

Wrong Number

by Mary Alston Capps

The package arrived, delivered to her work as was her preference. She took it to the ladies room and sat on the lounge, carefully opening the box, removing the new black patent leather FMQs, pulling out the tissue paper stuffed into the toes and placing her well-worn size seven flats in the empty box. She stood barefoot on the cold bathroom floor for just a moment, eyeing the foreign footwear with suspicion and then stepped into them with all the commitment of accepting a thrown gauntlet.

She picked up the box which now contained the soon-to-be-cast-off shoes and walked slowly, awkwardly to the bathroom door, her new footwear smirking, sliding, and squeaking across the tile floor. Are new shoes always this uncomfortable? As she opened the door and stepped outside, she heard her phone ring across the field of cubicles.

Crap.

Her boss.

Out of town.

Scheduled conference call.

Crapcrapcrap.

She saw the light flashing on the phone and accelerated toward her desk, momentarily forgetting the hobbling effects of the new shoes.

Until.

A few strides away.

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Reaching for the phone.

Grabbing the handset, cord pulling the cradle off the desk.

Shoes pointing one way, feet pointing another.

A tumble.

The shoebox flew out of her hand ahead of her, but she held the handset with a deathgrip, bringing it to her ear moments before hitting the ground.

"Tom?" She croaked into the phone.

A familiar voice, but not her boss.

"No - sorry - I was trying to reach Karl. Must have misdialed."

Sprawled on the floor. Skirt halfway up her thighs. Phone clutched in her hand.

Staring at the shoebox.

Size five.

