the hallway, barefoot in soft fleece, as the door closed behind them.

Then the silence hit.

She turned, walked back into her apartment, and sat on the edge of her bed, mind spinning. She was still in the onesie. Still zipped up the back. And it was 7:52 a.m.

Her workday started in a little over an hour.

She stood in front of the mirror and tugged at the zipper again, trying every angle, every twist of the arm. It was hopeless. She'd learned this lesson before—it just wasn't doable without help. She considered calling Jamie, but he lived 45 minutes away, and he'd already done so much for her.

She picked up her phone, stared at the screen. Her manager, Diane, was not the kind of person who would take "I'm stuck in fleece" as a viable excuse.

Think. Think.

She tossed on a long hoodie and a pair of sneakers, trying to hide the onesie as best she could. The zipper tugged awkwardly against her spine. She looked ridiculous. But she couldn't afford to miss work, not today.

Outside, the morning air was cold and sharp. She walked quickly, eyes down, praying she wouldn't run into anyone from the building. At the bus stop, she kept her headphones in, hoping the oversized hood would keep attention off her.

She made it to the office—late, flustered, still zipped in—and headed straight for the bathroom.

Inside, she locked herself into a stall and pulled out her phone again. This time, she texted Jamie.

Cassie: *Emergency. In the onesie. Mrs. Ellison is in the hospital. I'm stuck. At work.*

A few seconds passed.

Jamie: *That is the most "you" sentence I've ever read. Want me to come?*

Cassie: *Please. I feel like I'm smuggling pajamas inside my own skin.*

She stayed hidden in the stall for nearly half an hour before slipping into an unused conference room, avoiding eye contact. When Jamie arrived, she waved him inside like it was a spy mission.

He took one look at her, saw the tension in her shoulders, and softened.

"You okay?" he asked, quietly.

"No," she said, voice tight. "I feel stupid and selfish and helpless. And—just unzip me before I start crying."

He didn't laugh. He didn't tease. He just nodded and stepped behind her.

The soft sound of the zipper lowering felt oddly intimate. Cassie let out a breath she hadn't realized she was holding.

"I wasn't planning to depend on her like that," she said, staring at the floor. "It just... became routine."

Jamie paused. "Needing help doesn't mean you planned badly. It just means you're human."

She looked up at him then, something raw in her eyes. "Thanks for coming."

"Always," he said, gently patting her shoulder. "Maybe next time we install a zipper pull."

Cassie smiled weakly. "Maybe next time I wear normal clothes to bed."
