



A Matter of Trust

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Part I of the “A Series of Matters” Trilogy

Author's Note: The "A Series of Matters" Trilogy is foremost the story of the love between a mother and son and what they go through to be with each other. However, it is also a story about heroes, villains, and the grey characters that fall in between. Naturally, conflicts are going to arise so I caution you there is violence in these stories.

For those who are unfamiliar with my work, if you are expecting a quick sexual escapade with no deeper meaning, that's cool and more power to you, but you won't find that here. There is sex in my stories and plenty of it, I don't hold back on the details, but there is also more. If you are looking to make an emotional, as well as sexual, investment in the characters and get caught up in a gripping saga, that is what I have strived to provide.

CHAPTER 1: A GAME OF CHANCE

It was a hot summer night in Philadelphia and Colin, as usual, was out with Sheryl. He probably wouldn't be home until late. With nothing better to do, Aileen went to the small alcove of their apartment where the computer was set up and signed on. Perhaps she would play a couple games of gin rummy, but what she hoped for most was that Ben would be online.

Aileen Reilly had been divorced for almost ten years. Even though she hadn't had a serious relationship since her divorce, it was only in the last year or so the absence of a significant other in her life had really made itself felt. The reason was because she did have someone significant in her life, her son Colin. They spent a lot of time together and did

numerous activities, and it was always a blast being with him. She loved her son and was totally dedicated to him. His company had always been all she needed to be happy. But Colin was seventeen years old now and every day Aileen felt him move a few steps closer to leaving her and going out on his own. She was beginning to feel a loneliness and isolation she hadn't known since before Colin was born. She knew her boy had to grow up, but it saddened her that in doing so it made them grow apart.

Nearly two years ago Colin had met Sheryl and she eventually became his steady girlfriend. Their relationship had blossomed over the past couple years and they were now seriously involved with each other. It didn't surprise Aileen that her son would find a girlfriend so devoted to him. Colin was a handsome young man. He was over six feet tall, lean and muscular, and he had strong facial features with russet colored hair and insightful brown eyes. But aside from the way he looked, Colin also had the sweetest personality a boy could have. Aileen took pride in her son having grown into such a fine young man.

Sheryl monopolized most of Colin's time now and it resulted in making Aileen feel she had lost her best friend. Her main purpose in life, however, was to see Colin happy and if being with Sheryl did that, well then Aileen couldn't disapprove. It still didn't stop her from feeling lonely though.

Aileen held a nine-to-five job as a bank teller, which kept her busy enough during the week, but on the weekends she was off work and frequently found herself with nothing to do. She had a few friends, though no one she was especially close to, and once in a while she would do something with them. She had an older brother, Patrick, who ran a successful local pub and restaurant, but he was always busy with his own family or his business. While she enjoyed being in the company of Patrick and his family, she didn't want to infringe too much on their hospitality.

One way she found to alleviate her boredom was to play gin rummy via the internet. She enjoyed the card game but she hadn't really had anyone to play with in real life. She used to frequently play with Colin, they played gin rummy and a whole slew of other games, but ever since he began dating Sheryl, he didn't seem to have the time. So, online she found a place where there was always someone wanting to play a friendly card game anytime she felt like it.

Online is where she met Ben. He became a frequent and then favorite companion to play cards with. They would communicate with each other by way of the game's chat room during their play. They talked to each other about what was going on in their lives, frivolous things at first, but then more intimate. They became good friends.

It wasn't after too long that they began communicating more by instant messaging than during a card game. Ben was twenty-two and Aileen was thirty-six. Aside from similar tastes in movies and music, Aileen often wondered what Ben saw in her that made him always seem so eager to be talking with her. She didn't understand why he would want to spend so much time talking to someone so much older than him, but she really enjoyed his company and was flattered by his attention. Ben's company had become a decent substitute for Colin's.

Tonight, when she saw that Ben wasn't online, she felt a bit disappointed, but then about twenty minutes later, she saw Ben's screen name, Bender069, pop up indicating he had just signed on. Aileen felt a thrill run through her from seeing her friend now online. With her own screen name, IrishRose36, she instant messaged him.

IrishRose36: Hey Hon, how are you?

Bender069: Doing pretty good here, how about yourself?

IrishRose36: I'm fine, and happy to see you.

Bender069: Me too.

IrishRose36: So what have you been up to?

Bender069: Just got finished taking a nice long shower after a hard day's work.

IrishRose36: You got all nice, clean, and fresh just to come and talk to me? LOL

Bender069: LOL Yeah, I did.

IrishRose36: Ha, it's Friday night, I bet you are getting ready to hit the town.

Bender069: No, I don't have anywhere else I'd rather be than here talking with you.

IrishRose36: You flatterer. You need to find a girlfriend and take her out.

Bender069: What about you? Why aren't you going out with a boyfriend?

IrishRose36: Because I'm not interested in that. Besides who would be interested in me? I'm old and fat.

Bender069: No you are not! I saw that picture you sent me, you're beautiful! What man in his right mind wouldn't want to go out with a tall redhead like you?

IrishRose36: You forgot fat.

Bender069: You're not fat, you're voluptuous.

IrishRose36: LOL that's just a polite way of saying "fat".

Bender069: Bullshit! My cock is hard right now just thinking about you.

Aileen froze in the middle of typing a response when she read what Ben said. She was shocked. While they had discussed their love lives with each other, neither of them had said anything so direct like that before. Their conversations always stayed friendly and polite, but what Ben just said indicated their relationship might be going in a new direction. Aileen wasn't sure how to respond. Should she feel offended? She didn't. In fact, she felt somewhat...aroused. Before she could type something Ben typed more:

Bender069: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to be so forward. Please don't be mad.

IrishRose36: It's ok, I'm not mad.

Bender069: Good.

Aileen hesitated a moment, not really believing what she was going to ask, but thought, What could be the harm in it?

IrishRose36: Is it really hard?

Bender069: Yes

IrishRose36: Because of me?

Bender069: Always because of you.

IrishRose36: What do you mean?

Bender069: I hope you won't hate me for saying this, but I have been fantasizing about you for a while. I've gotten hard just talking several times but never mentioned it. I think I'm falling in love with you.

Aileen felt a shiver run through her body. She couldn't believe she was letting this conversation continue in this direction but she couldn't help it.

IrishRose36: I don't hate you. In fact, hearing you say that has made my pussy wet.

And it was the truth, her pussy was wet. Aileen had never thought of cyber sex as something she would be into. She hadn't gone looking for this, but she had to admit, talking like this with Ben over the internet was awakening certain urges in her body faster and stronger than she could have imagined. She was horny.

Bender069: Oh God, Aileen, I wish I could see your wet pussy!

IrishRose36: What would you do if you saw it?

Ben went into luscious detail describing what he would do to her longing cunt. He talked about touching it, exploring it with his fingers, fondling her most private pleasure zones. Then he started to describe performing cunnilingus on her. What he wanted to do to her sopping wet pussy with his tongue. He wanted to play with her clit, stick his tongue

deep inside of her, and slurp her juices. Then he talked about feeling her breasts, how he longed to touch them, to suck on her nipples, how wonderful he thought they were.

As Ben went on describing the things he wanted to do to her, Aileen undid the sash of her blue terrycloth robe. She slipped her hand inside and then under the white cotton tee shirt she wore. She brought her hand up to her full breasts, her nipples were very hard and erect. She rubbed her finger tips over one of them and tweaked it, and then she did the same to the other. The sensation sent chills all over her body, most strongly felt in her pussy. Aileen slid her hand down her tummy, her fingers made contact with the waistband of her panties, slowly she slipped them inside and her hand continued on its southern course.

Her fingers made contact with her pubic hair, it was wet, and the further down she went the wetter it got. She was already in a very high state of arousal by this point and when her hand brushed over the lips of her hungry cunt it sent her to an even higher plateau. She took in a deep breath as she stroked her hand over her excited sex. She slid her fingers inside her pussy and a "MMMMMMMM" escaped from her mouth. She delved into herself with one finger and then two, running them along the inner walls of her cunt. Then she found her clitoris. The sensitive little nub was firm and it stirringly responded to her touch. She gasped at how good it felt. She played with her clit running her finger round and round in circles over it.

Ben asked her what she was doing. With her free hand she typed in a response and told him exactly what she was doing. Ben then informed her that he had removed his towel and was now totally naked as he was running his hand up and down his hard cock thinking of her. Aileen had never considered herself a very sexual person, never having had a very good sexual experience. Her husband, Fred, had been a selfish and mean lover, only engaging in intercourse when he wanted to and it always had to be his way. After her divorce Aileen rarely dated, she primarily focused on bringing up Colin, and in truth she had soured on the idea of relationships. She masturbated sometimes, but even then it was mostly by thought rather than touch. Sometimes to get to sleep she imagined the perfect loving man having his arms around her and making passionate but tender love to her, and touching herself didn't seem to please her as much as fantasizing in her mind did.

But now something had come over her and her body felt truly alive and sensual. The thought that Ben was actually naked and so excited by thinking of her was making her feel hornier than she ever had before. She typed about doing things to him that she never thought about doing in real life, or had done but not really cared for, but now the idea of titillated her. She described touching his cock, rubbing her hand up and down it. She typed about taking his cock into her mouth and sucking on it.

Ben informed her that his cock was throbbing from her saying those things and that made her all the more excited. It also amazed her how much the idea of doing these things really appealed to her now. She was plunging her fingers in and out of her pussy now in a furious motion, imagining that it was Ben's cock pumping in and out of her. She felt something building up inside her. She felt she was close to achieving something grand. She typed to Ben that she was getting close to cumming, he replied he was too. She plunged her fingers deeper inside her, she was closer, she rubbed her clit with her thumb, oh so much closer. Ben typed that his cock was so hard it was ready to burst with cum for her. That did it, her body spasmed and her sopping wet cunt clenched around her fingers, wave after wave after wave of orgasmic pleasure shot through her as her pussy squirted its juice. She let out a loud "OHHHHHHHHHHHHH" as she came.

She typed to Ben that she was cumming and cumming hard, and he replied that he was as well, that his cock was shooting cum all over the place. It felt devilishly good to her that she could make a man do that just by talking to him over the computer and that a man could make her feel this way. She hadn't known she had it in her, but now that she did know, she wanted more.

* * *

Ben and Aileen continued their cyber relationship for the next couple of months. They usually engaged in cyber sex on weekend nights when Aileen didn't have to worry about having to be up early the next morning for work. Also, now that it was September and school had resumed, she only allowed her son out late on weekend nights. She could pretty much count on him being out with Sheryl every Friday and Saturday. It comforted her on those nights to have Ben and she didn't have to be alone. Aileen felt some guilt over what she was doing and a part of her kept telling herself that a thirty-six year old woman shouldn't be doing these things with a person she hasn't even actually met. But that part of her was overshadowed by the sexuality that had been roused in her. It felt good to be doing this, good in a way she never expected to feel, and she didn't want to lose that feeling.

She was indulging her newly discovered sexual appetite and for the most part felt safe about the way she was doing it. She felt she could talk to Ben about anything because he could talk about anything to her. She could consider and explore erotic desires she never would have thought about doing in real life. Like sucking a cock, something she had never done before but Ben seemed to enjoy the idea so much she enjoyed playing along and describing how she would suck Ben's. After a while she began to really wonder what it was like, if just the suggestion of doing it turned a guy on like it did with Ben, how much more rewarding would it be doing it for real? She began to think she really might like to try giving a real blowjob.

Ben reciprocated her talk of fellatio with generous talk of cunnilingus. The actions he depicted doing to her pussy with his mouth made her more than curious to truly feel a man's hot breath and warm wet tongue roaming over her pussy. She masturbated more intensely than ever before, no longer only thinking abstractly about being with someone, but now touching herself with vigor. That she communicated what she was doing with Ben made it all the more thrilling for her.

Over the course of her association with Ben, Aileen discovered something about herself; she needed something more in her life. Her son would always reign supreme in her life, but he was almost grown up now and starting to make a life of his own. Since Colin didn't seem to need her as much anymore, why couldn't she find someone else to share time with? She wanted a relationship, someone to be with in actuality. She was developing deep feelings for Ben, but she was afraid that with him being so much younger than her, he wouldn't want to be with her in a real relationship. Also, they lived so far apart; she didn't know if she could handle a long distance relationship. But Ben had shown her that she wanted more out of life and she thought she wanted it with him. She felt herself growing closer and closer to him every day. She trusted him. She felt she could tell him anything.

Before she had a chance to discuss these feelings with Ben, he once again did something that changed the course of their

relationship. Maybe he was feeling that their affair was losing some of its spice which triggered him to say what he said. It was a Saturday night and they were chatting online as usual, but this time when their dialogue began to get more amorous, he made a drastic suggestion.

Bender069: How do you feel about role playing?

IrishRose36: What do you mean?

Bender069: You know...Pretending we were other people when we cybered.

IrishRose36: What roles do you have in mind?

Bender069: Promise you won't get mad at me?

IrishRose36: Of course I won't, you know you can tell me anything.

Bender069: Ok...what if we pretended we were mother and son?

Aileen just stared at the computer screen for a couple minutes not knowing how to respond. She supposed she

should have been repulsed, but she wasn't. She was definitely stunned, but after all she and Ben had done together the idea of pretending to do something so forbidden was...exciting. Aileen felt a warm gush spread through her and goose bumps pop up on her arms. Her pussy had become wet just like the first night when they began to have cyber sex. Before she could respond to him though, Ben typed something else.

Bender069: I'm sorry, forget what I said, it was just a thought.

IrishRose36: No, wait. Um...how would we go about it?

Ben began to set up an elaborate scenario involving a mother and son being sexually attracted to each other. Aileen took her cues from Ben, and in no time they had fallen into their roles as pretend mother and son playing off each other in more and more explicit manners. The deeper Aileen got into her role, the more her pussy dripped at the idea of it. By the time they actually got to the describing of having sex as mother and son, Aileen was three fingers deep in her sopping wet cunt drawing in and out of herself like a madwoman. She climaxed and let out a dramatic moan. It was incredible! She was flabbergasted that the concept had turned her on so.

Aileen had never in her life imagined what it would be like to have an incestuous relationship, or if she did she was repulsed by it, but now she was turned on by it, at least in theory. She assured herself it wasn't like she actually desired an incestuous relationship with her own son; she was just excited by the fantasy of a hypothetical mother/son tryst. There was something about the idea of it that pushed all the right buttons in her. It was just so naughty, but at the same time the trust and security she felt with Ben, that whatever they did would stay between them, made her feel adventurous and extremely aroused. But there was something more to it as well, something she couldn't conceptualize at that moment.

All the while these thoughts were running through her mind, Aileen was casually running her hand over body in the comfortable aftermath of her orgasm. Her hand was lingering over her breasts and playing with her still erect nipples when she heard the lock at the front door click open. She grabbed for her robe in haste and scrambled to cover herself up. She managed to make herself decent enough by the time her son had come through the door and noticed her at the computer.

"Hi, Mom," Colin said.

"Colin, I didn't expect you home so early!" Aileen said as her heart raced from almost being caught in a very unseemly

state. Her face felt flushed and she hoped Colin didn't notice if she was blushing.

It didn't look as if he did. Colin shrugged in an indifferent manner and said, "Sheryl said she had some things to do tonight, so I decided to just come home. I guess I could use the opportunity to catch up on some schoolwork."

"That's a good idea. You don't want to get behind now that you're in your senior year." Aileen said trying to sound like she was having a normal conversation.

"True," Colin agreed. "So what have you been up to mom?"

Aileen felt even more flushed than before. "Uhhh...just playing on the computer." She said. Did her voice sound higher than usual? If so, it seemed Colin still hadn't picked up on anything being unusual.

"You and your card games," Colin said laughing. "Since I'm home early, if you feel like playing with a real person I could play a couple hands of something. I know we haven't had much time together lately..."

"No, sweetie, that's all right, I'm fine. School's more important anyway, so you go take care of that. But thank you for the thought."

"I suppose you're right. Well, 'night Ma, in case I don't see you till tomorrow."

"Goodnight, Darling." Aileen said and Colin went off to his room.

Aileen let out a sigh of relief when she heard Colin's door close. Then a potent feeling of guilt racked through her. What would her son think of her if he had known what she had been doing?

She turned back to the computer screen. Ben had tried to instant message her several times wondering what was going on since she went silent. She responded to his queries informing him she was all right, she just had been distracted for a few moments. She told him she needed to take a shower and then would probably turn in for the night. She would be back at another time.

Aileen signed off from the computer and then headed for the bathroom. Once there she turned on the hot water of the shower. She took off her robe and then her panties, when the bathroom started to steam up from the water she stepped into the shower. The nights were starting to get a little bit cold and there had been a chill in the air. Aileen hadn't realized how cold she was until she got under the hot water.

It felt so good to feel the warmth seep into her body all the way to her bones.

Aileen replayed the events of the night in her mind while the water beat down on her melting the tension out of her body. How could she have gone along with Ben's scenario, and worse how could she have enjoyed it? Was she perverted? Maybe she was. A couple of months ago she would have thought just having cyber sex was perverted, but now she thought of that as an acceptable thing for two people who were close to each other to do. But pretending to be mother and son...that was taking it too far. She shouldn't have done that and she wouldn't do it again. But even as she made that resolution, another part of her mind drifted back to how it felt, how it felt to be imagining a son so in love with his mother that he desired her sexually. As she thought of this her hands began moving over her body. She massaged her breasts, her nipples were hard again, and she gently pulled and rubbed her fingers over them as water fountained down on her tits.

She imagined how truly devoted a son could be to his mother, the safety, security, and love she must feel knowing what he wanted most was to please her. Aileen's hand found its way to her crotch and began touching it. She discovered her clit protruding and craving to be touched. Aileen condemned herself for being a weak and depraved woman but was too far gone to stop now. She fingered her cunt in a frenzied fashion, her digits repeatedly going in and out

lubricated by the shower water and her own juices. Then she turned on the hand held spray and set it to pulsate, she positioned the spray between her legs. The pulsating water hit directly on her clit and Aileen rolled her eyes back in ecstasy. For the second time that evening she had a powerful orgasm.

Clean, dry, and dressed in her nightgown, Aileen lay curled up in bed, but her thoughts were too troubled to sleep. Guilt still plagued her for what she had done. She couldn't get over feeling ashamed that she had done something wrong, but what was worse was the shame she felt for enjoying it. Every time she went over what happened too thoroughly she started feeling horny again, which inevitably brought on more guilt. After going through this cycle for about the hundredth time, she finally felt merciful sleep coming on. One of the final thoughts she remembered before drifting off into a troubled slumber was that maybe talking this over with Ben would help. It was a comforting thought that at least she wasn't alone, that she had someone she could share her concerns with.

* * *

The next day Aileen talked to Ben online about the concerns she had.

Bender069: Don't worry about it, we are not doing anything wrong. We are both adults and whatever we talk about or do with each other is no one else's business. If we both get enjoyment out of pretending to be mother and son in a sexual relationship, what harm is it to anyone else as long as it stays between us?

IrishRose36: I suppose you're right.

Ben was really only echoing Aileen's own thoughts when she tried to rationalize what they had done, but it did alleviate some of her guilt seeing him confirm those thoughts.

IrishRose36: But still, I know legally you're an adult but you're only twenty-two. I'm fourteen years older than you, I feel I should be more responsible. Maybe it is wrong to be encouraging you.

Bender069: LOL I assure you, I'm old enough to be responsible for my own actions and I love the fact that you are older than me. I've always found mature women attractive and I used to fantasize about them before I met you. Now your beauty is all I fantasize about. I don't believe a woman can be truly beautiful until she is at least thirty.

Aileen didn't know whether to feel complimented that Ben thought she was beautiful, or insulted that he acknowledged

she was over thirty. She supposed that since she brought up their ages, she couldn't really blame him for commenting on it. He had done his best to say he liked that she was older, but it still irked her some that he recognized it. However, with Ben she had found that she couldn't stay even slightly angry with him for long. Talking to him was intoxicating and she soon realized that she wanted to do anything to please him.

Eventually their conversation came back to mother/son role playing. Ben wanted to do more of it, and even though she still felt conscience-stricken about it, she couldn't refuse him and she really couldn't refuse herself. Her biggest concern was would she be hurting Colin in any way by engaging in this activity and she told herself that as long as he never found out about it, it wouldn't hurt him. Aileen and Ben had a secret. She felt guilty and ashamed because of this secret, but also deliciously naughty. It would remain a secret and she would continue to indulge herself because it felt so good.

For the next few weeks they got deeper and deeper into their role playing game and Aileen was astonished at how she hungered for more and more of the fantasy. Ben began directing her to websites that featured erotic incestuous stories. They always focused on the mother and son stories and read them together. The stories aroused Aileen like nothing had before. She became addicted to reading those stories and now that she knew where the sites were that had them she would go and read them even when Ben was not

online. There was something about the idea of a mother and son; it didn't seem obscene if they loved each other, their love seemed pure. There was something else about it too, something she couldn't describe, but it made her hunger for these stories. She was hornier than ever and masturbating as often as a teenage boy

Aileen was beginning to think that maybe this was all she needed. She had Ben through the internet and the secret they shared. Maybe that was all the relationship she needed to keep her satisfied. She still had Colin for actual human companionship, and his time actually seemed to be freeing up. Sheryl had a new job at the video store and the hours she worked were different from the hours Colin worked at his part time job, helping out at his Uncle Pat's pub. Colin and Sheryl were seeing less of each other but still managed to go out one weekend night a week, so those were the nights Aileen would spend on the computer with Ben. So Aileen found herself with two young men in her life eager to have her company and she was happier than she had been in a long time.

* * *

The last Monday in October was Colin's eighteenth birthday. Aileen threw a big party for him and invited all his friends, family, and Sheryl. It was a wonderful party and she thought Colin was really pleased with it, but Aileen knew that what

her son was really itching for was a night out on the town to celebrate this milestone. Colin was a responsible boy, which allowed Aileen to give him a certain amount of freedom, but even though he was now eighteen, she didn't want to give him carte blanche. He still had school in the morning. She made Colin promise to at least wait until Friday to go out partying, and not to get too wild. Colin acquiesced to her wishes with a quirky grin but Aileen trusted him, he wouldn't do anything that would really disappoint her

In addition to it being Colin's first Friday night as an eighteen-year-old, it was also Halloween. Colin was out with Sheryl and Aileen knew he wouldn't be in until late, so she devoted that night to being with Ben. Once she knew the trick-or-treaters were done for the night, she got into some intense mother/son role playing cybering with Ben.

Suddenly, in the middle of the session, right when Aileen was getting the most aroused, Ben stopped typing. It still indicated on the computer that he was online, but he wasn't responding.

IrishRose36: Ben, are you there?

Aileen typed, but there was no answer. Then she typed,

IrishRose36: Ben, are you ok? Please answer me!

Still no answer. She waited for ten minutes and finally she got a reply.

Bender069: Ben won't be talking to you anymore.

Aileen was totally confused.

IrishRose36: What?

Bender069: You heard me you perverted bitch, go find your own fucking man!

IrishRose36: Ben, what's going on? You're scaring me!

Bender069: What are you stupid as well as twisted? This isn't Ben, this is his wife!

Aileen felt her heart fall into her stomach. Was this some cruel Halloween trick?

IrishRose36: Wife? He never told me he was married. I didn't know.

Bender069: We've been married for fifteen years!

IrishRose36: Fifteen years? He told me he was 22!

Bender069: He's 43, now fuck off you home wrecking slut!

Aileen was stunned, she didn't know what to feel. Hurt? Anger? Fear? Despair? Her emotions seemed to be swirling around in a big ball in her stomach fighting for dominance. Aileen rushed to the bathroom where she promptly lost everything she had eaten that day. It felt like she lost everything she had eaten in her life, plus a whole lot more.

After cleaning herself up, Aileen went back to the computer. The last message from Ben's wife was still on the screen staring at her. With tears in her eyes she shut the machine down. She then made her way to her bedroom and shut the door tight. She collapsed onto her bed, buried her face in her pillow, and let out the sobs that had been building up in her. How could she have been so stupid after all that had happened to her? All she ever heard was don't trust anyone you meet on the internet, they could be anybody, and what did she do? She foolishly got involved with a man and believed he was who he said he was. She trusted him, she let him see a side of her that even she was hardly aware of, and he betrayed her. How many times would she have to be betrayed by people she cared about before she finally

learned her lesson not to trust anyone? Aileen continued to deliver sobs of anguish into her now soaking wet pillow. She cried until she exhausted herself and finally fell asleep.

CHAPTER 2: INTERLUDE OF A PROMISE

She was awakened by the sound of the phone ringing. Her bleary eyes focused on the clock on her night stand. It was past two o'clock in the morning. Who could be calling at this hour? Aileen thought she knew. She picked up the phone and answered, "Hello?"

"Aileen, it's me." Why did I have to give him my phone number? she thought.

"Ben, what do you want?"

"I want to explain..."

"Are you really married?"

"Yes."

"Are you really forty-three?"

"Yes."

"Then what is there to explain? You lied to me."

"I'm sorry, I never meant to hurt you, I was going to tell you the truth, I never meant for you to find out this way, I'm so sorry. My wife caught me while I was talking to you and saw what we were writing..." Aileen thought she was going to be sick again, a total stranger had been reading her most intimate thoughts. But wasn't Ben a stranger too? He might as well have been for all she thought she knew him. Anger was burning in her now.

"When were you going to tell me? After I had told you every deepest darkest secret I have and you were still pretending to be twenty-two years old and single?"

"I was going to tell you, I swear I was!"

"Why did you lie to me, Ben? I was totally honest with you."

"We had something special, you and me, I was afraid to lose you. I thought I would if you knew the truth. Things aren't

working out well between me and my wife...I'm going to leave her."

"Why couldn't you have been upfront from the beginning?"

"I'm sorry, sometimes I like to pretend I'm a young guy online, then we met and things were going so well and I just thought it would be better for you to accept the fantasy if you thought I was younger..."

"You preyed on me from the start, didn't you? You had it in you're head to find some lonely old woman, befriend her, then slowly get her involved with your sick fantasies! You played me for a fool!"

"Aileen, you enjoyed it too..."

"Your wife wasn't into that kind of stuff; was she? Or maybe you just can't satisfy a woman in real life? So you found me, and I trusted you, you bastard! You know how hard it was for me to do that! I trusted you and you betrayed me!"

"Now wait a god-damned fucking minute! I have to take this shit from my wife, but I'm not going to take it from both..."

"Fuck you, Ben!" Aileen hung up on him. Her eyes, sore from her previous crying, began to burn as tears started to swell in them anew. There was a knock on her bedroom door.

"Mom, are you okay?" Colin's voice came from the other side of the door. Aileen swallowed a couple times to steady her voice before answering him.

"Yes, Sweetie, I'm fine." She called to him. "Did you just get in?"

"Yeah, about twenty minutes ago. I was just having a bowl of cereal before bed when the phone rang. Who was calling at two in the morning?"

"Just a wrong number,"

"You sure you are okay Mom? I thought I heard you yelling at someone?"

"It was an obscene caller, don't worry about it Honey, I took care of it."

"Maybe we should report him Mom?"

"Don't worry. He's not going to bother us again. Go to sleep Dear." Aileen almost managed not to sound choked up when she said that, and it was true, Ben would not be bothering her ever again!

"Okay Ma, good night then," Colin said through the door.

"Good night Honey."

Aileen thought Colin had left, but then she heard him say, "Mom?"

"Yes, Dear?"

"I love you."

Oh thank God for you, my precious, darling boy! Aileen thought to herself as tears coursed down her face. She didn't realize how desperately she needed to hear those words until this moment.

Once again she swallowed to gain some control of her voice, then answered him, "I love you too sweet baby."

"Night Ma,"

"Night Honey." Once she was sure Colin had actually gone to bed this time, Aileen flung herself back down on the bed. Oh, Colin, I pray you never find out what a fool I was! She thought to herself. She didn't know if she would be able to stand it if her son knew she had gotten into another bad relationship. What was wrong with her that she kept falling in love with men who hurt her? She knew there were good men in the world, Colin was proof of that. Look at tonight, if there was any night where he could possibly think he had an excuse to get into some trouble, it was tonight, but here he was home safe and sound, just like he promised he would be. She could always trust him. Aileen had no delusions either that it was due to her parenting that made Colin that way. She tried her best to raise her child right but she knew she made mistakes, but still Colin had grown naturally into the kind of man that gave her faith in the decency of the human race.

Why couldn't she find a man like Colin, someone who was kind, gentle, and trustworthy? She was just beginning to come to a place where she thought she could trust a man in her life again, her old wounds felt like they had finally healed, but Ben had deceived her and ripped them open again. Now it hurt worse than ever and she didn't think she could ever trust another man again. Aileen wept silently as memories of her past resurfaced from the depths of her mind, her new pain clearing a pathway for her old pain to return.

It began with her parents. Her father beat her severely when she was growing up; sometimes for no reason she could understand at all. Her mother never confronted her father about it, even when her father was in the worst of his rages she would still stand by and do nothing to stop him. Sometimes it felt as if her mother's noninterference hurt more than her father's beatings. She grew up in constant fear that she would be assaulted at anytime, and in emotional turmoil that maybe somehow she deserved it. Why else would she be beat like that, if it wasn't for doing something wrong? Her father beat her and her mom let him because they loved her; that had to be it. It scared her that sometimes she didn't even know what it was she had done wrong to deserve a beating, she had thought if she couldn't tell right for wrong, she must indeed be a bad person.

Her brother, Patrick, wasn't much better when they were growing up. He received his fair share of beatings too. You would think that having a common fear would have made them closer, but Patrick hadn't been there for her. He never paid her much notice except when he wanted to tease her, and when he did that it wasn't a playful teasing, it was cruel and relentless. She recalled one incident when her brother found her secret stash of romance magazines. Patrick gleefully reported to their father that she had "dirty magazines" in her room. They weren't really even dirty magazines; they just had stories in them about people falling in love. But that didn't stop her father from giving her one of

the worst beatings of her life and then throwing out the magazines afterward.

He had taken his belt and whipped her repeatedly using the buckle. She was stung and cut and battered, she thought the pain would never end. Aileen cried and screamed until her voice was ragged and her tear ducts were depleted and still the lashes came. She was sore for weeks after that. She had welts and black and blue marks all down her backside and whenever someone made a sudden move, especially her father, she flinched, thinking another blow was about to come.

Whenever Patrick saw her flinch, he snickered. He actually thought what had happened to her was funny. Adding further insult to injury, she had known for a while that her brother had magazines like Playboy and Penthouse hidden in his room, but she had never told on him and still wouldn't. What good would it have done if she told on Patrick? It would have just made him angry and want to get back at her for getting him in trouble, which would just result in her being hurt again. For Aileen, life was about surviving, she couldn't afford revenge.

By the time she was seventeen Patrick had left home and gotten married. Even if they were never that close as brother and sister, at least when Patrick was living at home he would sometimes draw some of their father's ire, but when it

became just Aileen all his attention focused on her. It was a bad situation that kept on deteriorating and she had had enough of it. She had to get out of there. That was when she met Fred Martin. He was tall, strong, and good looking and she was flattered that he was interested in her. They began going out. He was so powerful he even intimidated her father, which completely awed Aileen. She felt she had found a protector and that was part of the reason she fell in love with him. In Fred she had thought she found her salvation.

Fred asked her to marry him and the day after she turned eighteen they were wed. Eight months later, Colin Martin was born. Aileen never spoke to her parents again. Six years later when she heard her mother died after being severely beaten by her father she grieved and felt guilty for leaving her with that man even though she never did anything to stop him when he was beating her. Her father had been sent to jail on the charge of manslaughter for murdering his wife and two years later that's where he died. When Aileen heard about his passing she felt nothing.

When she married Fred, he had taken her away from her parents and finally she felt she had freedom, but then she soon realized she had only traded one abusive captor for another. Fred liked to drink and when he got drunk he turned mean. The first time he struck her they had only been married a few weeks. They were having an argument and she said something flippant and he backhanded her across the face so hard he cut her lip and made it bleed. Then he

apologized profusely and promised never to do it again and she forgave him. That began a familiar pattern for them, he would hit her and then apologize and she would always forgive him. He always blamed it on the drinking and always promised to quit and never hurt her again, but he never kept his promises and his beatings steadily grew worse and worse.

Life with Fred would have been just as miserable as it had been with her parents if it wasn't for one thing: Colin. Now she had her son and he was the sole reason she had any happiness in life. He was so sweet and gentle hearted, it made her own heart swell with pride and love every time she looked at him. He was her reason for living.

Colin was also part of the reason she stayed with Fred. She thought her boy needed his father. The other part of the reason she stayed with him was that she had accepted that this was just what love was. After all, her father had beaten her pretty bad and her mother had let him. Weren't parents supposed to love their kids? Fred said he loved her and he beat her as well. Aileen came to understand that the ones who loved you would hurt you sometimes. She took the abuse during those years because she thought she didn't deserve any better.

The thing that triggered Aileen to leave Fred was when he started his abuse on Colin. There had been times when Fred

hit Colin before, but Aileen had convinced herself that he was only being a strong disciplinarian. Then the day came when he took things way too far.

It was when Colin was eight years old. One day he was running around the house playing with a plastic water gun. He had squirted Aileen a few times and she reprimanded him for it but she could never get truly mad with Colin, he was just caught up in his play and Aileen had to admit it always gave her joy to see Colin in a happy mood, so she hadn't been too stern with him. That had been a mistake.

Colin eventually found his father in the den watching a baseball game. Fred was drunk and his team was losing. Aileen arrived in the den just in time to see what Colin was about to do, but too late to stop him. In a playful manner Colin squirted his dad with the water gun. Fred was totally stunned for a moment when he felt the cool jet of water hit him. When he saw Colin with the water gun pointed at him, an impish grin on his face, Fred completely lost his temper. He shot out of his chair and charged toward his son. Colin, seeing the rage in his father's face, quickly switched from an expression of amusement to one of pure terror. Aileen understood what the look in her husband's eyes meant and she screamed at him to take a moment to calm down, that she would punish the boy, but Fred had lost control of his senses and he was too focused on Colin to even register that she was saying anything.

Aileen stepped in front of Colin but Fred just shoved her aside hard like she was nothing, so hard she fell to the floor. She lifted her head from the floor to get her son back into view and saw that he had backed up all the way against the far wall. He was futilely looking for a way to escape, but he had no where to run. Colin still had the water gun in his hand as his dad closed in on him, he brought the gun up and pointed it at his dad and resumed shooting him with water. It didn't look like Colin even knew what he was doing at that point, like it was some reflex making him do it. The water pistol was all he had to defend himself with and his finger locked on the trigger out of instinct not of his own volition. A continuous stream of water struck his father until the gun emptied of ammunition. All he had done was add more fuel to his father's rage.

Fred got to Colin, stripped the toy gun from his hand, and used it to hit Colin over the head. Fred struck his son hard and repeatedly. Colin tried to apologize through his screaming and crying, but Fred was furious and paid it no heed. Aileen rushed from the floor to once again try to rescue her child. She tried to pull Fred away from Colin but Fred turned and struck her forcefully right in the jaw with a closed fist. Aileen fell back to the floor and Fred continued laying massive wallops on Colin.

Aileen was dazed for a moment, the pain in her jaw was intense, she tasted blood and she spat out two teeth. Then she once again looked at her son, his nose was bleeding, one eye was swollen shut, and he had stopped screaming. Fred was still hitting him though. Colin had surrendered to the assault. He had retreated within himself waiting for it to end one way or another. Seeing her son being hurt like that brought on a rage of her own from Aileen. She quickly got to her feet and tackled Fred screaming at him not to dare lay another hand on their son. Both of them fell to the floor. Now she was pounding Fred with her fists repeatedly, something had snapped in her mind and it seemed as if all the anger she had ever felt though never acknowledged was released and flowing through her. The pent up rage for all the times he had hurt her, for the times her father had hurt her, and most significantly, for what Fred had done to their son propelled her fury intensely onward. She screamed at Fred as she hit him, "NEVER! NEVER, NEVER, AGAIN!"

All of a sudden Aileen was on her back and Fred was hovering over her and severe pain was emanating from her face, chest, and stomach. Fred had recovered from the stun of Aileen's attack, had managed to push her off, and now she was the object of his rage as he pummeled her. "You fucking bitch, I'll fucking kill you for that!" He shouted as he struck her. Aileen tried to fight back, tried blocking his punches, and tried to get in some more of her own, but Fred just overpowered her. He laid a particularly hard wallop to the side of her head and she blacked out.

She awoke what seemed only a few minutes later but Fred was gone. Aileen felt bruised and battered all over but her first thought was for Colin. She frantically looked around for him but instead of seeing her boy, she saw strangers in the room. As her eyes focused a bit more she saw they both were wearing dark blue clothes and then she saw their badges. The police were here, later she would find out that a neighbor had called them after hearing all the commotion coming from their home.

"Colin! My son! Where is he?" Aileen managed to get out through her voice that was hoarse from screaming. She tried to stand up, but was racked by a pain so intense she felt she would throw up.

"Easy, ma'am," One of the police officers said as he put a hand gently on her shoulder to keep her from moving. "You've taken a pretty bad beating and the paramedics will be here to take you to the hospital in a moment. Your son is all ready on the way there."

Then paramedics came into the room with a stretcher, she must have blacked out again because the next thing she knew she was riding in the ambulance, then she lost consciousness for a third and final time and didn't wake up until the next morning.

She awoke feeling sore all over, but it didn't hurt as bad as she thought it would, like the pain was being dulled and her mouth felt like it was full of cotton. She saw she was in a hospital bed and also that she had an I.V. tube running out of her arm. She assumed she must be on some medication for the pain.

There was someone in the room with her. When her eyes focused on him, she saw that it was Patrick. He was sitting in a chair beside her bed and smiling at her, but she could see concern in his eyes. It was still strange to see Patrick showing any kind of sympathy for her, but he had changed over the years, mostly thanks to Sarah, his wife. He seemed ashamed for the way things had been when they were kids and had apologized to her on several occasions for not being the older brother she needed, he seemed to be sincerely trying to redeem himself. Aileen had forgiven Patrick for the way he had been in the past and was proud of the way he changed, but she could never forget.

"Colin, where is he?" Aileen said. She couldn't believe how raspy her voice sounded. Patrick handed her a cup of water and patted her hand.

"He's all right, Leena" Patrick said. "He's in pediatrics, Sarah is with him. He took some rough treatment from that

bastard, but the doctor said he would make a full recovery. He's a tough lad."

Only then after finding out the condition of her son did Aileen allow herself to drink the water her brother had given her. The cool drink felt like liquid satin as it cooled her dry and raw throat. "I want to see him." Aileen said.

"You will, in time, but you need to do some healing of your own. That son of a bitch broke two of your ribs." Patrick said. "You will be fine as well, though you need to let yourself recover."

"I'm fine enough as it is now. He needs his mother. He needs to know I'm here for him." Aileen said with determination.

"I know, Leena, I know, but if you could just rest awhile..."

"Now, Pat, please!" Aileen said.

Patrick hesitated but finally he said, "Okay, I'll see what I can do."

"Thank you, Pat." Aileen said.

Patrick nodded and made eye contact with her conveying he understood how badly she needed to be with her boy, and then left the room to track down her doctor.

A few hours later, Aileen found herself being taken by wheelchair to the pediatrics ward to see Colin. It took a bit of cajoling with the doctors and nurses, but eventually they relented and told Aileen she could have a brief visit with her son. They had him in a private room, and as the orderly rolled her into it she immediately laid eyes on her son. Her heart broke as she looked upon him. She was wheeled right up to the side of his bed and she saw how bad the damage was. Aileen couldn't hold in the loud sob that escaped from her lips as she put her hand over her mouth. Tears started flowing down her cheeks.

Sarah was still there with Colin. Sarah had always been a tactful and empathic person and without a word she placed her hand on Aileen's shoulder giving her a gentle squeeze of support then left so Aileen could be alone with her son.

Colin was asleep. He looked so small and precious; that he was also covered in bruises and bandages was obscene. She forced herself to look at her son. The angry red and purple welts covering his face and arms, the swollen eyes and lip, the I.V. fluids hooked up to his arms sustaining his life, she took this all in and wept. She folded her arms over the guardrail of the bed, laid her head down on them, and wept

like she had never wept before. How could someone do this to such an innocent little boy? How could she have let it happen?

The people who had been most influential to her in her life were running through her mind; her father, her mother, and Fred. They never once admitted that what they did was wrong and Aileen hadn't believed it was. If she was beaten, she had done something bad because it was somehow always her fault. She thought she deserved everything she got. Sometimes the ones who loved you had to hurt you. They had to show you how wrong you were and all you could do was try to be as good as you could be so they didn't feel the need to hurt you. Aileen had always believed that deep down, but now seeing Colin in this condition, the sweetest boy she had ever known with not one ounce of malice in his heart, seeing her son like this shook Aileen's beliefs to the core.

How could a loved one do this? Colin didn't deserve what happened to him, and if he didn't deserve it, maybe she hadn't deserved it either. She felt betrayed. Betrayed by what she had been taught, betrayed by the people in her life who were supposed to have loved her, but instead had abused her. But more than that, she felt she in turn had betrayed Colin by letting this happen and, by far, that was the worst feeling she ever felt. It pierced her to the soul. She betrayed him just like her mother had betrayed her by letting her father beat her so badly. Now she understood. She

understood what love really was. It wasn't a power trip and it wasn't acquiescence out of fear, it was tenderness, kindness, devotion, and above all else it was trust. Trust that the ones you love would never do anything to hurt you and were always looking after your best interests. Trust that the ones who loved you would always do their best to protect you no matter what the cost. Trust that you could feel safe with someone who loved you.

Aileen reached out and took Colin's tiny hand in her own. She looked at her son, bruised and broken. He would recover physically and at that moment she vowed he would recover emotionally as well. "I promise you Colin," Aileen whispered to the sleeping child, "I promise I will never ever let this happen again! I will always be there for you, to love you and cherish you. No matter what you will always have one person in the world that you can count on, someone who will fight to her last breath to keep you safe! Even if you never forgive me for allowing this to happen, I promise to always love you more than anyone else ever will. You are the one thing on this planet that I live for, you are the joy in my life, and I swear that I will never let another day go by without you feeling how special you are to me!"

After she and Colin had both recovered enough to be discharged from the hospital, Aileen divorced Fred and was able to get sole custody of their son. She changed her last name back to Reilly and she and Colin were granted a restraining order against Fred. He was brought up on

charges for his assault on them and was sentenced to two years in prison, but he was out on parole in less than a year.

The restraining order didn't stop Fred from coming into contact with Aileen and trying to win back her heart, but now Aileen's heart was totally devoted to her son and she would not tolerate Fred's attempts to charm his way back into their lives. When charm didn't work, Fred got mean, but luckily during that time Patrick and Sarah had opened their home to Aileen and Colin giving her a place to stay until she was able to get on her feet. When she had been married to Fred, they had always lived paycheck to paycheck, and after her divorce she found she had no means of supporting herself. Patrick, the brother who had once tormented her as a child, now became their provider and protector, and was very good at the job. Fred never got within ten feet of Aileen or Colin when Patrick was around. Whatever harm Patrick had done to her when they were kids he more than made up for now, he had become the friend and big brother to Aileen she always wished he would be. She and Colin owed him and Sarah so much for helping them through this time.

When Aileen heard Fred had been killed in a car crash, she felt saddened that a man she had once loved was gone and that her son had to hear that his father had died, but more than anything she felt relieved. She was relieved that Fred had not taken out anyone with him when he went—he had been driving drunk, had fallen asleep, and smashed into a cement wall—and she was relieved that he would never hurt

her or Colin again. She realized that the three people she had depended on most in her life, and yet had hurt her so badly, were gone for good. She didn't feel happy or sad about this realization; the scars these people had given her, emotional as well as physical, would stay with her for the rest of her life but at least now she felt a certain sense of closure.

While Aileen and Colin were living with Patrick and his family, Aileen entered the work force again. She started by helping out at Pat's pub, but then she got the job at the bank. Eventually she was making enough money to get an apartment of her own.

Through all that time Aileen strived to keep her promise to Colin. There had been some rough spots when she didn't always know what to do, but she always put the best interests of her son first in her life. She was always there for him and did her best to protect him from being hurt in any way. They had always been close, but after Aileen made her promise, it bonded them even tighter.

However, as Colin began getting closer to adulthood, he was spending more and more time away from home. Without anyone else really in her life, Aileen had been lonely. Then Ben showed up and she thought she found a new companion. No matter what, Colin would always come first in her life and she'd be there whenever he needed her. He came first over Ben, over herself, over anyone. But when he

didn't need her was it so wrong to indulge herself in something that made her happy? That was how she rationalized her guilt before, but now any happiness she had felt had turned to ashes.

After this debacle with Ben, the full ramifications of what she did impressed on her mind and she agonized over the thought that she may have broken her promise. What would she do if Colin ever found out what she did with Ben? How would he take it? Would he ever forgive her? Aileen couldn't stand the thought of hurting Colin and now, however unintentional, she may have done so. And yet, as long as Colin never found out, he would never be hurt by what she did. She would just have to see that he never did.

CHAPTER 3: A STORM OF WORDS

For weeks after she found out the truth about Ben, Aileen wallowed in self pity and self loathing. She had done wrong and she was paying for it. She kept up a brave front whenever she was with Colin or other people, but every night she cried herself to sleep. The month of November went by like a slow agonizing time of incarceration, she was imprisoned by pain. Thanksgiving eventually came and she and Colin were invited over to Patrick's for dinner. They accepted the offer and Aileen acted like everything was normal, but the holiday barely even registered with her.

However, a few days later something happened that shook her out of her obsession over her own inner turmoil.

The first of December was on a Monday this year and it was the day school resumed after Thanksgiving break. Aileen had been home from work for about an hour and was preparing dinner. Colin wasn't home, but basketball season had started and he had practice on Mondays. He usually got home around four-thirty on days he had practice, however, it was now past six and Aileen was beginning to worry. When Colin finally came in through the front door he slammed it closed...hard. She could tell immediately that something was wrong. He had a pained expression on his face that made her wince just by looking at him.

"Honey, are you all right?" Aileen asked, even though she could tell something was clearly wrong.

Colin just stared at her for a moment, as if debating with himself whether to tell her anything or not, and then he spoke. "Two years! Two fucking years we been going out and she dumps me!" Colin shouted then stormed off to his room. He never used foul language in front of her, that he did so now was just another strong indication of how distressed he was.

Oh no! Aileen thought. No, not this. She rushed to Colin's room. She found her son sitting on his bed with his back up

against the wall, one leg tucked under himself, and staring out into space.

"Colin? What happened?" Aileen asked as she sat down next to him.

"What happened?" Colin repeated in a neutral calm voice. "What happened was I walked into the cafeteria today at school and there I see Seth sitting next to Sheryl with his arm around her. I asked him what he thought he was doing and he told me matter-of-factly that he was having lunch with his girlfriend

"I was ready to smack him upside the head for saying that but then I see Sheryl. She has this embarrassed look on her face, she looks at me and says she's sorry and she was going to tell me she was seeing Seth now. I just left. I've been wandering around the city for the rest of the day.

"So that's it. Two years with her down the drain. I thought we meant something to each other, but I guess it didn't mean as much to her as it did to me." Colin reported the entire series of events without showing any emotion, but Aileen could tell he was torn up inside.

"She told me she loved me." Colin said softly.

"Oh my dear, sweet, boy!" Aileen said and she took her son in her arms.

"Mom, please, I'm not going to let myself get upset over this more than I have to." Colin said in a shaky voice. "I'm not going to cry."

"Then let me cry for you." Aileen said with tears all ready flowing from her eyes. Her son was trying to be brave, but she knew (Oh, how she knew!) how he really felt. It hurt her just as bad, if not worse, to know what he was feeling. Colin didn't say anything else, but he didn't pull away, so Aileen just sat there holding her son and cried.

How could Sheryl do this? She had thought more highly of her than to hurt Colin like this. Of all the people Sheryl could have left him for, why Seth? The hairs raised on the back of her neck as she realized the answer to that question. Because Seth was the only one who could have taken her away. She had no doubt he was the main force behind the break up.

Seth was Patrick and Sarah's boy, Colin's cousin. They were the same age; Colin was just a couple months older. Seth was Patrick all over again, the Patrick Aileen remembered as a child, that is. Except maybe Seth was even meaner and more devious. When Aileen and Colin had moved in with Patrick

and his family, it seemed wonderful at first. Colin loved his cousins, Seth, Morgan, and Kyle, and got along with them quite well. Being raised an only child Colin had to cope with a certain solitude, having the constant companionship of his cousins made him overjoyed.

Seth and Colin, being so close in age, also became the closest of friends. They liked to do a lot of the same things together, sports, video games, and getting into general mischief. However, there was also the sadistic side to Seth and a need to dominate. Seth was the oldest of his siblings and was used to being the one in charge, meaning it was his right to tease and torture his sister Morgan and his brother Kyle whenever he felt like it, much like Patrick had done with Aileen when they were kids. Colin, being who he was, presented a challenge to Seth's power.

It was subtle at first; Seth would try to persuade Colin what game to play, or what to watch on television. Colin was a fair player, and he knew this was Seth's territory, so he would most often acquiesce to Seth's wishes. But if Colin was right in the middle of playing a video game or watching a television program and Seth ordered him to stop, Colin would balk him. Seth was the more aggressive one and Colin more laidback, but when push came to shove, Colin would not back down when Seth became overbearing. When Seth tried to push Colin around, Colin pushed back, Seth soon learned that his cousin couldn't be intimidated like his brother or sister could. That Colin couldn't be forced by Seth

to do what he wanted grated on him, it got under his skin and began to fester.

It exacerbated matters when Seth took out his frustration by being even crueler to Morgan and Kyle. He would tease them ruthlessly and when no adult was around they would naturally turn to Colin. Colin would protect his younger cousins and not stand for Seth's brutal teasing of them. This only infuriated Seth further, but soon he learned how to get back.

Seth became very adversarial with Colin. Whatever opinion Colin had, Seth's had to be the opposite. If Colin liked a particular movie, sports team, song, or whatever, Seth detested it. If Seth beat Colin at a sport or game, Colin would never hear the end of it, if Colin beat Seth, Seth would shrug it off with an attitude of insignificance. Colin and Seth were pretty evenly matched, and Colin welcomed the competition, but all the ridiculing started to wear Colin down. When Seth enlisted Morgan and Kyle in his campaign of taunting, it really began to hurt.

After all Colin had done for his little cousins in being their protector, he had thought he earned their loyalty, but it was not so. Seth was their brother and Colin was only a cousin. Whatever Seth said, Morgan and Kyle would agree with him, wherever Seth led, they would follow and there was nothing Colin could do to change that. So in effect it became

three against one, three people ridiculing Colin at every turn. Colin had a pretty thick skin, and he could handle the name calling and opinion bashing for a time, but Seth was relentless. He would not give up until he broke Colin, and because Morgan and Kyle were under Seth's influence, they kept it up too.

You could insult Colin over and over, and the first ninety-nine times he would just shrug it off, but on the hundredth time you could see it would begin to sting. Because Colin had refused to bow down to Seth's will, Seth had in effect made Colin feel like an outsider. Colin was isolated again, but now it was far worse, because now every day he saw what he was missing out on. Seth's policy of isolation and derision started to take its toll on Colin.

When Aileen realized the animosity that was developing between Colin and Seth, and how Seth was turning the littler ones against Colin, she tried her best to curtail it. She tried talking to Patrick and Sarah about it, but she couldn't be too direct. It wasn't like she could just go to the people who were providing a roof over her head and say; "Hey, your kid is a sadistic bastard, could you tell him to back off?" They understood that their son was a bit of a bully, but Sarah was a kind hearted person, and through his love and devotion to her, Patrick had become that way too. He hadn't forgotten the way he used to be, but still, Seth was his boy and he couldn't accept how mean he could actually be. Whatever reprimands Seth received didn't deter him.

Aileen tried intervening between Colin and Seth, but she had to be careful not to overstep her bounds in admonishing Seth. For some reason Aileen felt Seth held some animosity towards her since even before she moved in with Patrick. He could hide it well, but every now and then she would turn around and catch the boy staring daggers at her. When she started living with Patrick and his family it seemed the boy was just waiting for her to scold him so he could play the "you're not my mother" card. He took any opportunity to indicate to his parents that she was prejudiced against him. It seemed like he was actually trying to build the tension between her and Patrick.

Aileen was desperate to keep Colin's spirit up, but she couldn't alienate her brother and sister-in-law to do that. She had to keep things amiable while they were providing shelter for her and her son. Whenever a conflict arose, she had to act impartial and chastise all the children equally, even when she knew who the primary instigator was. However, she always made sure to go to Colin in private and hug him and tell him how much she loved him and always would. She would comfort Colin whenever she saw he was feeling down and spend as much time with him as she could so he wouldn't feel lonely or ostracized. But she couldn't spend all her time with him, because she knew the most important thing was getting Colin away from Seth before his spirit was totally crushed. Aileen could see signs that Seth's approval was becoming important to her son. That's when

Aileen got the job at the bank and once she was making enough money she and Colin moved to an apartment complex close by.

Aileen felt it would do the children some good to put a little distance between them, but not too much. Patrick and Sarah had helped her through a very hard time in her life and she would always be grateful and love them for that. They were the only family she had and she needed them, so did Colin. In time, she hoped, Colin and Seth would put their enmity behind them like she and Pat had. Whether Seth ever warmed up to her wasn't as important.

For a while it appeared as if Seth and Colin had made amends. They still saw each other regularly, they went to the same schools, and were part of the same circle of friends, but living apart from one another gave them a needed respite. They were no longer suffocating in each others presence. An air of competition remained between the two, at times it seemed like the only thing that mattered to either of them, they competed for everything, but eventually their competitive spirit appeared to become more genial than antagonistic. It looked as if they had become friends again.

But Seth had never really forgiven Colin. Aileen realized that now. All this time he must have harbored resentment towards Colin for challenging his dominance. Seeing how happy Colin was with Sheryl must have been too much for

Seth to bear. Sheryl wasn't innocent in all this, Aileen knew that, but she also knew that Seth had grown into a handsome man and he had always been a persuasive individual. By threat or by charm, he usually got what he wanted. Seth had a fair chance of winning over just about any girl he wanted, but he sought after Sheryl. Whether or not Seth had actual feelings for Sheryl, Aileen didn't know, but either way, she was sure his prime motivation for stealing her from Colin was Colin had her, and he didn't.

* * *

Colin entered a deep depression for the next few weeks. Aileen strived to cheer him up, but it was to no avail. It was a chore just getting him up in the mornings to go to school. He limited his contact with Seth as much as possible. Aileen could see it hurt him too bad to see the person who had taken Sheryl away from him. No doubt Seth would taunt him whenever he could, that was just the way he was. Colin quit the school's basketball team, of course he and Seth had both been on it.

He stopped working for Patrick, Seth didn't work at his father's restaurant, but he was there a lot. It was a shame, when Colin had turned eighteen Patrick had promoted him to server and he had loved the new job. The loss of income from his job was a blowback as well. Aileen hadn't had to give Colin an allowance since he had started working

officially for Patrick at fourteen. She couldn't afford to give him one now, but since all Colin did was stay in his room most of the time, he didn't seem to have a need for money anyway.

The deep state of misery he was in worried her terribly, worried her to a point where her own problems didn't even register with her any longer. All she cared about was relieving her son's sadness. She tried to snap him out of it. She made him his favorite meals for dinner, she kept company with him when he apathetically watched his television programs, she talked with him trying to spur his interest in any subject, but nothing worked.

It was a Friday night and Colin was moping in his room like he had been for most of the past few weeks. Christmas was next Thursday, less than a week away. She and Colin usually spent Christmas day with Patrick and his family, but the way Colin was now, having to see Seth on that day, who would undoubtedly rub things in, would be torture for him. She couldn't do that to him, so she didn't know what she was going to do for the holiday this year.

Aileen had always tried to make Christmas time special for her son. She always wanted to see her boy happy, but making sure he was happy on this day was especially important to her. In the home she grew up in, she never understood what was so special about Christmas. Her family

went to church and everyone talked about it being the day their savior was born, a day for peace on Earth and good will toward men, a day of warmth, love, giving, and togetherness. People talked about having "Christmas Spirit" but Aileen didn't know what that was either.

Even though they went to mass on Christmas Eve, had a Christmas tree, most of the time even with a few presents underneath, and mom would cook a reasonably nice dinner, it all seemed superficial to Aileen. It was like they only did these things out of ritual. Underneath it all nothing was different. Dad still got drunk and was just as likely to beat her if she wasn't careful, Mom was just as impassive as ever, and back then, Patrick was just as mean. If the spirit of Christmas was supposed to come from within, she never saw any evidence of it affecting her family.

Then when she had Colin and Christmas came around, she was determined for his sake to understand the true meaning of the day. Every year she put up decorations, played the music, bought meager gifts with the little money she had managed to save, and told Colin all the stories she knew about Santa and the reindeer, and Jesus and the manger and everything. He absorbed it all up and loved it. Every year as Christmas approached Colin would get so excited. It didn't matter if he got a little or a lot, he enjoyed the entire experience. The idea of Christmas was a treat for him. Then on Christmas day, she would watch Colin open his presents and she would take delight in the joy he got at getting the

gifts. The family would spend the entire day together Aileen, Colin, Patrick, Sarah, their kids, and Fred as well, during the years she was with him. Aileen's attention always stayed focused on Colin though. If anyone was infused with the spirit of the season, it was Colin. It didn't matter if no one else had the spirit in them, he had it in him. Seeing the joy of Christmas in Colin made Aileen feel the joy as well. She finally understood the magic of Christmas.

But now it didn't look like he would have much joy this year. He was just hurting too much. Why did this have to happen so close to the Christmas? Aileen was pondering what to do about the holidays this year when someone knocked on the front door. That was strange. No one had beeped her on the intercom and she hadn't buzzed anyone in. Colin had a key to the building, but he also had one to the apartment, besides he was in his room. Patrick had keys to the building and apartment as well but that was only in case of an emergency. He always used the intercom to announce his presence when he came over.

Aileen went to the door, "Who is it?" she asked.

"Aileen?" said a deep, masculine voice from out in the hallway. The voice sounded a bit familiar.

"Yes?" she said.

"It's...it's Ben." Aileen was shocked. She couldn't believe it was him.

"Ben? What are you doing here?"

"I have to talk to you, will you let me in?"

"I don't think so Ben, I told you, there's nothing else for us to talk about."

"Yes there is. Please Aileen...could you...will you at least open the door? Please?"

Aileen sighed and unlocked the door, but left the chain on. The door opened about two inches before the chain grew taut. She looked through the opening and saw for the first time the real Ben. He was a little taller than average, he was balding, what little hair he had left was black going gray, and he had a sizable pot belly. Giving him my phone number was bad enough, but giving him my address was pure idiocy! she thought.

"I've left my wife." Ben said.

"So?" Aileen said.

"I'm sorry I lied to you, it won't happen again. Aileen, I love you, I want to be with you."

"What do you expect me to do Ben? Fall into your arms and tell you all is forgiven? I don't even know you. The person I thought you were was all lies. Even if there was a chance for you and me I would need time to get to know the real you."

"So are you saying we have a chance?"

"I don't know...I don't think so. Too much has happened, I just can't trust you."

"Have you met someone else?"

"Ben, look, this really isn't a good time...I'm dealing with some other problems here."

"You have met someone else, haven't you? I knew you were a slut!"

"Ben, just leave and don't come back!"

"No! I came here to talk to you and that's what I'm gonna do!"

"We're done talking! Goodbye Ben!" Aileen began to shut the door but just before it closed all the way Ben pounded into it. The chain ripped out of the wall and the door flew wide open. Ben marched into the apartment.

"We're not done talking until I say we're done!" Ben said.

"Get out of here now!" Aileen yelled.

"Try and make me!" Ben grabbed Aileen by the shoulders. The sour smell of beer was on his breath. Fear raced through her and it felt like the blood in her veins had turned into ice water.

"Get your hands off me!!!" Aileen screamed. Ben covered her mouth with his hand. Aileen tried to kick him but he shook her hard, Aileen's vision blurred and for a moment she thought she was seeing Fred before her instead of Ben. No! This can't be happening! Aileen thought.

"Don't be rough, or you'll find out I can be rough too." Ben said. Tears started to roll down the sides of her cheeks.

"Mom? What's going on?" Aileen twisted her head around to see Colin had emerged from his room. She wanted to scream at him to run and get help, but Ben's hand still covered her mouth.

"What are you doing to my mom?!!" Colin demanded. No, Colin, please don't confront him! Go get help! Aileen thought as she cried.

"So if she's your mom, you must be Colin!" Ben said. "I figured you'd be out with your girl, since you usually are on weekends."

"You figured wrong, now get your hands off her you son of a bitch!" Colin shouted.

Ben looked back and forth between Colin and Aileen for a minute and then his eyes widened as a thought occurred to him. "Don't tell me you're fulfilling your fantasies and he's the guy?" Ben said to Aileen.

Aileen shook her head frantically trying to keep Ben from saying any more, she knew where he was going with this.

"I told you! Get your hands off her!" Colin shouted again.

"Did Mommy ever tell you about how she likes to pretend she is fucking her son?" Ben said. NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! Aileen's screamed in her mind.

"What...?" Colin said.

"She don't need me anymore, that it? She fucking you for real now?" Ben sneered. Aileen managed to get an arm free and she brought it up and scratched Ben in the face before he could say anymore, not that mattered, the damage was done. She scratched him right over the eye and Ben took his hand away from her mouth to cover it.

"You fucking bitch!" Ben said, and with his other hand he backhanded her across the face so hard she fell to the floor.

"Mom!" Colin yelled and flew over to her.

"The whore deserved it!" Ben said.

Colin grabbed Ben and pushed him up against the wall. "I'm calling the police on you, you crazy mother fucker, and you better not say another word or you'll be going to the hospital before you'll be going to jail." Colin stated.

Ben started laughing. "You're calling me a mother fucker? That's too funny!"

"Shut up, old man!" Colin said.

"Who are you calling an 'old man'? I'll kick your fucking ass!" Ben said. He pushed Colin away from him and then took a swing at him. Colin easily ducked it and then shoved Ben hard back up against the wall, so hard the back of Ben's head hit the wall and he passed out.

Seeing that Ben was no longer a threat, Colin knelt down to take hold of Aileen. "Mom? Mom are you all right?" Colin asked.

Aileen wasn't all right. She could never be all right again. Colin knew! Oh, God! Colin knew now! How could she live with herself for letting this happen? This was all her fault! She had brought this all down on herself! Why couldn't she have ended things with Ben when he first started talking about mother and son incest? Because she was perverted. She deserved what she got, but what about Colin? He didn't deserve any of this and she had broken her promise to him. How could she ever face him again? It was all over, she had ruined her relationship with her son, she had hurt him, the one thing she vowed she wouldn't do. She was a horrible person.

Aileen couldn't stop shaking. She hugged herself tight and still the trembles wouldn't stop. Tears were streaming down her face, and all she could think was how she had finally lost everything that was important to her. Aileen felt dizzy and nauseous. She couldn't move, her body wouldn't respond to her commands. Her mind felt trapped in her body, like an animal trapped in a pen clawing frantically at the walls to escape. She would do anything to escape from this moment, it felt like her mind was going rip away from her body. Oh my God! I'm losing it! Aileen thought. I'm losing my mind! She felt herself beginning to drift away. She could feel herself losing her grip on reality. She felt like she was being pulled toward a void of darkness. Just let it happen, Aileen thought to herself. Life is filled with too much turmoil. I've had enough reality, maybe by losing my mind I'll find peace...

"Mom?"

What's left for me in the real world anyway?

"Mom, please come back..."

What good is being sane when the world is insane?

"Mom, I need you, please be okay..." She heard his voice as if from far off in the distance. "Mom, I love you, I need you, please come back to me! I don't know what I'd do if I ever lost you." She knew that voice. It belonged to...someone...someone important. "Mom, please, it's going to be okay..." It seemed to be calling her back. Back to where? Back to where there was pain. Aileen didn't want anymore pain. It seemed she had had enough pain. "Mom, please..." She was still being called back, pulled back. Colin! That was who the voice belonged to! Colin needed her! For Colin she would face any pain.

Aileen followed the voice like a beacon in the darkness. She followed the voice back to suffering and chaos. But...there was also warmth and love. She heard it in his call and when she opened her eyes the first thing she saw were Colin's deep brown eyes brimming with moisture. "Mom, are you okay?" Colin asked.

Aileen gasped and a loud sob escaped. Her jaw hurt and her throat felt dry like she hadn't used it for a while. "Oh, Colin! I'm so sorry!" she managed to get out.

"Everything's going to be okay, Mom. I love you!"

"Oh Colin! I love you so much and I'm so sorry!" Aileen clung to her son desperately, her hands clutched to his shirt in vice-

like grips. He was a rock she could hold on to. He was an anchor for her sanity. She didn't want to let go of him. She had been on the edge of madness, the insidious nature of which had actually made her yearn for it. She didn't realize how frightening that was until now that she had returned from the brink. She would have braved anything to get back to Colin though, no matter the cost. Aileen buried her face in his chest and let out all her agony, all her torment, and all her terror through heartrending sobs. Colin just held her tight. He held her until she had let it all out.

* * *

Patrick set a steaming cup of coffee in front of Aileen. She placed both her hands around the ceramic cup, letting them absorb some of the warmth before she took a sip. It was a fiercely cold day outside and Aileen had only just come into Pat's pub. She could feel the hot liquid flowing through her body, warming her from the inside out.

"Ahhhhh thanks, Pat," Aileen said.

"No problem," Patrick said as he sat down at the table across from Aileen. "How are you doing?" He asked.

"Humph," Aileen muttered, "It was a pretty rough weekend but I'm doing better now, I think." When the police arrived

Friday night to take her statement and take Ben into custody they told her she would have to wait until Monday for him to be arraigned. But she had at least gotten a temporary restraining order against him in case he made bail before today. Patrick had come by on Saturday to visit and so he had learned about most of what happened the previous night.

"I just got back from the courthouse and dropped Colin off at school so he could get in a half day." Aileen said. "He didn't want to go but I made him, he felt uneasy leaving me, he's been by my side all weekend." Colin had to be at Ben's arraignment this morning since he was an integral witness but Aileen felt he shouldn't miss any more school than he absolutely had to. Aileen had to take off from work today as well, but when she called her supervisor at the bank and explained the situation, there wasn't any problem.

"I see," Patrick said. "So, how did things go today?" Patrick had volunteered to accompany Aileen to court for moral support, but they had to be there early in the morning so she had insisted he didn't have to come. However, Patrick did make her promise to stop by the pub afterwards for a cup of coffee and to fill him in on what happened.

Aileen sighed, "He got six months probation for breaking and entering and assault. He didn't have much of a prior record, a couple counts of disorderly conduct and a few

complaints from his wife, but she never pressed charges, and none of that happened in this state, so there was nothing much they could do. The judge did make the restraining order permanent though." Aileen dropped her head into her arms which were folded on the table.

"I can't believe this is happening again!" Aileen groaned. "I am such a damn fool! For ten years I didn't get seriously involved with any man, and then when I finally do, over the internet no less, it's Fred all over again! I am so ashamed!"

Patrick reached across the table and put his hand on her shoulder. "Leena, don't be so hard on yourself. You're the victim here, that guy Ben had no right to do what he did. You can't blame yourself for getting chummy with some guy you met playing cards on the internet. It's human nature to want to seek contact and make new friends, but he is the one who abused your friendship. I'll grant you that you've had more than your fair share of bad relationships, but that's not your fault. You did nothing wrong."

Aileen looked up and smiled at her brother. "Thanks, Pat. That's nice of you to say, but I still can't help feeling that there is something wrong with me that makes me keep attracting these losers." Patrick didn't know everything that had gone on between her and Ben, and Aileen wasn't going to tell him, but she didn't care if he found out. She didn't really give a damn who found out now, because now Colin knew and it

was only his opinion of her she cared about. They hadn't talked much to each other since Friday night, not about anything important. Colin had been sticking close to her, but he stayed silent and brooding. Aileen was terrified of what Colin was thinking about her and that things would never be the same between them. They were going to have to talk things out and soon, they would have no peace as long as the issue was there hanging over their heads. It had to be resolved one way or another because she couldn't go on much longer the way things were.

"There's nothing wrong with you Leena, you've just had a run of bad luck, that will change and things will get better, you'll see." Patrick said.

"I hope you're right," Aileen said, but she was doubtful. For her the only way things could get better was if she made things right between her and Colin because that was all that mattered. But she didn't know how to accomplish that.

"I'm always right," Patrick grinned. Aileen gave her brother a dubious look.

Aileen finished her coffee and said, "Thanks for the hot drink and the pep talk, Pat, but it's time I get going." Aileen got up and started buttoning up her coat.

"Any time, Leena," Patrick said. Then as Aileen began to head for the exit, Patrick said, "You and Colin really aren't coming over for Christmas this year?"

"I'd love to Pat, you know how much I enjoy spending the holidays with you and Sarah and the kids, but Colin is still hurting from his break up with Sheryl, and now this other matter on top of it. I've never seen him this despondent before. Being around Seth right now just adds salt to his wounds and I can't do that to him, not on Christmas." Aileen wasn't sure if Colin even wanted to be with her on Christmas, but there was no way she was going to leave him alone. She had to set things right between them somehow.

Patrick sighed, "I understand. I am so sorry about what happened between him and Sheryl. You know I love Seth, but he's been walking around looking so smug lately, I've felt like slapping that look right off his face. Sometimes I think Dad wasn't all wrong in his method of parenting."

Aileen went rigid at the mention of their father. Patrick must have comprehended the look on her face because he immediately apologized. "I'm sorry. Of course I didn't mean that. That was stupid of me to say. I can't believe I even brought him up."

Aileen managed a smile, "It's ok Pat, that's all water under the bridge."

Patrick nodded in agreement. "So, what are you and Colin going to do for Christmas then?" He asked.

Aileen knit her brows. "I wish I knew," she said. "I've been racking my brain over that question for the past week or so. I suppose we'll just have to have Christmas at the apartment and make do the best we can like we've done in the past. I was hoping the spirit of the holiday season would help snap Colin out of this funk he's in, but the apartment has felt so oppressive lately, there's been such an air of gloom hanging about it, I don't see that happening. I wish I could get him away from there for a few days, but I really can't afford to take us anywhere."

Patrick's eyes brightened, "Say, I've got an idea," he said. "I don't have anyone staying at the cabin over the holidays this year, why don't you and Patrick go up there for Christmas?" A few years ago Patrick bought some land alongside a mountain lake close to Dubois, Pennsylvania and built a snug little cabin up there. Aileen's brother was an avid fisherman and nature lover, but he knew he would also be bringing his wife and kids up there with him and what he considered peace and tranquility, they mostly considered boredom and monotony. So he supplemented the cabin with some luxury items like a lavish entertainment center with

large screen television, a satellite dish, a game room, and a spa with a Jacuzzi and Sauna. It was Patrick's dream for him and Sarah to live up there permanently when he retired but for now he settled on spending a couple weeks there with his family three or four times a year, and the rest of the time he rented the cabin out to help finance it.

Aileen and Colin had been invited up to the cabin several times, and she loved it up there. "Oh, Patrick, do you really mean it?"

"Sure I do, consider it a Christmas gift," Patrick said.

"That sounds perfect! This could be just the change he needs." Aileen said hugging her brother. This might actually be what they both needed. Having fresh air and fresh surroundings, and some time for undistracted talk, maybe she and Colin could make a fresh start. Aileen felt hope burgeoning inside her. "Oh thank you, Patrick!" she said.

"Your welcome, Leena," Patrick said with a big grin.

Aileen gave her brother a peck on the cheek. "You've become a really good guy, Pat. I'm proud of you." Then she kissed Patrick on his other cheek, "That one's for Sarah, because she deserves a lot of the credit for who you've become."

Patrick rolled his eyes and smiled, "You don't need to tell me that, she reminds me every day."

CHAPTER 4: A WORLD OF THEIR OWN

When Aileen told Colin the news that they would be spending Christmas up at the cabin he seemed pretty amiable to the idea, apparently the thought of getting away from the apartment for a few days appealed to him as well. It was a four hour drive from Philadelphia to the mountain cabin and they planned on leaving early in the morning on Christmas Eve day, but it wasn't until slightly before noon before they were actually on their way. Not only had Patrick given them the use of his cabin, he also lent them his SUV. He said he didn't need it if he was staying in the city, and he would feel better knowing they had his four wheel drive vehicle to navigate the mountain roads. Colin was better at handling this type of vehicle than she was, so he drove.

The drive up was actually quite pleasant. The change of scenery as they drove from the city where so many of the buildings were festively decorated, to the country with its natural elegance, then up into the majestic beauty of the mountains was marvelous to observe. The radio was playing continuous Christmas carols which helped put Aileen in a holiday mood. Colin seemed to be enjoying himself, on the surface at least. When a particular song that he liked came

on he commented on it, he also talked about their previous visits to the cabin. They had always gone in the summer before, he talked about how he had swam out to the island in the middle of the lake and speculated on whether the lake would be frozen enough now that he could walk to it.

Colin seemed to be in a cheery mood, but Aileen knew that he was still very troubled, just as she was. They really needed to talk. A couple of times Aileen almost started a serious discussion, but then decided to just hold off until they were actually at the cabin. She wanted to pretend that everything was still normal between them, just for a while on the drive up, after they talked, their relationship might be so damaged that she wouldn't even be able to pretend any longer. She rested her head on his shoulder and drifted off into a fitful sleep

They arrived there in the late afternoon. The cabin looked bigger than it had the last time they were there. It was just the two of them this time. It was very cold up in the mountains and the lake was indeed frozen over, but Aileen wouldn't recommend walking across it, the ice looked pretty thin in places. The air was brisk, but it was also clean and refreshing. Stark trees laid bare for the winter intermingled with evergreen ones all over the landscape. There were patches of snow on the ground and the mountain tops that could be seen through the clouds were all white capped. More snow was coming too, the sky was overcast, but more than that, she could taste it in the air.

"We better get the car unpacked. It looks like it's going to start snowing soon." Aileen said. Colin agreed with her and started unloading the vehicle.

By the time they got everything inside the sun was setting and snowflakes had begun to lightly drift down from the sky. Aileen thought she might as well start making dinner. Among the groceries they brought up to the cabin were a ham and a turkey. She decided she would bake the ham tonight and save the turkey for tomorrow's dinner.

Colin went out the back door to get some wood for the fire place. In about fifteen minutes he came back inside holding an armful of logs. He was covered with snow. Aileen looked out the kitchen window and saw that flakes were now falling furiously from the sky. "Definitely a white Christmas this year!" Aileen said.

"I know, it's perfect!" Colin said as he shook off the snow. "I love having a white Christmas!" Colin headed into the living room towards the fireplace. "The woodshed is stocked full," he called back to her, "so we can keep this place nice and toasty and I won't have to worry about chopping any wood."

"That's great!" Aileen said, and then she went back to making dinner. About an hour later she had their Christmas Eve

dinner prepared and ready to serve. Aileen brought the ham out to the dining room table, she saw that Colin had made an inviting fire; the living room was all ready growing warm. Aileen also noticed, with surprise, a small Christmas tree in the corner. Colin was standing next to it and smiling proudly.

"We can't have Christmas without a tree," he said. It looked like Colin had chopped off one of the fuller branches of one of the evergreen trees outside then brought it inside and strung it with some colorful lights and a few ornaments. He even had a little stand for it so it wouldn't fall over. Underneath he had placed the wrapped presents they had brought up with them from home. He must have been planning this before they left because Aileen recognized the decorations from their tree at home, especially the star on top. "What do you think?" Colin asked.

The tree wasn't grand, it wasn't extravagant, and it wasn't needlessly ornate, it was a simple, charming little tree. Charlie Brown, eat your heart out, Aileen thought as she smiled. It was perfect for their private little Christmas. "I think it's wonderful," Aileen said choking up a bit, moved by Colin's gesture.

They sat down at the table to enjoy their meal. The lights were turned down low so most of their light was coming from the Christmas tree, the crackling fire, and the candles

Aileen had lit on the table for a final touch. Through the windows they could see the snow continuing to fall outside, and inside, the cabin had indeed become toasty. It all led to a very cozy atmosphere.

As they ate, Colin lapsed back into detached silence. He was brooding again. Aileen had had enough of it and she knew it was finally time to clear the air between them. "Colin, please talk to me," she said. "I know there must be a lot on your mind, if you could just tell me what you're feeling, maybe we could both start healing."

Colin looked up into her eyes. "This place reminds me of Seth," he said. "I've tried to ignore it, I've tried to add my own personal touches, but all my memories of this place are from when we were all here together...with him. His stink permeates this place, just like it does everything else in my life."

"Oh, Colin," Aileen sighed, this wasn't where she expected he'd start, but at least he was talking. "We didn't go to your Uncle's this year because Seth would be there, and we didn't stay home because it was just too depressing there, I didn't know what else to do. It's not like I could have flown us to Disneyland or something."

"I know Mom, I know. You've done great, this was a terrific idea. The problem is with me. I'm sorry. I know Seth isn't the root of all evil in the world, but lately it's getting harder and harder not to believe that. It makes me sick to think of the influence I've let him have over my life. I just can't get over the pain that guy has caused me."

"It's okay, Sweetie, and there is nothing to be sorry about. I want to help you get over this. In time the pain will dull and you will find somebody else, you have so much to offer any young woman..."

"And Seth will always be able to offer more. Seth always wins," Colin said interrupting her. "You think I want to go through this again?"

"It won't be the same, Colin. You'll find someone who really loves you..."

"I thought Sheryl loved me. She said she did," Colin said. "For two years we went out, I thought I had come to know her so well, and she me. I know that relationships are seldom permanent, but I thought we had a shot. For years I've had to listen to the guys brag about how many girls they've bagged. It was like a game to them, every time they slept with a different girl it was another point and then they

moved on to score again, and Seth was the ringleader of the bunch!

"But, you know...that never bothered me. I couldn't see what was so appealing in having sex with someone you barely knew. I always imagined it as the ultimate act of sharing oneself, of trusting someone enough to let them see you when you are most vulnerable. How can you trust a virtual stranger? You can't. I saw Seth and the others as always having to keep their guard up, always holding a piece of their selves back when they were with someone. I wanted no part of that. I had Sheryl and I knew that when we finally did it, it would be something special."

Now that Colin was talking it was like a dam had burst and all his feelings were pouring through. Aileen listened intently to everything he said, but she focused on the last part. When they finally did it? It would be something special? "Colin..." Aileen began, "Are you saying that you and Sheryl never..."

"She said she wanted to wait until she was ready. I didn't want to push her into anything she didn't want to do. When the time came I wanted us both to want it." Colin said.

Aileen was silent for a moment. Colin had been going out with Sheryl since he was sixteen, and he had never seriously dated anyone else. "Colin, are you a virgin?" Aileen asked.

Colin's face flushed deep red, he looked away from her eyes, starring down at his plate, and then he nodded.

My God! Aileen thought, My tall, strapping eighteen year old son is still a virgin! He had been dating Sheryl for so long that she had just assumed they would have done it by now. She had given him the sex talk when he was younger, told him that she would prefer he didn't do it at all, but if he did use precautions and all that. But she was realistic and thought that for sure he would have had sex by now. She knew the onus that was on teenagers to lose their virginity, especially the boys. And Colin was so handsome that there must have been plenty of girls interested in him. But even in the face of peer pressure Colin had remained loyal to Sheryl, and he stuck to his beliefs and convictions. She didn't think the admiration she had for her son could grow anymore, but just now it did.

Aileen reached her hand across the table to grasp Colin's, "There's nothing wrong with that..." she began, but Colin gave a sardonic chuckle.

"You know what's funny?" said Colin. "Sheryl is one of the girls Seth brags about now, especially when I'm around."

"He's just trying to goad you Honey, it's probably not even true," Aileen said.

"It's true," Colin said. "I confronted Sheryl about it. She denied it at first but I could see she was lying. Eventually she admitted it. I always thought that even if we didn't end up together, we were at least going to be each other's first...but we didn't even have that. Seth won again. Seth always wins in the end."

Now it all came clear to Aileen. Now she understood the whole picture and she could see why this was so much more than an ordinary breakup. She understood why her boy was so distraught. "My poor, sweet, baby boy, what have they done to you?" Aileen whispered.

"Is this how people are?" Colin asked. "I mean even though I thought Seth and I were friends, it doesn't surprise me that he did this, but Sheryl, I would have trusted her with my life. I thought I knew her, but she betrayed me. It makes me wonder if I will ever be able to trust anyone else."

Colin's words shook Aileen to the core. They echoed exactly her thoughts of late. Both of them were going through the same crisis of losing trust. Then another thought slipped unbidden into her mind. He could trust me... Aileen was surprised by the thought, and she found when she tried to dismiss it, it would not leave. Colin could trust her. She loved him so much, she would be so good to him, and he

would never have to worry about her loving anyone more than him...

She couldn't believe what she was thinking. How could she think of her own son that way? The same reason she was turned on by all those mother and son incest stories and the role playing with Ben, the reason that she couldn't admit to herself until now why it appealed to her so much. After all she had been through, the idea of a mother and son in love seemed so heart achingly pure. The bond was so strong between a mother and son, the son was the one person the mother could trust not to hurt her. At least that was how it was between her and Colin. Aileen was struck by an epiphany. She not only loved Colin, she was in love with him. Aileen felt a surge of arousal in her loins with that realization, immediately followed by an intense wave of guilt. My son is pouring out his heart to me, and I can't stop thinking about how much I desire him! Aileen thought, disgusted with herself.

Aileen was having difficulty breathing. How could this be possible? Was she truly the most perverted woman on the face of the Earth? She couldn't allow herself to think of her son that way. But she knew she would never love anyone as much as she loved Colin, and it broke her heart that it was so wrong to love him that way. She felt a single tear escape her eye and run down the side of her face.

"Mom? Are you okay?" Colin asked.

"I'm so sorry Colin," Aileen said.

"Mom, none of this is your fault," Colin said.

"It's all my fault," Aileen said. She wasn't talking about Colin's situation with Seth and Sheryl though, not directly. "It's my fault that I'm such a horrible mother," she said as more tears fell freely.

"Mom, what are you talking about? You are a wonderful mother! You've been the only one I can count on!" Colin said.

Aileen shook her head. "I've let you down; I know I have, even when I promised you I wouldn't."

"Mom, I...I don't understand?" Colin said perplexed. "Does this have something to do with what happened with that guy Ben?" Aileen could only nod. "You said you were sorry that night too. Did what he say...was it true? Did you really do those things with him? Those fantasies?"

Here was the moment of truth. Aileen had to confess now or she didn't think she ever would, and any hope of salvaging

their relationship would be lost. Aileen brought her hand up to her face to try to control her blubbering but it was no use. "I'm so sorry!" She said. "I knew it was wrong, but I didn't think... I...I never meant to hurt you! Now you see how horrible I am!"

Colin rushed over to her side. "Mom, it's not your fault. It was that guy Ben, he tricked you!" He said.

"No. I was deceived by Ben, that's true. I thought he was someone I could trust. But that doesn't change the fact that I still did those things with him and (please forgive me, Colin!) I enjoyed them. But it wasn't all like he said. It wasn't something crude, at least it wasn't to me...it was something beautiful. It was channeling a love I have for you I had no right feeling, but yet I did. So, I must be perverted. I'm so sorry Colin, I would have done anything to keep this from you, but now that you knew I had to talk this out with you!"

Colin banged his fist on the table. It startled Aileen and made her jump. "Damn!" Colin said. "This never would have happened if I had spent more time with you. He never would have hurt you like he did."

Aileen was confused. "What do you mean?" she asked.

"Mom...when Ben said that you liked to pretend you were having sex with your son...sure, I was floored, but that's not what's been bothering me since that night. It didn't matter if what he said was true or not, either way the reason he was there was because of me."

Aileen couldn't understand what her son was trying to say. "Colin, you're not making any sense, he was there because of me, you had nothing to do with it."

Colin sighed. "I've been holding something back, for a long time, but I can't keep it to myself any longer."

"Colin, you can tell me anything, you know that." Aileen assured him.

"Well, if you're perverted, then so am I. I have had fantasies about you, for a while now. I just thought it was natural for a son to love his mother like that. You've always been there for me. When I thought no one else in the world cared about me, there was always you telling me how much you loved me. How could I not fall in love with you? I love spending time with you, doing things with you, just being with you." Aileen was stunned and she didn't know what to say. He had been having fantasies about her? He was in love with her? The very idea was enough to give her an anxious feeling in her stomach and make her pussy begin to moisten. Aileen

gave herself a mental shake. She had to get control of herself! It was wrong to feel this way!

"But a few years ago I started getting teased for being a mama's boy, mainly by Seth." Colin continued. "He was unrelenting. I shouldn't have let it get to me, but it did. Thinking that what I felt for you was an impossible dream anyway, I was determined to prove that I wasn't a mama's boy, so I distanced myself from you.

"Then I met Sheryl and the feelings I developed for her were real, but nothing compared to what I felt for you, but still I was trying to distance myself. I came to love her only because I had closed off the part of myself that was in love with you.

"I was devastated when Sheryl broke up with me, but since last Friday that hasn't been the thing that has been troubling me. Mom, I don't think I could go on living if I ever lost you. That guy, he hurt you, and it scared me to death. To make matters worse, I realized it was all because of me that it happened. I abandoned you. I detached myself from you because I was afraid of what it looked like when I was hanging around with you all the time. You got lonely which led you to the internet and befriending that asshole. It was my fault you got involved with him. He was there because I deserted you. If I hadn't let Seth's taunting get to me back then, this would never have happened." Tears were welling

up in Colin's eyes now. "This was the second time I caused you to be hurt. I'm so sorry."

"Second time?" Aileen said perplexed.

"The first time was with Dad. The time he beat you up, that was all because of me too."

Aileen felt like someone had reached into her chest and grabbed hold of her heart and was squeezing it. How long had he been holding that in? She grabbed hold of her son and hugged him tight. "Oh, Colin, never, never, ever blame yourself for that!"

"Why not? It's true! I remember that day. It all happened because of me, I made Dad angry and..."

"Colin!" Aileen stressed, "You need to understand this, your father was an abusive man and he would have turned on us sooner or later no matter what. It was my fault for not leaving him earlier. I've blamed myself for that so long and I made a promise that I would never let you be hurt again, now look at where we are. Just look."

Colin took hold of Aileen's arms and looked into her eyes. "Mom? It seems we both have been carrying around a lot of

guilt for a long time. What if...what if we stopped blaming ourselves for what's happened in the past and just forgive each other for whatever wrongs we think we may have done to one another? I love you so much and I always will."

"That sounds wonderful Darling." Aileen said through tears, she was just so happy he didn't hate her for what she had done. If he forgave her, it was time to put the guilt behind her. "I will always love you Son. You can trust in that at least."

"I know," Colin said, "I may have lost my faith in the rest of the world, but I'll never lose it in you."

"Baby, don't lose your faith," Aileen said placing her hand on his cheek. "There is joy in the world. I still believe that because after all I've been through, the world still gave me you. That makes up for all the pain. You'll find your own joy, just give it time."

"What if my joy is staring me right in the face?" Colin said taking her hand in his, and then he leaned in and placed his lips on hers. The kiss was tender and it was passionate and Aileen had no will to resist it even though she knew it was wrong. Let me just have this moment... Aileen said to herself. She closed her eyes and surrendered to bliss. Colin was all that existed to her. All she heard was his breathing, all she

smelled was his body, all she felt were his lips, and when he parted her lips to slip his tongue inside her mouth, all she tasted was ambrosia.

Too soon the moment ended, however, and Aileen was able to curb herself. She pulled away from Colin and looked into his depthless brown eyes. There was a light in his eyes that seemed to call to her, but she held fast. "Colin, that was lovely, but we can never do that again," she said.

The smile on his face quickly faded away, "Mom, why? I thought this was what you wanted? I want it too! Now we know how we feel about each other, we don't need to hide our feelings anymore, we can be together!"

"We just absolved ourselves of our mistakes; I don't want to start making new ones all ready. Things can never happen for us in that fashion. We are mother and son, that's all we can ever be, because that's the way it is."

The light in Colin's eyes changed from beckoning to dismay. "What if not acting on our feelings is the mistake?" He said. "I've decided that I'm no longer going to let myself be manipulated by the opinions of others. I love being with you Mom. I've always loved it, and now I'm no longer ashamed of that. I want to spend the rest of my life with you. You are the only one I want."

"Colin, please don't make this more difficult than it all ready is," Aileen said with fresh tears in her eyes. "It would be wrong and damaging to have a relationship like that. I love you too much to do that to you."

"It would be damaging to be in a relationship with a man who would worship you, who would treat you with nothing but love and tenderness for all his life? That would be damaging? But being with a man who likes to hit and lash out at you, that's acceptable? That must be it because I definitely can see a pattern here."

Aileen slapped him. Hard. She had never hit him like that before, her hand stung from the slap, but her heart stung even more, especially when she saw the hurt in his eyes. Colin silently walked over to his coat, put it on, and then walked out the door.

This couldn't be happening! They couldn't have just settled things between them only to have them fall apart again! Aileen grabbed her own coat and headed out the door. She looked to her left and saw Colin standing on the porch, hands stuck in his coat pockets. She went and stood next him. There were several inches of snow on the ground and it was still coming down steadily. The trees and bushes were coated with it and the whole land was white. Colin was staring intently at the falling snow. Aileen wanted to say

something to him, but she didn't know what. She reached her hand out and laid it on his arm she needed to have contact with him.

"I love snow," Colin said. His breath was visible vapor in the air. "It's like magic."

"Magic?" Aileen asked.

"It blankets everything, makes it all one color. It quiets everything down. The world looks and feels completely different after a snowfall. It's pristine and serene. Especially up here, it feels like we have a world of our own. It feels like magic to me."

"Magic," Aileen said again. "I see what you mean." Colin nodded and continued to stare. After a few minutes Aileen couldn't bear the silence any longer. "Colin, I'm sorry..." Aileen began but Colin stopped her before she got any further.

"Mom, don't apologize, please. If anyone should apologize it should be me. I was an asshole for what I said to you and I deserved the slap. It knocked some sense into me. I understand why we can't be together, and I accept it."

"It just wouldn't be fair to you, Sweetheart." Aileen said. "We wouldn't have anything like a normal life, we would always be being judged by others, we'd be treated like criminals. Hell, we would be criminals according to the law. I can't put you through that."

Colin turned and faced her. "I told you I understood the reasons, Mother, but you need to understand this. I love you and I would go through any obstacle, any hardship, and any torture possibly conceived of in Hell to be with you, the only thing I won't do is fight you, because you're the only person in the world I need on my side. If you say you can't let it happen, then I have to accept it."

"Colin, please don't talk that way!" Aileen cried.

Colin bent in and kissed his mother on the cheek. "I'm just telling you how I feel. I am now, and always shall remain, helplessly in love with you. If all we can have is a platonic love, then I will just count myself lucky to be in your presence and that will be enough."

"I think that's all I'll be able to give you," Aileen said.

"Then I'll be grateful we can at least have that," Colin said. Then he started to walk back to the cabin entrance.

"Where are you going?" Aileen asked.

"To bed I think, it was a long drive up and I'm kind of tired."

"I thought, maybe we could watch one of Pat's DVD movies together on that huge TV?" Aileen said.

"It's been a long day. I think I would rather just turn in," Colin said. "How about we do that tomorrow? Maybe Uncle Pat's got some Christmas movies in his collection."

"All right, tomorrow then," Aileen said.

"Good night Mom."

"Good night Colin."

Colin started to enter the cabin, but before he was out of sight Aileen called out, "Colin!"

He turned his head and looked at her. "Yes?"

"I love you!" Aileen said.

Colin smiled, but it was a wistful smile, "I love you too," he said, and then he entered the cabin leaving her outside all alone. Aileen hadn't noticed how bitterly cold it was until that moment.

CHAPTER 5: A POINT OF NO RETURN

Aileen went back inside the cabin and after she cleaned up after their dinner and put away the leftovers, she decided she might as well retire to bed herself. Before she left the living room, she walked over to Colin's Christmas tree and straightened the star on top. The tree was a tiny island of cheer in a room that had suddenly grown dark and lonely.

Things had worked out well this evening. There were some surprises, but she and Colin had talked out their feelings and things were fair between them again. It was all Aileen had hoped to accomplish by coming here. Now they could both enjoy spending Christmas together tomorrow. Yes, things had definitely worked out well. So why did she feel so empty inside?

Aileen went to her room to get ready for bed. Colin had left her the master bedroom, taking one of the smaller rooms for himself. Aileen had her own private bathroom which had its own access to the spa room with the Jacuzzi and sauna. She

changed into her nightgown, then washed her face and brushed her teeth. When she turned off the light in the bathroom something caught her attention. There was light seeping in under the door from the spa room.

Aileen hadn't even been in that room yet this trip. She walked over to the door and it was locked. She unlocked it and opened the door and sure enough the fluorescent lights were on bright. She stepped down into the room, walked around the Jacuzzi, and over to the sauna. Nearby on a ledge folded semi-neatly was a pair of plaid boxer shorts and a white tee shirt. On the floor sitting in a little puddle of melted snow were Colin's boots. He must have come into the spa the other way, from the back porch.

Aileen stepped up to the sauna and peered into the small round window on its door to see if Colin was in there. Yup, he was in there all right. Aileen quickly averted her gaze and she felt herself begin to blush after catching a glimpse of her son in the nude. He probably wanted to sweat out some tension before he went to sleep, Aileen surmised. She made to leave Colin in peace, but her feet remained planted where they were. Something inside her made Aileen look through the window for one more peak.

It was steamy inside the little room, but she could see him. He was stretched out on a bench lying on his back. A towel was bunched up under his head to serve as a pillow. Aileen knew she shouldn't be doing this, but she couldn't help

staring, admiring his body. Colin was lean and athletic, with finely toned muscles in his arms, legs, and chest. Beads of sweat dotted his entire body. He had one arm behind his head, and his other arm was lying on top of him with his hand on his...Aileen's eyes opened wide when she realized what he was doing. This was wrong for her to be watching! She had to turn away! But she couldn't.

Colin's hand was on his fully erect cock, slowly moving up and down. She looked at his face, his eyes were closed and he had a look of concentration. Her eyes were pulled back to his cock. She had no idea it was so large, so entrancing. It was standing straight up and rigid, it was sublime. She watched his hand slide up the shaft to the head, give a gentle squeeze, and then slide back down the shaft. Over and over he did this and Aileen watched as her son pleased himself sexually, watched and was mesmerized by it. It was the most erotic thing she ever saw.

Aileen licked her lips. Slowly, she lifted up her nightgown and with a trembling hand she touched the crotch of her panties to find they were damp. She slid her hand into her panties, the closer her fingers got to her slit, the wetter she became. Her pussy ached to be touched. In the back of her mind there was a voice that was shouting at her she shouldn't be doing this, but as each moment went by that voice grew fainter.

Aileen's gaze remained fixed on Colin's cock as she ran her fingers up and down her wet cunt lips. Her middle finger glanced over her protruding clit and a shiver went up her spine. She went back and circled that button with her finger tip. Around and around the rim of her clit she rubbed and then over the center. A moan escaped her lips.

Colin immediately halted what he was doing, his hand stopped still on his cock in mid stroke. Aileen looked at his face. His eyes were open and looking directly at her. Oh, God! He sees me! Aileen thought. Her instinct was to run away but she was frozen like a deer caught in the headlights. They just stared at each other for what seemed like forever, each one not moving a muscle. Then Colin's hand slowly started to move again, he was resuming pumping his cock! His eyes didn't waver from hers and Aileen knew. She knew that he had been fantasizing about her the entire time. He started pumping faster, and his cock looked even larger than it was before.

Aileen couldn't help herself; her hand started moving again on her twat. She parted the lips of her pussy and inserted a finger. As she watched Colin's hand slide up and down his cock, she started sliding her finger in and out of her cunt, first one finger, then two. Her motions synchronized with his. Colin could only see her face through the window from his position, but Aileen knew he knew what she was doing, and just then she didn't care.

Aileen didn't know how long they continued in this manner, but it felt like a while. Eventually Colin's breathing started to become ragged. His stomach was contracting and expanding erratically. He was pumping faster and faster, Aileen increased her finger fucking pace. All of a sudden he gave his cock a final squeeze and a geyser of cum shot upwards then fell back to splatter on his stomach and chest. Aileen felt her pussy clamp down on her fingers and felt her own juice running down her inner thigh as she watched the white liquid spew forth from her son's cock. Aileen let out a mighty wail as she orgasmed in concurrence with Colin.

As climatic shivers ran through her body Aileen wanted to yank open the sauna door and run into Colin's arms. She wanted to feel his naked body against hers, to hold him and kiss him. But the reality of what she was thinking, what she had just done, crashed in on her and overwhelming guilt finally brought her to her senses. Mobility returned to her legs and she turned and ran back to her bedroom.

She crashed onto her bed curling up in the fetal position. Things were spinning out of control. How could she deal with these feelings she had for her son? She knew she couldn't give in to them, that Colin so clearly and amazingly longed for her as well couldn't be a factor. But she had come so close, for a brief time she had given into temptation and had almost passed the point of no return. She could not allow

him to come to harm! To give in to their desire would ruin his life! But every minute, every second, it was getting more difficult to resist. What was she supposed to do, sever their relationship entirely? The thought of losing him completely was unbearable (she would rather die!) but it was something she had to consider. Aileen banged her fist repeatedly on the bed screaming and crying into her pillow. Why, God, why? Why is it so wrong to be with a man if I love him this much?

She heard a door slam somewhere in the cabin, it must be the back door. She heard his footsteps coming down the hall. They stopped right outside her door. She could feel him there, on the other side of the door, and it was all she could do to hold herself from rushing up to swing it open and bask in his glory. She waited for the door knob to turn, for him to enter, but that never happened. He must have been debating with himself whether to come in or not. Apparently he decided not to, his footsteps carried on going away from her door. Aileen didn't know if she was relieved or disappointed.

She heard a door close and then the sound of running water. Colin must be taking a shower in the other bathroom. Aileen sighed and got up to turn the lights out in the room. Then she climbed back in bed under the covers. She pulled the covers up to her chin and closed her eyes and tried to go to sleep. It was a queen sized bed and it felt huge to her, in fact, she felt lost in it, small and insignificant. Having that big bed all to herself only emphasized how alone she felt. Her head

was buzzing with troubled thoughts and she tried to tune them out. The steady sound of running water helped lull her into a drowsy state, she refused to imagine Colin in the shower, only listening to the constant whoosh, and eventually descended into an uneasy slumber.

* * *

Before she was even awake, before she opened her eyes, she knew he was in the room, she felt his presence. The feeling of him being in the room was what gradually brought her around, and when she opened her eyes, there he was, sitting in a chair close to the bed just staring at her. If it had been anybody else, it would have scared her to death to see them sitting there in the dark like that, but with Colin, she felt...security. He was watching over her, like he was her protector.

"I...I just wanted to look at you," he said when he saw she was awake. "You are so beautiful, you look like an angel, I've always thought so...I just needed to look at you. I love you so much." His words melted her heart and brought tears to her eyes. She leaped out of the bed and rushed to take him in her arms.

"I love you too Baby!" Aileen said as she held his head to her breast. He hugged her back tightly. Aileen felt her son

shivering and his teeth were chattering. He was cold to the touch. "Honey, you're freezing!" she said. All he had on was his tee shirt and boxers and it was very cold in the room. "How long have you been sitting there?"

"I don't know, an hour or so, ever since I got out of the shower," Colin answered with a shaking voice.

"C'mon, get into bed," Aileen said.

Aileen crawled back into her bed and Colin followed her without hesitating. He climbed in and lay on his side with his back against her front. Aileen wrapped them both up in the thick blankets and put her arms around her son's robust form holding him close to her.

"Mom?" Colin said.

"Yes, Dear?"

"I'm sorry about what happened before...in the sauna. I didn't mean for you to see..."

"Hush, Baby, we'll talk about it in the morning. Just go to sleep, my love."

After a few minutes the warm bed and Aileen's body heat started warming her son up. Colin stopped shuddering and his breathing became more regular. Aileen nuzzled her head up against his neck, the clean scent of his freshly washed hair and body filled her nostrils and was intoxicating. She gave him a squeeze; it felt so good to hold him! Comforted by the companionship of each other, they were both able to drift into a placid sleep.

* * *

The next time Aileen woke up it was because of her bladder. It was early in the morning and the light of dawn was just starting to come through the bedroom windows. She groaned to herself. She was so comfy and cozy in bed that she hated the idea of having to get up into the cold. She tried to hold off, but the longer she waited the more the pressure built up and the more uncomfortable she got. Finally, she got out of bed irritably, it was so cold! Hugging herself to try to keep warm she made her way to the bathroom. On her way there, she glanced out the window, there was two feet of snow outside and it was still coming down at a heavy pace! White Christmas indeed! This was a blizzard!

After she relieved her bladder, Aileen went out into the living room. She noticed that the fire Colin had made last night had completely died out. The first thing she did was to

go over to the thermostat and turn the heat up. Then she went over and turned on the television. She was greeted by a sky blue screen and no picture. She tried turning channels, but nothing came in. Of course, the satellite dish! There was a heap of snow on it. Aileen turned the TV off and switched on the radio. After tuning the dial a moment she got a station to come in clear. She waited a few minutes and then the weather report came on. There was a blizzard warning for their area and they were calling for one to two feet of snow in Philly, but possibly up to four or five feet in the mountains! The snowplows and salt trucks were in a mighty struggle to keep just the main roads clear and they couldn't say when they would be able to get to the secondary streets and mountain roads. It might take days.

Aileen turned off the radio. Well, it could be worse. At least they had plenty of food and when Patrick had this place built he had in mind how harsh the mountain winters could be and took extra precautions to make the power lines as secure as possible. But even if they did lose power they still had the fireplace and plenty of wood.

Standing there in her bare feet in the living room with nothing on except her nightgown, the cold was proving too much for her. Shivering, Aileen hustled back to the bedroom and scrambled into bed. Colin had been lying on his back, but when Aileen got back in bed, he turned on his side and now he encompassed her. She took refuge from the cold in his powerful arms. His warmth quickly eased her shivering

and the joyous feeling of being held by him made her not want to be anywhere else in the world. Let the snow come! she thought, I'm happy where I am.

Aileen closed her eyes and basked in the snug closeness she felt with Colin. She started drifting off again, but in that semi-conscious state between sleep and awake, she felt something. Colin's pelvis was pressed right up against her backside and she could feel something firm digging in from behind. She knew it was Colin's cock, hard and poking through his boxers. With that realization she was wide awake again.

Aileen squirmed a bit trying to get into a position so she wouldn't feel his cock, but all that managed to do was cause his cock to work further in and make her nightgown ride up a bit. Aileen's eyes rolled back at the feel of her son's cock rubbing into her ass and she began to deliberately grind her ass into his groin just to feel the sensation. Aileen got a grip on herself and stopped the motion, but it was too late, Colin had begun to respond.

Colin slipped his hand underneath her nightgown placing it on her bare tummy. He began to brush his hand over her stomach in a circular motion. Aileen felt a heat radiate out from the place he was rubbing and spread throughout her body. It felt too good to make him stop. Colin pulled her closer into him, which caused his cock to push in even

deeper into her ass. Aileen started grinding again as he continued to rub her belly. She felt Colin's warm breath and soft lips towards the back of her neck as he began to kiss her there. Aileen moaned in pleasure. With every motion of her ass, she could feel his cock coming closer to her slit, her pussy was wet and his touches were making her wetter by the second.

Colin's hand on her stomach was moving further up, and eventually it found her breast. Aileen placed her hand on top of his to stop its movement. "Colin," she said.

"Yes?"

"We...we can't do this,"

"Mom, I love you! I need you, only you! Please...?"

Aileen knew how much her son hurt inside, how much he needed to be with someone he could trust not to hurt him again. She had been hurt just as bad, if not worse, and she would never trust anyone as much as she trusted Colin. How much more pain would she put them through if she denied this? Would she be hurting Colin more by refusing him? Dear God, she prayed as tears came to her eyes, I don't know what's right anymore. All I know is my son needs me and I

need him! Please, no matter what I decide, no matter what happens, please God, please, don't let him be hurt!

Aileen turned around in Colin's arms and looked into his intense eyes. "Things will change if we do this." She said.

"Will your love for me change?" Colin asked.

"It can only grow stronger, but..."

"Then that's all I care about," Colin said

"But the world won't accept us being together," Aileen said.

"What world? The snow has changed the world...magic, remember? It's a new world out there today. It's our world, just us. The other world never has to know about this one."

"But what happens when this world is gone? Snow melts away."

"But my love for you never will. Our love will sustain this world. There's magic in love too." Colin moved in and kissed her delicately on the lips. Aileen couldn't resist him anymore, she didn't want to resist any longer; she craved

him too much. It was a sweet surrender as she joined in with his kiss. They held each other as they kissed, soaking in each other's essences. Their tongues intertwined, dancing in celebration of being together.

Colin ran his hands up and down Aileen's body, when he got to her breasts Aileen tugged at her nightgown, eagerly pulling it off. Aileen always thought her tits were too large and sagged a bit, but when she lay bare-chested before Colin, he seemed fascinated by them. Ever so slowly his hand came up and touched her left breast. Softly he caressed it, feeling every part of it, holding it, it felt like it belonged in his hand. When he ran his fingers over her hard nipple, she trembled at his touch. Then he moved to her other tit and gave it the same attention.

Colin started kissing her neck then gradually he worked his way down her throat and down her chest. He buried his soft lips in her cleavage. His tongue came out and brushed her tits, when his mouth came over a nipple he gingerly took the bud in his mouth and his lips surrounded her areola. As he began to suck, Aileen purred and ran her fingers through his dark reddish hair.

Colin looked up from her bosom and into her face. He was directly on top of her now and she could feel his cock pressing through his shorts against her pussy. "Mom, I need you so bad..." Colin said.

"I'm here Baby. I'm here all for you, my love." Aileen said burning to be taken by him. Once she decided to give into her desire, she wasn't going to hold back. Colin pulled his shorts down freeing his impressive cock. With shaking hands he slipped his fingers underneath the elastic band of her panties, he looked back to her eyes one more time, as if seeking final confirmation of her consent, Aileen nodded definitively and he pulled down her panties with exhilaration.

Colin gazed at her pubic region for more than a moment. He seemed to be studying it in great detail so Aileen spread her legs wide allowing him a good look. It felt wickedly good to have his eyes on her in that place. Then he lay back on top of her, the feel of his powerful body enveloping her was like a cocoon of love, she had never felt so safe and secure before. She wanted more, she wanted all of him; she wanted him in her. Her cunt was dripping for his cock. Colin moved his hips and pelvis, and she could feel his erection sliding all over her slick pussy, but he was uncertain of exactly what to do, she could see it in his eyes, he had never gone this far with a woman before.

Aileen reached down and took hold of his throbbing cock in her hand, it was coated with pre cum and pussy juice, and guided it to the opening of her pussy. Colin pushed and she

could feel it begin to slide in. She gasped at how big it felt going inside her.

"Oh God!" Colin said as he penetrated her deeply. Aileen couldn't believe how far in his shaft was stemming. "Oh God," Colin said again. "This is incredible, this feels amazing! Oh God Mom, I love you!"

"I love you Honey!" Aileen said in a pant. Colin pushed in until their pelvises met. He was so far immersed in her it felt like the head of his cock was touching her womb. She had never felt so full before, so whole. It was like she had been living all her life with a part of her being having been torn asunder and now she was finally reunited with it. She wanted the feeling to last forever.

Colin started pumping his cock. He drew himself out almost all the way and then thrust himself back in. He did this two more times, but she could feel his muscles tense, this was his first time and the experience was overwhelming him, he was already past the threshold. "Mom...I'm going to..." Colin stammered out.

"I know, Baby, give it to me, I want you to cum in me," Aileen said. She had just managed to get the words out when Colin slammed his cock into her as deep as it would go and

spasmed in sheer delight. She felt his warm semen spreading into her uterus.

"OHHHHHHHHHHHHH!" Colin shouted as he shook. The thought that this was her son, but also the man she loved, cumming inside her, pushed Aileen over the edge as well. Her pussy clamped down on his cock and evoked it for all the jizz it would secrete. Aileen let out a scream of her own and grasped hold of her son tightly. Embracing, they felt each other's orgasmic quivers running through one another.

"I love you so much, my darling! My darling man!" Aileen said with tears in her eyes. Those words felt inadequate to express the powerful emotions she felt but she didn't know of any better, so she just kept saying them to reiterate it, "I love you!"

"I love you!" Colin said breathing heavily. "I love you forever! Forever and always!" He collapsed on top of her and kissed her passionately. She felt his cock going flaccid inside her. She held his member in her pussy as she didn't want to lose the connection.

Colin looked up from kissing her, he was smiling from ear to ear and there was a sparkle in his eye. "I did it!" He said, "I actually did it...with you! We did it! I never thought this

would ever happen. You made my dreams come true! Thank you! Oh, thank you so much! You are wonderful!"

"Yes, my love," Aileen said, "we did it. And you are wonderful too. Thank you for being in my life! Merry Christmas, my darling."

"Merry Christmas!" Colin said. "Thank you for the best Christmas ever!"

"We didn't even open our presents yet and this is the best Christmas?" Aileen said with an impish grin.

"That's what you think!" Colin said. "The only present I want to open is in here!" Colin tickled her ribs and Aileen squealed. They both started laughing but that eventually led to more kissing.

The kissing became more and more intense and soon Aileen was very pleased to feel Colin's cock hardening inside her. Electricity seemed to dance behind his eyes as his potency grew again. Aileen drew in a breath sharply as she felt his member expanding the walls of her pussy. Was his cock this large before?

Colin slid his dick almost all the way out of her, and then he glided back into her, all the way to her womb again. Aileen's

nails dug into his back. He slid out of her again, then back in. He began to build up a rhythm, moving in and out, in and out. Aileen luxuriated in the feel of his cock moving within her. Colin fondled and caressed her breasts as he made love to her, adding to the sensations she felt.

He began to pump faster and harder, he pushed in deeper. He was lasting much longer than he had the first time and it was Aileen who first started to feel the orgasmic build up this time. The look on Colin's face was absolute seriousness as he went on penetrating her cunt. The force building inside Aileen kept getting stronger and stronger; it was feeding off of Colin's motions with his boner. Finally she got to the boiling point and released a blaring scream as her pussy clenched on his cock.

She spasmed as waves of pleasure washed over her, over and over again. Colin's cock remained hard as steel though and continued to pump in and out of her. Just when Aileen felt her orgasm subsiding she was shocked to feel another one building up right on the heels of the previous one. Aileen's arms had fallen to her sides and now she tightly gripped onto the bedding holding on for the ride of her life.

As Colin plunged deep inside her, as if into her very soul, Aileen climaxed again screaming louder than before. The rapturous waves washed through her once more and Aileen

thought she might be carried away by them. She was half delirious with ecstasy.

Colin still hadn't had his release yet, but Aileen could tell by the fervent look on his face he was close. One more time she felt an orgasm of her own coming on. Oh my God! Again?!! Aileen thought, half in trepidation, half in gleeful anticipation. She didn't know how much more she could take but she was determined to find out.

Colin's cock was sliding in and out of her faster and faster, lubricated by the enormous amount of juice she had cum all ready. It was coming, Aileen knew she was on the verge; just a little bit more and she would be there. His shaft glided through her vaginal walls and, like an arrow shot by an expert archer, he hit the bull's eye.

Gripping the sheets for dear life, Aileen arched her back and threw back her head making a parabolic form of her body, and let out a primal roar. This time when her cunt clenched Colin's cock, he let out a scream that rivaled hers and his manhood gushed forth its cream.

Colin, in a kneeling position, placed his hands under her arms and pulled her up to him all the while his cock continued to shoot cum into her pussy. Aileen threw her arms around her son's neck and rubbed her body against his.

Their lips met and they kissed sloppily as they shared this final orgasm.

They fell back on the bed, remaining in each other's arms. Both of them were breathing heavily, Aileen felt her heart beating rapidly inside her chest, when she finally caught her breath she said, "Oh my God! How did you do that?!!"

"You," Colin said simply as he placed his hand on her stomach and began to stroke it. "I've dreamed of you for so long, I desire you like no one else."

"I never knew it could be like that," Aileen said, and it was the truth. Fred was the only other lover she had ever had and sex with him had always seemed a duty rather than a pleasure. When he wanted sex they had to have it, it got to a point where she was only doing it to avoid a beating, and still sometimes he beat her anyway. She didn't think she ever had a real orgasm with him either. It was hard to feel sexual when you were afraid the man you were with could injure you at any moment. But with Colin, she was able to give herself totally over to him because she trusted him, and she had the best sex she ever had.

"I just want to please you," Colin said.

Aileen placed her hand on top of his, "You did," she said, "and you do, and you always will, no matter what. You can count on that." Then tears came to her eyes as she said, "Just tell me that it can always be this way, that if things become difficult you will never resent me for allowing this to happen."

Colin brushed a tear out of her eye and said, "I cherish you for allowing this to happen and I always will. I told you, I would go through Hell to be with you. All I need is your love."

"You have it," Aileen said, "forever."

"Forever," Colin repeated with a smile, and then he kissed her softly. Hugging each other close, the two lovers fell into an exhausted but blissful sleep.

* * *

When they awoke again it was past noon. Colin got out of bed and exclaimed, "Holy shit!" when he saw the amount of snow outside.

Aileen explained to him what the latest weather report had said then added, "They probably won't have the roads cleared up here until New Year's."

"A whole week snowed in...whatever shall we do to keep ourselves occupied?" Colin said with an evil grin.

"I wonder?" Aileen said grinning.

When they walked into the living room Aileen once again noticed the cold fireplace. "We should bring in some more wood before it gets any worse out there." She said.

Colin looked out through the blowing snow towards the wood shed with a look of dismay. Aileen stared at him expectantly, "Well you're the snow lover," she said.

"That's not snow out there, that's Mother Nature gone daft!"

"I'll tell you what," Aileen said whispering into his ear. "You go get the wood and when you come back I'll be waiting for you in the Jacuzzi. If the hot water doesn't heat you up, I bet I will."

"Give me ten minutes," Colin said then ran to his room to get dressed, before he shut the door he stuck his head out and peering at her from around the corner said, "No, five!"

Aileen walked back to their bedroom, she thought of it as 'their bedroom' now, and took off the nightgown she had only just put back on. Totally naked, she walked through the bathroom and into the spa. She removed the cover over the Jacuzzi and turned on the heater and the jets. She sat on the ledge of the tub while she waited for the water to get hot.

Aileen was amazed at how much she all ready longed to be in Colin's arms again. Last night she fought herself to resist him, now there was no force in the universe that could make her refuse him. But their relationship would change, has changed, at least in private. She would always be his mother, it was just that she was also his woman now and he was her man. No longer could she act the parent and him the child, they were equals now, partners. She felt a little misty for the end of their old roles, but she felt infinitely more excited for how things were going to be now. Colin was still Colin and that would never change and there was no other man in the world she would rather have for a partner. Just the thought of his touch, full of love, made her glow inside.

Aileen had absentmindedly started to touch herself in anticipation of Colin's return. She was rubbing her finger around her nipples which had become hard and erect. Then

she heard Colin calling from the bedroom, "Mom? You back here?"

"Yes, Sweetie, I'm by the Jacuzzi," Aileen called back.

"Ugh! The wind blew snow so far up my nose I think I got some in my brain!" Colin said from the bathroom. When he emerged in the spa and saw Aileen sitting on the Jacuzzi ledge he froze and just stared at her.

"What?" Aileen asked.

"It's just...you're so ravishing. When you're out of my sight and I envision you in my mind I think to myself I must be embellishing, you can't really be that beautiful, but then when I see you again I see that you are even more beautiful than I thought and it stops me in my tracks.

Aileen blushed, Colin had a tendency towards the melodramatic, but that he was sincere, she had no doubt. He thought she was beautiful and that made her glow inside.

Colin was standing there in only his boxers; she could see his teeth chattering a bit, he was still cold from outside. "Why don't we get in the tub, it's nice and hot now," Aileen said. Colin nodded. He stripped off his boxers and now he was

totally bare, Aileen could see that he was erect again. She still found it hard to believe that this gorgeous man was hers, but he was and the reason he was excited was for her, and knowing that made her pussy start to drip.

Aileen dipped a foot into the Jacuzzi. The water was very hot, almost too hot. But once she got a little bit used to it, it felt really good. She brought her other foot into the tub and let that one get acclimated, and then she slowly slid her whole body into the tub. Goose bumps popped up all over her body, but the water felt wonderful.

She watched as Colin came over and climbed into the tub, "Ow!" he said when he put his foot in, but he didn't take it out. "Ow!" he said again when his other foot came in. Then he carefully sat down into the water and after a minute said, "Ahhhhhhh,"

Aileen scooted over to Colin and he embraced her and they commenced kissing. Aileen ran her hands all over Colin's chest, over his muscles, over his nipples. Her hand ran down Colin's flat stomach, circling it a few times, and then it ran lower, underneath the water. She found his cock and it was rock hard. She ran her hand up and down the shaft, she brought her hand to the head and squeezed it gently like she saw Colin do last night, and she found the tiny slit in the head and played with it. She loved how it felt in her hand,

and she loved how what she was doing made Colin feel good.

Aileen's desire was burning for him and she had to have him now! She climbed on top of him and placed the head of his cock on her cunt. She rubbed it up and down her slit a few times. Colin had his hands on her ass and he squeezed it, Aileen let his cock slide into her pussy, it was paradise to have him in her again and she stayed still for a few moments just reveling in the feel of it. She then started moving slowly up and down, riding his cock.

For a while they continued like that, and then Colin started moving his hips pumping his cock harder and faster between her thighs. They started sliding further under the water. The water rose to their chests, then their necks, and when it got to their chins, Colin said, "Take a deep breath." Aileen did so and then they were both completely submerged.

Totally under water, Colin came in her. Aileen opened her mouth as soon as she felt his cock start to shoot its load but Colin placed his mouth over hers before any air could escape and soon they were breathing each other's breaths. There was no sound other than pulsing water, there were no sights; it was like they were immersed under the water as one being. Aileen came and her pussy squeezed tight on his cock. It was an incredible experience.

They broke the surface of the water and both of them took in air greedily. Once they had replenished enough air they immediately locked lips again. Aileen folded into Colin's arms and they returned to the side of the Jacuzzi where jets of water shot into them massaging and adding to the overall pleasure they felt as they basked in the afterglow of their love making.

When their skin started to prune, they reluctantly decided it was time to vacate the Jacuzzi. Colin got out first and then held a hand out to Aileen to help her as she climbed out. She was immediately hit by a draft of cold air and a shiver ran through her. She grabbed for a towel and began to dry off quickly.

As Aileen was drying her hair, her gaze fell upon the sauna. Vivid memories of the previous night flashed through her mind and her sexual appetite was triggered anew. She dropped the towel and took Colin by hand and started leading him over to the sauna.

"What are you doing?" Colin asked.

"We have some unfinished business in here," Aileen said holding open the sauna door. Colin nodded and grinned. He followed her into the steam room eagerly.

It was all ready nice and warm inside and soon it would begin to get steamy. As soon as the door shut Aileen pressed her body up against Colin's and mashed her lips against his. She felt Colin's cock pressing hard against her abdomen. She wanted to possess him, every part of him; she wanted to feel all of him on all of her, she was ravenous for his body.

Aileen led Colin over to the bench and had him sit. She embraced him and slid her body down his. Her tits were smashed against his chest and her hard and sensitive nipples felt the contours of his shape as they moved down it. Her lips kissed him on the places her breasts had been only moments before. She licked his chest, his nipples, she ran her tongue down his abdomen, and she flicked it in his belly button.

She kneeled in between his legs and took his bulging cock in her hand. It was warm and firm, a muscle of surging power, yet delicate and vulnerable at the same time. She was drawn to his cock; she wanted to give pleasure to this member that had given so much to her. She moved her hand up and down the shaft, stroking it for a while, and then she brought the head of his cock to her bosom. She rubbed his dick over each of her tits, first in wide circles over the entire fleshy mammaries, then in tighter circles over her areolas and supple nipples. The sensation of his cock head rubbing over a nipple sent a charge through her body. Clear pre cum

dribbled out of his tip and onto her nipples and Aileen relished the slippery feel of it.

She placed his cock in her cleavage and squeezed her tits close together. Colin let out a satisfying moan and began to move his hips sliding his boner back and forth between her boobs. She loved the feel of his pulsating erection on her skin.

She brought his cock inches away from her face. She inhaled its musky smell. She kissed his cock then she licked it. She felt Colin's body tense as she ran her tongue in circles around the shaft and head. Aileen had only recently entertained the idea that sucking a cock might be a favorable experience, now she was drooling for it. Only because it was Colin's, his was the only cock she ever wanted to touch or feel...or taste.

She placed his cock into her salivating mouth and experienced the flavor of the man she loved. It was luxurious; it felt like it was growing even more inside her mouth. She sucked on his cock with intense desire. Colin began to moan and that only increased her passion. She savored the taste of him, she wanted more, she was fevered by her devotion to him, and she wanted all of him. She pushed his cock to the back of her throat swirling her tongue around the shaft as she did it. She pulled his cock back out and when the head was on the tip of her lips she started

taking it in again. She repeated these actions again and again while continuing to suck and slurp on his dick.

Aileen's hand went to the base of his cock and started rubbing. She ran her hand down to his balls and fondled them, then brought it back to his shaft. She went on like this for a while until Colin's breathing started to become ragged and she knew he was close.

"I'm gonna cum!" Colin said. Aileen kept on sucking his throbbing cock, her lips continuing to move up and down the shaft. She felt the first spurt of ejaculation enter her mouth, the spurt turned into a powerful flow of salty cream. Aileen swallowed his cum thirstily, she wanted to feel it slide down her throat, she wanted as much of his love juice inside her as she could get.

Colin moaned loudly as he came, Aileen siphoned the remaining drops of cum from his cock and felt it softening in her mouth. She released his member and moved up Colin's body to look him in his sweet face. She didn't know if Colin would want to kiss her with the remnants of his cum in her mouth but it was he who moved in and passionately kissed her mixing his saliva with hers and allowing his own jism to transfer from her mouth to his, Aileen found it highly erotic.

"I love you so much," Colin said when they broke from their kiss. "That was fantastic!"

"I love you too, Honey," Aileen said. "I loved doing that for you."

"Now it's your turn," Colin said.

It took a second for Aileen to understand what he meant and when she did her eyes widened. "Oh Baby," she said, "you don't have to do that..." Aileen didn't want Colin to feel obligated to do anything he didn't want to, not in matters of their pleasure.

"Are you kidding? Mom, I've wanted to taste you from the first moment I saw your pussy," Colin said. She saw in his eyes a burning intensity, he really did want to do this. She made no further objections, in fact now that she knew what he was going to do, her pussy was dripping with excitement.

Colin slid down onto his knees as Aileen sat on the bench, essentially switching positions with each other. His lips slowly brushed over her breasts, down her stomach, and then his head was between her thighs. She had never had oral stimulation before and felt her pussy twitch in anticipation as her son's lips came nearer.

Colin began kissing her inner thigh out towards the knee. He meticulously worked his way closer and closer to her aching crotch. The sauna was going at full steam now and the heated room was becoming a haze of vapors. Aileen dreamily rubbed her fingers over her stimulated nipples and watched a bead of sweat condense in the middle of her chest and roll down between her tits. It seemed that the closer Colin was getting to her sopping cunt the more time he was taking to get there, it was delicious madness waiting for him to arrive, the thought of his mouth touching her down there was driving her more and more wildly aroused.

Finally he made contact with her most private area and her body tensed as she felt his soft tongue sliding over her crack like a wet sponge. Aileen moaned at the extreme pleasure she felt. She felt his breath stir her neatly trimmed pubic hair as his tongue moved all over her yearning cunt. Aileen had been in the habit of keeping her pubic hair cut short because she didn't like the way it looked when scraggily hairs would stick out of her panties, even if no one else ever saw them, and she would die of embarrassment if they ever stuck out of her swimsuit on the occasions she went swimming. Now Colin had the chance to explore her entire vaginal area bare and up close and from the moans and grunts he was making it sounded as if he approved of what he saw, she was exuding copious amounts of lubrication from her excitement.

He spent time licking her outer lips and then her inner lips lapping up her juices. Finally his tongue found her palpable clit. She mildly convulsed at the sensation when his tongue laved over her protruding nubbin. Ever so gently his tongue circled the bud then started flickering over it in a side to side motion. Aileen started taking deeper breaths as her wonderful son manipulated her most sensitive of nerve endings with tenderness and care. Aileen's body spasmed and Colin seemed to take note of that and paid particular attention to that area sending her into a heightened frenzy. "Oh God, yes!" Aileen exclaimed. Her body went into more spasms and more cum flowed from her pussy, Colin moved to intercept it.

With her pussy slick with saliva and cum, Colin's tongue slipped easily into her slit. He twirled it around and curled it inside of her basting her vaginal walls. Aileen gyrated her hips and pushed her crotch deeper into his face. Just when she thought the experience couldn't get anymore intense, Colin brought his hand up and started massaging her clit with his fingers. He was finding all the right places and Aileen was enrapt by the feeling. "Oh God, yes!" she said again, she felt a tremendous orgasm bubbling up inside her ready to boil over. "Yes!" she said, "Yes! Yes! YES! YES!" Then she climaxed and she howled, "YESSSSSSSSSSS!!!" Her cunt was gushing juice and Colin was slurping it all up.

When her orgasm subsided Colin came up, his face was drenched in sweat, spit, and pussy juice. She eagerly took hold of her adored lover and kissed him in an all-consuming

way. Both their bodies were covered in a sheen of sweat; there wasn't an inch of them that wasn't wet, it felt more like they were in the middle of a steamy jungle instead of buried beneath a blizzard. Either way it was only the two of them. It was their world and they were the only ones who existed in it, they could do anything. Colin was hers and she was his. She loved him so much; she wanted to give herself over to him in every way possible. At long last she had found someone she trusted enough that she could completely let go of herself, she could indulge any and every desire she had with him and feel safe that he would never harm her. The idea was aphrodisiacal and she felt more sexually aroused and aggressive than she ever dreamed possible. She was being taken over by a primitive force, almost animalistic; she wanted her lover to take her in the most wild of ways.

She stood up and Colin rose with her. They continued kissing for a bit, with Aileen running her hands through his sweat soaked hair, but then she turned around in his arms pressing her back against his front, She slid up and down against him, her ass brushing over his cock several times, it had all ready returned to a semi-hard state now it rose to full erectness.

Aileen bent over the bench presenting her sex to him like an animal in heat, which she felt like she was. Long strands of her damp red hair, made even curlier by the steam, draped down from her head. She turned her head to see Colin. Peering through her crimson locks she saw him standing

behind her running his hand over his engorged cock staring with fervor at her backside. "Baby, I need you in me!" Aileen said.

Colin stepped up behind her, placed his hands on her ass, and pinched it delicately. Aileen crooned at his touch. She could feel his cock behind her, so close to her hungry cunt. He stepped up even closer and with his cock in his hand he stroked her twat with it. Aileen pressed backward into Colin and his cock slid marvelously between her lips and into her hole. Tears of joy came to her eyes at the sensation of being filled by him again. "OHHHHHHHHHHHHH" she moaned.

Colin started sliding his cock in and out, fucking her from behind. Each time he pushed back into her she heard his pelvis slap against her ass and the depth in which he drove into her each time made her want to scream in rapture. Colin maintained a steady rhythm of fucking and Aileen moved her body to accommodate his motions, otherwise she just enjoyed the experience. Sweat dripped from her hair, nose, eyes, lips, and from the pointed nipples of her dangling tits. Between her legs where Colin's cock was pumping in and out of her pussy, a mixture of sweat and cum dripped continuously.

"Oh Sweetie, you feel so good in me!" Aileen said. "I love your cock in me!"

"Oh God Mom, you feel so good!" Colin said squeezing her ass. He picked up the pace in fucking her and Aileen felt herself on the verge of culmination. With a few more drives into her Aileen began to spasm, Colin slammed into her one final time hard and deep and Aileen let out a ferocious scream. Colin bellowed as well as her pussy contracted around his ejaculating cock and they rode out the throes of their orgasms.

Colin collapsed on the bench and Aileen fell back on top of him. He rubbed his hands over her breasts, her stomach, her thighs, all over her sweat soaked body. "I love you," Colin whispered into her ear.

"I love you too," Aileen said. After a few minutes of lying in his arms she then said, "I think we need to get out of here before we dehydrate!"

"I agree," Colin said. "I need to take another shower, care to join me?"

"I don't want to be apart from you for a second," Aileen said, "and the idea of showering with you sounds like heaven!"

Colin grinned and took her by hand and led her out of the sauna and into the master bathroom. They entered the shower stall and Colin turned on the water, it came out

freezing cold which felt good at first after being so hot and sweaty, and then as their bodies cooled it felt good as the water heated warming them up again.

They held each other and kissed under the spraying water. They soaped up each other's body and put shampoo in each other's hair. They spent a good while just standing in the shower slipping and sliding their soapy bodies against one another. Aileen had Colin's cock in her hand and was sudsing it up; she smiled when she felt it begin to grow. She ran her hand back and forth over it, the slippery soap making it seem her hand was moving at lightning speeds.

Colin made a satisfied grunt at her attentions. His cock felt so good gliding through her hand, it being so frictionless gave her a devious idea. Aileen turned around and once again pressed her backside against Colin's front. Colin wrapped his arms around her waist and nibbled on her neck. Aileen pushed her ass into Colin's pelvis and she felt his cock slide between her butt cheeks. When she felt the head of his cock at the entrance of her asshole Colin said, "Mom, what are you doing?"

"Want to fuck me in the ass, Baby?" She said.

"Have you done this before, Mom?"

"No, never, but I want to feel you in every part of me you can enter. I want you to have all of my body. Do you want to do it?"

"Oh God, you turn me on like crazy! Yes mom, I want to do it. I love you so much!" Colin said.

"I love you too, with all my heart!" Aileen said.

Colin grabbed the soap and worked up a good lather on his hands, and then he backed up a little and placed the suds on Aileen's ass. He rubbed them between her ass cheeks and then on her asshole, as he was rubbing he slipped his finger inside her anus, Aileen gasped, he gently pushed it in as far as it would go then he removed it. If that's how it felt with only a finger, Aileen started to feel a little anxious about how it would feel with his whole cock going up her. But she wanted him to do it, she wanted her one and only love to have her whole body, she needed him to have it.

Colin applied some more soap to his fully erect cock and then moved closer again to Aileen's ample ass. Once more she felt his dick slide between her butt cheeks and again she felt the head of his cock at the entrance of her asshole. This time he slowly pushed forward and she felt the head slide in. Aileen's eyes widened at the sensation, it didn't hurt; it was just...different. Colin hugged her tight at the waist and

continued to push his soap slicked cock ever so slowly inward. Inch by inch he crept into her and Aileen's breathing became deeper and deeper, Colin continuously asked her if she was all right and she kept urging him to keep going. The strange feeling turned sexual and she was becoming very turned on by the experience. Having his cock slide up that part of her was setting off sexual nerves she didn't even know existed!

Eventually Colin managed to slide his entire length into her, "OHHHHHH, it's so tight!" he said. He held himself inside her for a few moments then he slowly started to slide back out. He slid himself out until only the head of his cock remained inside then he pushed himself back in. Between the slick soap and her rectum having been stretched it was easier this time, but it was still tight. Colin only managed to pump in and out for a few minutes before he had to cum.

"It's so tight, I can't hold it!" Colin said as he pushed his cock all the way in one more time and he released a burst of cum deep inside her, the feeling of him cumming in her ass caused Aileen to have a major orgasm as well, she spasmed as she felt his seed shooting up inside her.

As she felt his shaft softening inside her Aileen turned her head around and planted her lips on his. When they broke from her kiss she said, "That was extraordinary, my sweet love!"

"You are truly, truly wonderful!" Colin said breathing deeply.

After they finished their shower and dried each other off, they both crashed on their bed, they were beyond exhausted. Aileen's last thought before she drifted off into contented sleep in Colin's arms was she was having the greatest Christmas ever.

* * *

Christmas was almost over. It was less than a half hour until midnight. It was still snowing outside but the pace had let up considerably. Aileen judged there to be about four feet on the ground. They had a lot of digging out ahead of them, but that was for later.

Aileen never did manage to cook that turkey for dinner, but she knew Colin didn't mind. They had just been too preoccupied with each other to spend much time fixing something to eat. When they woke up from their nap they hastily put together some ham sandwiches, scarfed them down, and then returned to their love making.

Now Aileen and Colin were on the floor in front of the fireplace and a pleasantly warm and crackling fire. They were also wrapped up snug in a bunch of thick blankets, but aside from that neither was wearing a scrap of clothing.

Colin was on his back and Aileen was sitting astride him, his cock hard as a rock and buried deep inside her cunt, where she felt it belonged. After only having been his lover for a day, Aileen couldn't imagine living without being able to have his cock inside her. How had she lived without it before?

Her thoughts drifted over the events of the day as she peacefully rode him. She had enjoyed tremendously everything they had done with each other and wanted to do it all over and over again. She loved the sexual creature she had become and she loved all the wild sex they could indulge in. But what she considered her favorite was what they were doing right now; looking into each other's eyes, fondly petting one another, and making quiet, yet intense, love. This was when she felt the bond of love between them strongest, and that was the most important thing to her, she lived for it.

She wanted this to last forever with every fiber of her being. Every now and then the fear that it wouldn't last tried to rise up in her, but Colin's words would always get through to her and squelch the fear. He said he loved her and needed her,

that he would do anything to be with her forever. She believed him, there was no way she couldn't, with Colin it was a matter of trust.

Colin's cock throbbed inside of her and released its wonderful cream. They climaxed together. After their orgasms subsided, Aileen lay down on top of Colin's strong chest and put her arms around him, she retained his softening manhood within her. Colin put his arms around her and hugged her tight. "I love you," he said.

"I love you, my darling," she said.

Then they both fell asleep, two people united as one. By making a world of their own with the magic of love, on the most magical day of the year, and being daring enough to pass a point of no return, two tortured souls finally found peace on Earth.

To be continued in Part II – “A Matter of Betrayal”