

"Lily Takes the Reins"
by Jacquelyn Benoit

Page 1:

panel 1-2

It's a Friday night, so Steam Bar is packed with patrons. Tom is behind the bar.

panel 3

Lily sits at the bar, alone. A glass, empty save for ice, several cherries on a skewer, and a cocktail straw, sits in front of her on a cocktail napkin.

panel 4-9

Lily waves her arm in the air, attempting to get Tom's attention, but he's busy with other patrons. Sallie sees Lily's arm waving and heads in her direction.

panel 10

Sallie serves Lily a cocktail.

LILY

Thanks.

SALLIE

No problem.

panel 11-12

LILY

How come I never see you indulging on nights like this?

SALLIE

I own the bar.

LILY

So? Bar owners can have fun, too. Like, this one bartender I knew...

Page 2:

panel 1-3

Sallie leans against the bar, her arms crossed. Lily gestures with her half-drunk cup in hand.

CAPTION: 15 minutes later...

LILY

...I mean, it *totally* wasn't my fault. Right?

SALLIE

Well...

LILY

Exactly! You get it.

panel 4-6

Sallie is smiling, a drink in her hand. Lily now has 2 empty glasses in front of her, a third in her hand. She is visibly inebriated.

CAPTION: 1 hour later...

LILY

...so I punched the guy!

SALLIE

And then what happened?

panel 7-9

Sallie and Lily are laughing hysterically, both with a drink in hand. 4 empty glasses sit between them.

CAPTION: 2 hours later...

panel 10-12

Sallie is now on a barstool besides Lily. There are 7 empty glasses sitting on the bar in front of them, as well as one partly drunk one in front of each of them.

CAPTION: 4 hours later...

LILY

Are you kidding, Sallie? Holt McCoy is the finest man in this small town. I wish he'd notice me. I've liked him *forever*!

SALLIE

So *you* should go for it! Ask him out!

LILY

Yes! Sallie, you're a genius. I'll just ask him out myself!

Page 3:

panel 1-3

Lily enters the swinging double doors of the saloon, wearing huge oversized glasses. Sallie looks up from her position behind the bar where she's cleaning a glass and smiles.

LILY

I don't suppose I left my purse here last night?

SALLIE

Had a long night, did you?

panel 4

Lily stands across from Sallie; they are separated by the bar. Sallie puts Lily's purse on the bar. Lily's sunglasses have been pushed up, revealing some of last night's makeup collected underneath her eyes. She squints at Sallie.

LILY

Shut up. How are you not suffering from the same 'strain' of 'flu'?

SALLIE

Who says I'm not suffering?

panel 5-6

Lily glares at a laughing Sallie.

LILY

You wear your suffering remarkably well.

SALLIE

I might not feel *quite* as terribly as you do, but I do have one hell of a headache.

LILY

Serves you right, over serving me like that. Why, I could have your liquor license in a heartbeat!

panel 7-9

The Sheriff enters the bar through the double swinging doors. Sallie waves in greeting. Lily glances back at him with a wide-eyed look of shock and horror at being seen in such a state.

SALLIE

Mornin', Sheriff!

COLT

Morning? It's nearly noon!

panel 10

Lily has slid her sunglasses back over her eyes and is half-sitting on one of the barstools, clutching her purse. The Sheriff and Sallie are smiling pleasantly.

SALLIE

What can I do for you?

COLT

I'm just checking to make sure everything's set for tonight's event. You have all your permits?

SALLIE

Absolutely. Do you need to see them?

panel 11

Colt winks at Sallie, whose expression is still a perfectly bland smile. Lily is still frozen.

COLT

No, I trust you. If you say you have them, then I'm sure you do.

COLT

Besides, you wouldn't lie to an officer of the law, now would you?

SALLIE

I might, if the situation calls for it, but I'm certainly not lying now.

panel 12

Colt tips his hat to the women.

COLT

All righty then. I'll see you both tonight.

SALLIE

See you.

Page 4:

panel 1-3

Sallie and Lily are alone in the saloon once more. Lily has her hands massaging her temples.

SALLIE

What was that? Why didn't you say anything?

LILY

What would I have said?

SALLIE

You could've asked him to the festival tonight. You know, as a date.

panel 4-6

Lily shoves her sunglasses up, her eyes wide.

LILY

Oh, no. I couldn't do that. I know I said I would last night, but...

SALLIE

But what? I thought you liked him.

LILY

I *do*! That's why I can't ask! What if he says no?

SALLIE

Oh, come on, Lily. You'll never make the goal unless you try to score.

panel 7-9

Sallie frowns. Lily throws her hands up in frustration.

LILY

I'm not like you, Sallie. All confident and capable and...

LILY

When he says no, I'll be humiliated. I'll never be able to look him in the eye again.

panel 10-12

SALLIE

You have to fake it until you make it, Lil. Besides, *if* he says no, at least you'll have an answer, and you can move on with your life.

LILY

But --

SALLIE

-- No 'but's! You promised.

LILY

Fine. I'll try. Tonight, at the festival.

Page 5: *splash page*

The saloon is alive with people and activities. A band is setting up in one corner, with a decent sized (but empty) dance floor in front of them. Intense card games happen nearby, people crowded around the players. In another corner, a small ring has been erected and two robots placed inside. They're in the middle of some kind of fighting match, and a mob of people crowd around said ring, shouting out bets. The bar is filled with people, sitting and talking, drinking and smoking, observing the party and being observed. At one end sit Sallie and Lily, both with full drinks, surveying the crowd around them. Lily is dressed to impress, and Sallie is wearing a slightly nicer version of the outfit she was seen in earlier that day.

Page 6:

panel 1-3

WS/panorama that includes the bar, where Sallie and Lily sit, the empty dancefloor, and the stage with the band. A bandmember with a guitar hanging around his neck speaks into the microphone.

GUITARIST

All right, folks. The dance floor is officially open, so everybody grab yourselves a partner and get on the floor!

panel 4-5

Colt grins as he approaches Sallie and Lily. Sallie whispers to Lily.

SALLIE

Here's your chance, Lil.

panel 6

Colt tips his hat to a grinning Sallie and blushing (but terrified) Lily.

COLT

Might I request the pleasure of this dance, Miss Sadcheeks?

panel 7

Sallie's smile fades a bit.

SALLIE

Oh, I'm afraid I don't dance, Sheriff.

panel 8-9

Sallie's grin returns. Colt is a bit disappointed. Lily is still blushing.

SALLIE

But Lily here is a *marvelous* dancer, and I'm sure she would love to join you.

panel 10-11

Colt's smile returns, though it's smaller. He offers a hand to Lily, who is blushing even more. Sallie has a Chesire-cat grin.

COLT

What do you say, Miss Cushybottom?

LILY

I'd be honored, Sheriff.

COLT

Call me Colt.

panel 12

Colt and Lily (whose blush is fading, though now she's smiling) walk to the dancefloor, Lily on Colt's arm.