

On a hot and windy day in Las Vegas, Stella struggles to grab a taxi to get her to work on time. Every day, Stella has to walk from her apartment to make the bus, hop on another bus and try to catch a taxi all before her boss gets to work. With a pinch of luck, Stella sees a taxi in the distance that seems to be headed her way. Moving as swiftly as a deer, Stella sprints towards the taxi waving, her hands uncontrollably and grabs the driver's attention. Quickly, the driver pulls over to the curb and Stella hops into the cab with no time to lose.

"I need a ride to work, 2174 Wellington Street, please." says Stella.

"Right away!" says the cab driver.

About five minutes into the ride the driver asks, "Not a hot start to the day I presume?"

"How could you guess?" says Stella in an overwhelmed voice.

"Well let me think, it's a typical hot and dry day, and a woman like you is running around, trying to find a taxi that can get her to work, hopefully on time. That's not the greatest start to the day."

"I could assume that you are having the same problem as I am." says Stella.

"How could you guess?" says the driver with an amused tone to his voice.

After a few moments of laughter, the driver announces,

"Well it looks like we've come to our stopping point."

"Thank you so much for the ride, and it was lovely meeting you!" says Stella.

"Any day! And if you want me again, just ask for Sam." says the cab driver.

Sam the taxi driver couldn't have known, but Stella had already bought a plane ticket for tonight to leave Las Vegas for good. She wanted, she needed, a quieter and more peaceful place to live. As the day went on, Stella had thought about that taxi ride. That ride was the only thing that could have possibly kept her from moving to Unalaska, Alaska, the place that would give her a life full of peace and tranquility. For as much as she wanted to move away from this chaotic city, she also felt like it was her home. That night, Stella had made her final decision, she was going to leave. One taxi ride couldn't be the reason she denied herself true peace. She hoped that someday she would come across that same man, the man that had brightened her day by just asking how she was.

As the plane descended into Unalaska, Alaska, Stella was already thinking about the house that she was looking at, the coffee shop that she had been emailing for a job offer, and Mr. Linden's Library. Mr. Linden was a famous librarian that she had learned so much about during her childhood, and now she was ecstatic to be able to possibly work next to him! As soon as she landed, Stella raced across the airport to find a taxi. Interestingly enough, in this city there are no taxis. There were cars, yet most people rode bicycles to work or just walked. Stella had checked her watch and realized that it was almost time for her interview at the coffee shop. She quickly looked at the map of the whole town and the town square and began her run towards the coffee shop. Finally, when she arrived, she entered the coffee shop, it was unlike any coffee shop she had been in before. It almost had a feel of the lobby of a hotel.

In a rapid voice Stella asked, "Hello, is my interview still open?"

"What's your name?" the receptionist asked in a sweet tone.

"Stella Undergrove" Stella replied.

"Well, you're an hour early! We can take you now if you would like." said the receptionist.

"Well look at that, I forgot to turn the time on my watch back an hour! I suppose we could do it now." said Stella.

The receptionist leads Stella to the manager's office and once Stella walks in, she sees a tall man with a particularly funny outfit. He is wearing a hoodie which says, "I need my coffee" on the front, khaki shorts, and sandals on his feet. His expression was bright, and he wore big, gold rimmed, circular glasses.

"Good morning, Miss. Stella Undergrove!" said the energetic young man.

"Good Morning Mr. ..."

"Ellis." said the man, finishing Stella's sentence.

When Stella left the interview, she felt very confident about her potential new job. It made her even more confident because the man had complimented her about coming early to the interview. The next day, Stella went to the coffee shop to see if she got the job. To her pleasant surprise, outside the shop hung a sign that read, "Welcome New Employee: Stella Undergrove!"

"Yes! I got the job!" exclaimed Stella.

Out of nowhere, Mr. Ellis appeared.

"You sure did! Now get in there and I'll start teaching you the way of the barista!"

"Ha-ha ok!" said Stella.

The first day of working for the coffee shop was a dream for Stella. It seemed as if the whole town came in for a hearty breakfast and a specialty cup of coffee. Everyone had warmed up to Stella and she had made so many new friends. With all of this taking place, Stella had almost forgotten about Mr. Linden. Suddenly, she felt a rush of excitement and decided to try and meet Mr. Linden after work and hopefully get to know him. When she arrived, Mr. Linden was checking out books for a woman and her son.

"Hello Mr. Linden!" exclaimed Stella.

"Well hello! Is it Stella?" questioned Mr. Linden.

"Yes, how did you..."

"I've heard very much about you. You seem like a very kindhearted woman."

In the month that followed their first meeting, Stella had grown to be best of friends with Mr. Linden, and had the opportunity to explore every corner of his library.

Stella had been very busy at the coffee shop and was able to save enough money to buy a small house. While at her new house one day, Stella saw a news report showing how plants benefit people and elevate their mood. Being the bright person that she was and always looking for a way to bring more happiness to her life, Stella immediately ran straight toward Mr. Linden's Library to find a book about growing plants. Stella raced into the store and quickly located the "Plants and Greenery" section of books and manuals. As she wandered, Stella found a book with mysterious writing on the spine. She walked up to check out the book and noticed that the normally delighted look on Mr. Linden's face had turned into a cold and dark one. Sweating a bit, Mr. Linden mumbled under his breath,

"Now Stella, what could you possibly need this book for..."

"Oh, well, I want to grow some plants and this book looks like it could be the perfect match!"

"Yes indeed, very perfect... but I must warn you."

"What do you mean, Mr. Linden?"

"That book, it is... well, it is way too dangerous to just be growing some silly houseplants. Not to mention, whenever someone has checked out THAT book, they have vanished, never to return. The book has returned, only the book."

"Mr. Linden, are you alright? Do you need a glass of water?"

"If you insist on checking out the book, I will give it to you. Just remember, I have warned you."

"I mean what harm could it do..." thought Stella to herself.

"I believe I will pass without harm. May I have the book checked out, please?" said Stella.

"If you insist." said Mr. Linden cautiously.

As she walked home, Stella began to read the mysterious book. Around page six, her eyes became heavy and she decided to take a nap, where Stella dreamt about all the plants she would soon be able to grow. In fact, she was so eager to learn more about the plants that once she woke from her rest, she continued to read until later that night. Stella ended up reading intently until page thirteen then drifted off to sleep.

The next morning, Stella woke up and saw her house, but it didn't really look like her house anymore. Her whole floor was covered in plants, all of her walls were covered in vines and flowers. Feeling a bit concerned, she fled to work, in hopes of escaping her greenhouse of a house. When she got to work, the manager wasn't waiting for her like he always had done, the customers weren't lined up in front of the door like normal either. Stella called out to the abandoned shop,

"Hello?"

No response.

"Is anyone here?"

No response.

Stella knew she had to stay for her shift, but no one was coming, not even the manager was there. She even went over to the library to check up on Mr. Linden, but he wasn't there either. Spooked, Stella ran as fast as she could back home, in hopes to get away from the horror that her day had become. She prayed this was all a nightmare, and thought that maybe if she went to sleep, she would wake back up and her life would be restored back to normal. Somehow, she drifted off to sleep and began dreaming, reflecting back to when Mr. Linden said, "I have warned you." Yes, he had warned her, but now it was too late. When Stella woke up, she could not move her body, and all that was visible to her eyes was the color green. Legend has it, she still remains lying there, on her bed, trapped in the green vines she once thought would do no harm.