

CHAPTER 3



3838 WALNUT STREET

FICTION

Rawly Rawls

3838 Walnut Street 3

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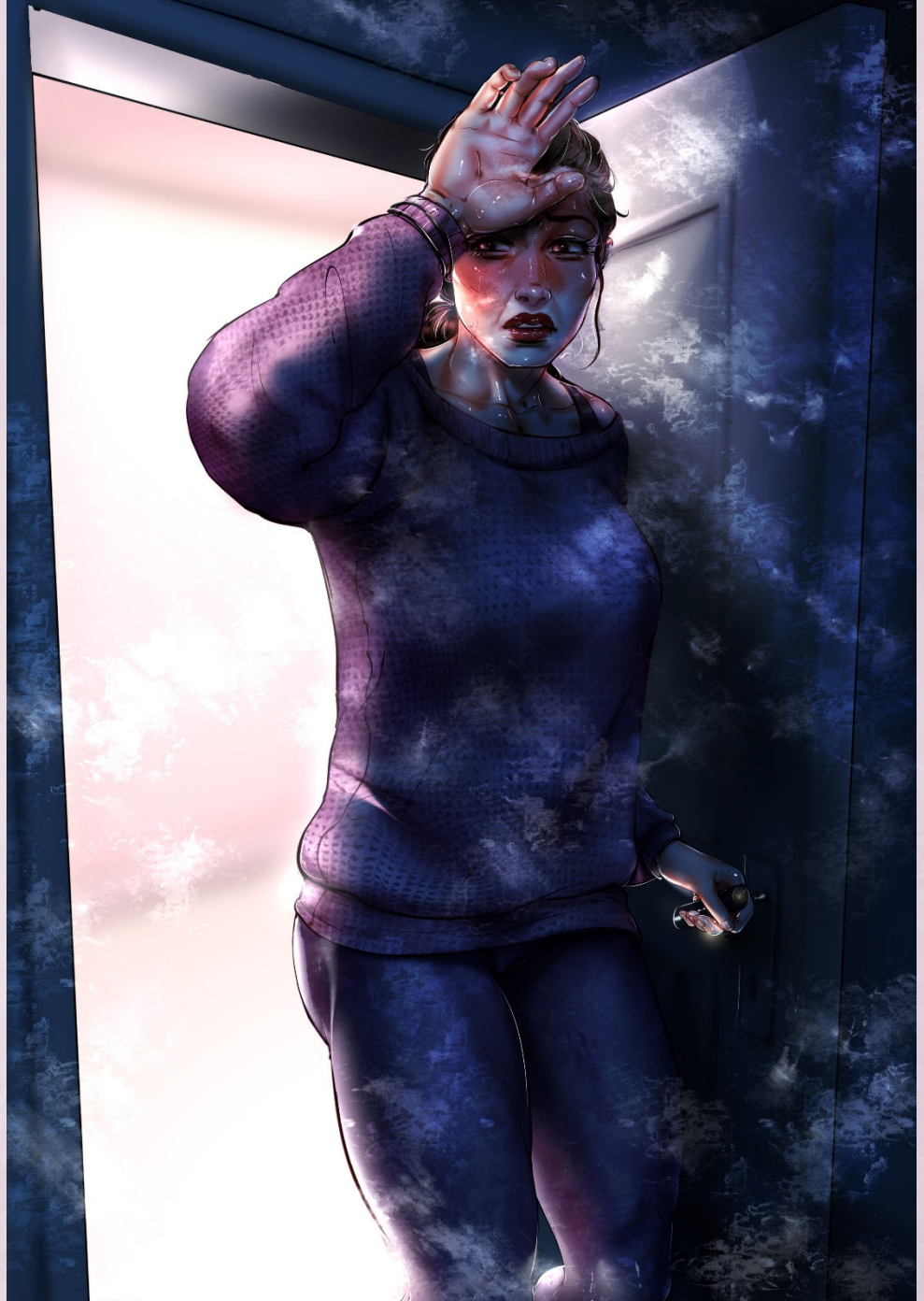
Chapter 3

The Chant was Low and Urgent

February 6, 2015: Apartment 12C, the Marland family.

“Joey ... are you up yet?” Carrie knocked on her son’s door. He’d suffered from a fever the night before, so she wasn’t surprised he was sleeping in. When she got no answer to several more knocks, she let herself into his room. It was dark and musty in there. It was redolent of sweat and other male teenager scents. It should have made her want to gag, but instead, she breathed in deeply. She stood just inside the doorway, huffing the air in her son’s room for several minutes before catching herself in the act. She shook her head and focused on his bed. The curtains were drawn, so the only light fell in through the open door.

Joey lay naked on his stomach with no blanket. His slim, pale form was covered in beaded perspiration. He snored loudly.



"You're going to miss school, Joey." Carrie breathed deeply again. *That smell. It's like my sweet little boy has turned into a beast at eighteen.* Her knees were weak. "Maybe you *should* miss school." She walked over to him and shook his shoulder. His skin was clammy and scalding. "Joey? Oh ... my!" In a flash, her son had flipped over and grabbed her wrist. He was snarling at her. She recoiled, but his grip was strong. He easily held her by the bed.



"Grrrrrrrrr." Joe had been dreaming about bounding through a forest, chased by a pack of wolves. In the dream, he had leapt over fallen logs and dodged around tree trunks effortlessly. He blinked and returned to waking life. His growl subsided. "Mom?" He could smell her fear. He saw that he was gripping her wrist and quickly let go. "What's going on?"

Carrie stumbled backward. She caught her balance in the middle of the room and put a hand to her chest. She made a fist clutching her loose sweater. She wiped his sweat from her other hand on the leg of her yoga pants. "What's going on?" She suddenly became aware that his penis was exposed. Despite his fever, he was sporting morning wood. "Oh ... gosh ... cover that up." But neither of them moved as she stared at it. For a moment, she thought the whole thing was pulsing with the beat of his heart in the most horrible way. She blinked. It was only a normal penis. Perhaps a bit small. Not frightening. *Not* frightening!

"What ... oh ... shit." Joe pulled his blanket from the floor and covered himself.

"I'm calling the school. You're staying home, and so am I. You are obviously out of sorts." Carrie backed toward the doorway.

"I thought you were volunteering today." Joey scratched his head in confusion.

"This is more important." Carrie frowned. "I'll make you a healthy breakfast. I'll bring it to you in bed."

"No ... I feel good, Mom." It was true. He felt great. "I can go to school."

"No ..." Carrie shook her head. "No school. But if you feel up to it, clean yourself up and come to the kitchen when you're ready." She quickly turned and fled.

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Carrie watched in horror as her son devoured plate after plate of whatever she put in front of him. "What on Earth is going on with you?" Finally, he pushed his plate away, and she sat at the table with him, sipping coffee. She watched him drink a glass of orange juice and refill it.



Once he was done gulping down the juice, Joe smacked his lips. "I don't know. I feel great."

"You do look better." Carrie smiled at him. He was practically glowing now that he'd been fed. She got up and put her hand on his forehead. "Your fever's gone." She looked at the clock. "Well, maybe we should do something together. Do you feel like you could manage a jog in the park?" She had often gone on runs with his brothers, but Joe had always declined exercise. She expected him to decline her again. But it never hurt to ask. They were a family of athletes with one exception. "I'm sure you'll need to put all the food you just ate to good use."

"Yeah." Joe laughed. "I need to move. Let's go for a run in the park. Let me get dressed." He jumped up from the table and ran off to his bedroom.

Carrie shook her head and went to put her running things on.

Ten minutes later, mother and son were heading down in the elevator. Carrie glanced at him. "You still feel good? You look ... really healthy." She had been worried he might be sick for days just a few hours ago. Now he had the energy of a sprinter waiting for his mark.

"I feel as good as I look." He laughed and smacked her butt.

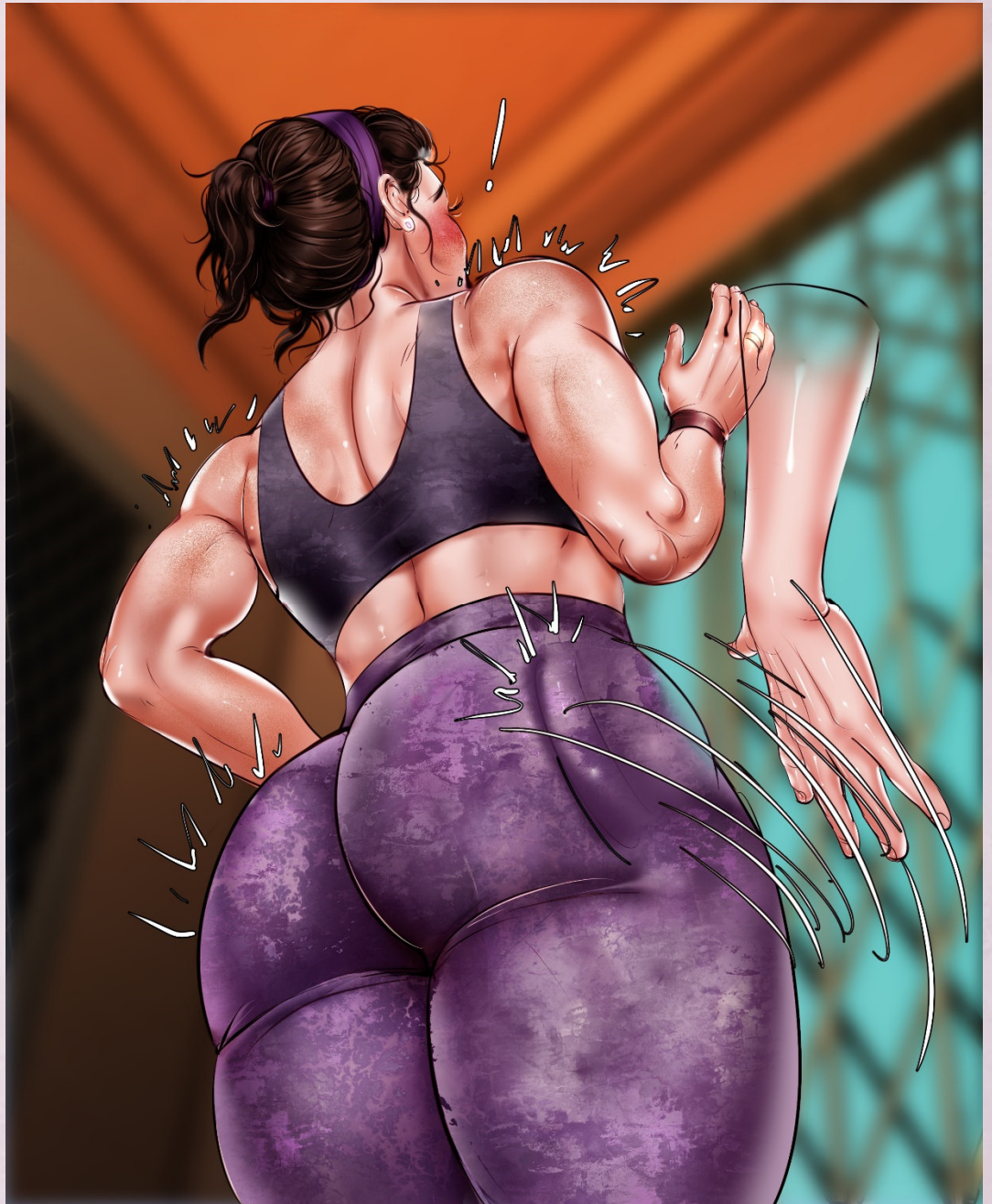
"Oh!" Carrie's eyes went wide. "Joey ... you can't ..." The doors opened, and he sprung out into the lobby. He dashed past the reliefs on either wall. Carrie had to jog to catch up with him. "Hello, Greg," she nodded to the doorman who held the door for them. He was a friendly older gentleman of Korean descent.

"Mrs. Marland." Greg tipped his cap to her.

Suddenly, Carrie was out on the busy sidewalk, dodging pedestrians to keep up with her son. Despite her efforts, he was always a few paces ahead of her. "Wait ... Joey ... Jeez!" She watched him cut across traffic and head into the park. She jogged down to the crosswalk, waited for the light, and followed him. She found him waiting for her, jogging in place on the snow-covered grass.

"You're getting too old, Mom. You can't keep up with a young pup like me." It felt incredible to move his body.

"I'm not. And ... you're not ... not a ... wait!" Carrie was already panting when he took off down the path through the park. She followed him, watching his skinny butt move in his sweatpants. She had to laugh, even if she could barely spare the oxygen. She had thought that Joe was the black sheep, but it seemed he was just like his brothers. It made sense, she and Gabe had always been physical.





Maybe Joe had a point. Carrie did feel a tad too old, trying to chase her lithe son. He moved with such grace and ease. Eventually, he stopped for her under the bare branches of a cherry tree. She immediately slowed to a walk and put her hands behind her ponytail, sucking in the cold, February air. "Wow ... Joey ... you must have been ... training ... while I wasn't watching."

Joe flashed her a smile. He was also breathing hard and sweating. *I'm finally sweating for the right reasons.* He shook his head at how odd the day had been so far. "I think I'm just ... growing into myself or something. You look great in your jogging outfit, by the way. You're still an athlete ... Mom." She wore yoga pants and an athletic top. Despite his teasing from before, she wasn't too old for anything. She looked like the perfect, toned woman. He caught himself wondering about how toned she really was ... what she'd look like naked. With her nipples protruding through the fabric of her top as they were, he could almost imagine it.

"Thank you ... Joey." Carrie smiled warmly. "Let's go ... a little farther ... before we turn back ... and go easy on this old lady."

"Sure, Mom." Joe eased into a slower jog next to his mother. It had been fun to outrun her, but it was also fun to chat and steal glances of her bouncing bust out of the corner of his eye.

"So ... Joey ... you've been spending ... a lot of time ... with the Dahirs. Hani isn't ... too forward ... for you?" Carrie loved chatting with her son. How odd that she'd find herself jogging with him after all that had happened. How had her day turned out perfect after so many misfires?

"You noticed that about Hani, huh?" Joey laughed. He found that he was barely breathing hard at the slower pace, but he could hear his mother huffing and puffing as she blew ragged puffs of mist. "Hani's cool. And she's pretty."

Carrie raised an eyebrow and glanced at him. "Is there ... a twelfth floor ... romance ... blooming?"



"No, Mom." Joey shook his head and took a quick peek at his bouncing mother.

"Well, prom is ... on the horizon ... is there anyone ... you might ask?" Carrie felt wonderful. Her son was opening up to her. And they were exercising together. *What a splendid Friday!*

"I don't know ... I've hooked up with some girls ... at parties. Maybe ... one of them?" He shrugged and jogged closer to his mother to avoid a mother with a stroller heading the other way.

"Joey Marland! I thought ... you were maybe ... not interested in girls."

"I like girls ... Mom. Sometimes, lately, when I see a pretty woman, it makes my brain shut down ... you know?" Joe let out a self-deprecating laugh. "I think maybe ... I like girls too much."

"Just like ... your father." Carrie slowed to a walk. "I suppose ... most men ... are like that." She turned around. "Let's head back. I'm going ... be sore ... tomorrow." They walked for a few minutes and talked. When she'd caught her breath enough, they broke back into a jog. Her son seemed to have boundless energy. And he was so happy to share what was going on in his life. She heard about troublesome teachers, great teachers, bullies, friends, and lots more. She learned more about her teenage son in one morning jog than she had at the last thousand dinner conversations.

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September 15, 1954: Apartment 4F, the Lavey family.

"It's good to see you, Mrs. Creech." Betsy felt so odd dressed up in her Sunday best just to stay in the building. It was even odder to have her son on her arm and her husband trailing them, eager to attend to any errands Billy might have for him.

"You're positively glowing, Mrs. Lavey." Natalie Creech smiled warmly at mother and son. She was a woman who appeared to be in her mid-thirties, wearing a dress that was maybe a couple decades out of style. "You look astonishing." Natalie leaned close to the fallen housewife and whispered, "I must know your secret."

Betsy glanced uncomfortably at her husband behind her. His eyes were cast on the floor. She looked back at Natalie and rubbed her belly. "I'm pregnant, Mrs. Creech. That must be it." They were standing outside apartment 1A. From this vantage, Betsy could see a little sliver of the lobby. There was a depiction on the wall of a slain stag, its throat slit and bleeding out. The wolf-headed man stood in the background of this scene. But the goddess stood above the stag, a dripping knife in one hand, her eyes turned toward the heavens in what looked like a plea or a prayer. Betsy shivered and looked at her husband again. Poor Harold was the defeated buck. Would something terrible happen to him? Were they planning to sacrifice him to that goddess? She hated to think about it.



"I'm thrilled that She finally invited us to worship." Billy stood proudly with his arm interlocked with his mother's. "Please lead the way."

"Yes, of course." Mrs. Creech stepped out of her apartment and closed the door. She pulled out a ring of keys as she led them to the elevator. "We've recently closed off the top floor. We'll have to get off on twelve and then go through a locked door. Once tenants have been here long enough, they usually get a key. We'll have one made up for you soon. In the meantime, I'll be your key."

Harold rushed to the elevator ahead of them and hit the call button.

"You won't be coming up with us tonight, Mr. Lavey." Mrs. Creech frowned at Harold. "The defeated will not sully the thirteenth floor. Get yourself a doorman's outfit and help out at the front."

Harold hustled toward the front door for further instructions.

The elevator chimed as the doors opened. Natilie's smile returned. "There now, this way. I'm excited for your first worship."

"We are, too." Billy squeezed his mother's ass through her dress and laughed.

Betsy let out a nervous giggle, and the three of them entered the elevator.

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October 18, 1993: Apartment 12C, the Kwon family.

"Brian ... what are you doing in there?" Darby knocked on her son's door. Since she'd walked in on him masturbating, she made it a point to knock. He hadn't even stopped touching himself when that had happened. It was like the food he constantly shoved down his throat. He no longer had any self-control. Her son was devolving before her eyes. "Brian? I know you're in there. You're spending too much time in your room."

"Leave me alone, Mom. I'm nineteen. I can take care of myself." Brian's voice sounded more than irritable.

"What are you doing in there?" Darby waited, tapping her foot on the hallway carpet. "Whatever it is, it's time to stop!"

"I'm surfing the net, Mom!"

"Brian, your sister is in town. We're going to meet your father at work, and the four of us are going to have a nice day as a family. So, come on out." Darby couldn't understand the silence that greeted her. Her sweet son cherished family time, especially with his sister. He was always so eager to be with them. She marched to the kitchen, pulled a tall glass out of the cupboard, and filled it at the tap. She returned to her position in the hall, outside her son's room. "Brian? You better not be doing what I think you're doing."



“Leave me alone, Mom!”

“That does it.” Darby opened the door. He was indeed masturbating. With grim determination, she moved across the room. The first thing she noticed was that there was a naked, Asian woman with big breasts on his computer monitor. The second was that her son’s penis appeared to be bigger than before. And it had dark blue veins protruding all over its shaft. *It was smaller and smooth before, I’m sure of it. Has he been pulling it so much he’s deformed himself? He’s ruining himself!* Remembering why she’d come in there, she threw the water from the glass onto her son. “Get a grip, Brian. Put that thing away.” She crossed her arms with satisfaction and watched him sputter. “We’re going to have a nice day as a family. Get ready. You have ten minutes.” She turned and headed toward the door, but something made her look back. Her son’s thing was shrinking, but it was still quite beastly. The head of it was knobbier than she remembered, too. It made something in her belly quiver. And something ... down lower ... quiver ... too.

“Fine, Mom! I’ll get ready. Just get out.” Brian was humiliated. His mother had literally thrown cold water on his jerking habit.



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"There you are." Greg had finally found his son. Usually, Brian was chatty in museums, but today he kept wandering off. "What did you find?" He stopped next to Brian and regarded the painting his son was observing. "Hey, this looks familiar." Greg rubbed his chin. "It's a bit ... grisly." There was a buck laying on a stone altar, its crimson life running out of the slit in its throat. The blood ran over gray mineral and onto the verdant forest floor. A generously proportioned woman with black hair stood behind the altar. Incongruously, she held up a baby that looked like it had just been born. The umbilical cord stretched to the dead deer's wound. "What is this thing?" Greg was suddenly upset. He turned his eyes away and read about the painting. *The Rebirth of Ogganse* by Artur Victorovitch Siyankov, 1931. There was no other information.



"It does look familiar, doesn't it?" Brian turned and looked at his father, judging the man as an adversary for the very first time. "It's the same woman from the walls of the lobby."

"What lobby?" Greg didn't like the look in his son's eyes. He was suddenly aware that Brian's forehead was beaded with sweat, and a musky odor came off the teenager. Greg took a step back.

"From our building, Dad. From 3838 Walnut. She's all over the walls there. Ogganse." Brian nodded and looked back at the painting.

"This woman? Ogganse?" Greg pointed at the zaftig woman holding the baby.

"That is not Ogganse. That's the woman on the thirteenth floor," Brian said in a whisper.

"What woman? Our building only has twelve floors." Greg furrowed his brow in confusion.

"There you two are." Rachel waltzed up to them with a smile. "It's nice to see some manly bonding." She took their arms, one in each of hers, and led them away without noticing what they were looking at. "Mom found some awesome *Der Blaue Reiter* pieces. She wants you two to see them."

"Okay, Rachel." Greg was glad for the interruption. He wasn't quite sure what had just happened with his son.

"Lead on, Rachel." Brian leaned into his sister, feeling the warm, softness of her body along his side. He smiled. It was nice to spend time with his family.

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February 21, 2015: Apartment 12E, the Dahir family.

"It's definitely bigger." Abshir stood in the bathroom, staring at his soft dick in the mirror. "I'm going to have to figure out if this is related to ..."

There was a knock on the door. "Are you in there staring at your dick again? I swear, if you get any more vain ..." Hani sounded impatient. She had caught her brother in the bathroom the day before, swinging his soft dick in the mirror. It did seem like he had something to be vain about. It was big. But that didn't mean he should spend his days staring at it.

"Shut up, Hani." He quickly wrapped a towel around his waist. "I was just drying off." He opened the door, letting out the steam. "I wish you wouldn't ..." He stood gawping at her pretty face and shiny, curly hair. The black of her curls were lustrous and seemed to call out for his touch.

"What are you staring at?" Hani frowned at him. "Do I have a bird's nest on my head or something?"

"Nothing ... nothing ... you look pretty without your hijab." Abshir continued his slack-jawed stare.

"You always see me without my hijab, and you haven't ever complimented me before." Hani pressed her lips into a line. When he continued to gawk, she pulled him out of the doorway and went into the bathroom. "You're acting really strange lately. Get a grip." She slammed the door on him.

In a daze, Abshir walked down to his room and started to dress. His mother walked in while he was pulling on his argyle sweater. On his lower half, he was still only wearing briefs. He finished getting the sweater in place, and then he found himself gawping at his mother's gorgeous, black curls. "Mom ... um ... I'm getting dressed."





“Don’t mind me, it’s nothing I haven’t seen before.” Uba dropped a full laundry basket on his bed. “I want you to fold those before we go out to eat.” She walked back toward the door, but his silence made her pause. “Is everything all right, sweetheart?” She looked over her shoulder and saw that he was staring at her butt. “Abshir, you can’t look at me like that. Your father would be very angry if he caught you doing that.”

“What about you, Mom? Are you angry?” He could feel his dick lurch in his underwear.

Uba turned toward her son, cocked her head, and rubbed her chin. “Look up here, sweetheart.” She pointed to her glasses, but he continued staring at the curve of her boobs. “Abshir? I have something to tell you. Look up here.”

Slowly, Abshir raised his gaze to meet hers. He took in the sight of her soft, hazel eyes, magnified by her glasses. “Mom?”

“I know you’re going through some changes right now. And everything is confusing.” She smiled patiently. “But I’m your mother. I’m married to your father. I am not a woman for you

in that way. You can’t spend your life thinking with that.” She pointed to his penis, which was quite obviously hard ... and big. She could see the outline of it running north and disappearing up under his sweater. “Find a nice girl at your new school and ask her to help you with it. Maybe Joey can introduce you to some girls.”

“You want me to ... be with girls?”

“You need to get this primal energy out somewhere ... else.” Uba nodded.

Abshir stared at her full, dark lips. “Mom ... I have a lot ... of primal energy right now.”

"I know, Abshir. It's obvious." Uba had always felt safe around her son. But he had been so wild lately. And something about the way he was looking at her chimed warning bells in her mind. She took a step back toward the open doorway. "Finish getting dressed and -"

"Mom ... I'm hungry." Abshir took a step toward his mother. He absentmindedly adjusted his glasses. "Mom ... I'm so hungry." His gaze dropped down to the wonderful slope at the front of her dress.

"I know, sweetheart. You've been eating nonstop for the past month. You should see our grocery bills." She let out a nervous laugh.

"What do you think the art in the lobby means?" Abshir didn't realize it, but he was sweating profusely again. His undershirt was already wet, and his underwear clung to his penis, the damp fabric becoming more transparent.

"I don't know. I don't like it. But we got such a deal on this apartment ... and it's a wonderful building otherwise ... I ..." Uba couldn't help but fix her gaze on her son's briefs. Everything underneath was on display. His testicles were too big for him. And she thought they might be pulsing in the most unnatural way. "I ... um ... I have to go."

"Wait, Mom." With a snarl, Abshir bolted across the room. He was not normally fleet of foot, but he somehow passed his mother and closed the door before she could reach it. He could see that her chest was rising and falling with each accelerated breath.

There was a loud knock behind Abshir.

"Don't slam doors, moron." Hani banged on her brother's door again and then continued down the hall to her room.

"Hani," Uba whispered. Her throat was suddenly so dry she couldn't raise her voice enough to be heard out in the hall.



"I'm hungry, Mom," Abshir growled. "You will ... satisfy me."



"You can fix yourself a sandwich. And ... you ... will not growl at me ... in that way." Uba put her hand to her chest to steady herself. She found that she was still whispering. "What has gotten into you?"

Abshir breathed deeply. He could smell her fear and excitement. He could smell her womb preparing itself to breed a goddess. He shook his head. *That's not right. None of this is right.* He stepped to the side and opened the door. "Sorry, Mom. I was just ... really hungry."

"Then get yourself a sandwich." Uba hustled past her son, out into the hall, and raced down to the living room. She found her husband reading on the sofa. She practically jumped onto his lap and draped her arms around him.

"What's wrong, Uba?" Taban didn't take his eyes off the page, but he did stop reading. He was hoping his wife might move along and allow him to finish the chapter.

"Abshir is ... um ..." Uba didn't know what to say. Her son hadn't done anything beyond blocking her way and undressing her with his eyes. "He's ..."

"What is it?" Taban sighed, marked his page, and closed the book. "What did Abshir do?"

"He didn't do anything ... but ... he's different, Taban." Uba hugged her husband tightly.

"He's not your little boy anymore, I know. All mothers must eventually see their sons as men." Taban opened the book again. "I've noticed that he's been a bit more erratic than usual. Maybe we can find a way to have him focus his energy."

"Girls?" Uba's voice squeaked.

Taban laughed. "Sure, he needs some of that. But I don't have any women to offer him."

"No, you don't." Uba snuggled into her husband's side.

"I like you there. Your breasts are so heavy. Stay where you are while I read." Taban began reading again. "Maybe afterward, we can visit our bedroom together."

"I would like that, Taban." Uba looked over her shoulder. Her son was standing in the shadows of the hall listening to them. She couldn't see his face, but his body language seemed ... disapproving. She shivered.



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September 15, 1954: Apartment 4F, the Lavey family.

"Uuuuggghhhh ... ooo ... ooo ... uuuuuggghhh ... ooo ... ooo ... nnnnngggaaaaaa ... Ogganse!" The chant was low and urgent in the chapel. There were twelve tenants from the building in the pews, not including Natalie, Billy, and Betsy who all sat in the last row.

The Laveys didn't know the words, so they sat with their hands in their laps and with solemn expressions on their faces.

"Uuuugggghh ... ooo ... ooo ... ooooooo ... Ogganse!" The crowd chanted.

Leading the prayer was a figure in purple, hooded robes. She chanted in a deep, guttural voice. Billy stared at her. She was clearly a *she* by the curves of her body that the billowy robes could not hide. Her face was hidden in shadow, however. The more Billy stared, the more he wanted the woman. He desired her almost as much as he desired his mother. Without even seeing her face, she was driving him up the walls.

The chapel was clearly an apartment that had been gutted, with only the support columns left where walls had once been. Behind the hooded figure rested the rough-hewn statue of a goddess. It had heavy, ponderous breasts and absurdly wide hips. The statue rested on a large, wooden stage that was stained with faded rust red in the spot just before the statue. The walls of the place were bare and danced in the light of the many candles.

Finally, the chanting came to an end, and the room fell into silence. The lead chanter threw back her hood and looked directly at Billy and Betsy. The woman was maybe in her mid-thirties, with black hair, piercing green eyes, and pale skin. Her smile was warm and inviting. "Welcome to the Laveys of 4F. We finally have a doe and buck worthy of carrying our goddess back into this world."

The crowd rejoiced, and the chapel erupted with their cheers.

