



Reluctant Press presents:

BLISS



Nick Lorange

AN 'ADULT TV' E-BOOK

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Bliss

By Nick Lorance

February 2002

My father died when I was eleven, and she remarried before the corpse was even cold. She was what they call a functional alcoholic; she wasn't really straight in the head unless she was drinking. She needed someone to be in control and Richard was that kind of person. He needed to be in control. The one thing he could never control was me. He wasn't abusive unless he was drinking, and he drank a lot.

I decided when I turned fifteen that I'd find a job, not easy since you need parental consent. Richard 'helped'. He knew a convenience store owner who let me stock the shelves and cooler for a hundred dollars a week. Great!

Yeah, great. The end of the first week came and instead of handing me some crisp 20s, he handed Richard a bag with a hundred dollars worth of booze. Richard gave me a ten, tousled my hair like a dog that had done a trick for the first time and walked out. I told the store owner to go to hell, and never went back there, even for a soda.

When you're a kid it is always easier to assume that being in charge of your life is a really big thing. I had always thought my mom and my step-dad had it all. They decided where the money was spent. What we ate, when we went to bed.

I wanted all of that control, and never could understand why I didn't get a say in the matter. Hey, it was my life, right?

But not until you're eighteen. An adult. I didn't want to wait, and Richard was like a tick, not letting go. I planned, and again, tried to find a job. This time I chose it, because of something Richard probably hadn't thought of. I was hired, again with parental consent, as a box boy at the local grocery. Richard had never gone shopping, leaving it to my mother and myself. I noticed that the older people, both men and women would not ask for help but were grateful when they got it. So grateful that they would tip you sometimes.

Like the old saying goes, you gotta kiss a lot of frogs to find your prince, and I humped many a bag of groceries from cart to trunk for nothing. But by the time I had finished my first month I had almost 50 dollars squirreled away. It's a good thing I did.

Richard, of course, picked up my checks; not a lot, about one fifty a week. He'd given the owner some song and dance about how I'd blow it all if I got it direct. Every Friday like clockwork he'd arrive, peel off a

ten to hand to me, and put the money to good use, I.E., getting drunk.

You know the old comment, no good deed goes unpunished? It fit me. There was this older woman named Mrs. Wagner, Gertie to her friends, among which I was numbered. It had taken her almost two months to convince me to call her that. She almost always came in on a Tuesday or Thursday, and ever since the first day I had been her box boy she had asked for me by name. She was a sweet older woman and I never had the heart to refuse her.

She came in a Friday right before January ended, and I helped her as I always had. She had relatives leaving after the holidays, and had decided to make a blow out dinner. It meant a full cart instead of only half full. I rolled her cart out, and immediately began moving the groceries into the back of her station wagon, setting them so nothing would slide in the small compartment after the seats.

I closed the door, and smiled, "There you go, Gertie."

How were your holidays?" She asked. I must have looked irritated or something, because she looked at me closely. "Was it a bad time Jimmy?"

I shook my head. "Same as always, Gertie." Yeah right. Ever since Richard had come into my life, the holidays were the same old same old. My mother had no surviving family, and my father's family had taken one look at Richard and made themselves scarce.

They did try, asking that I be allowed to spend Christmas with them, always refused, or sent gift certificates the first couple of years. Of course I never got to use a one of them, and that stopped when I was thir-

teen because when my grandmother had called to wish me a Merry Christmas she received a tirade from Richard because there was nothing at the local toy store he wanted, so why the hell was she sending him useless gift cards? His own mother had done the same until she received almost exactly the same speech. I had seen her only once on my 12th Birthday.

My birthday party was Richard and mom getting hammered while Grandmother Victoria (His mother) looking on in disapproval. I never got a chance to play with them Richard refused to let me open them except for the 'Hallmark Moment' when you rip off the wrapping for pictures. As soon as that was done they were taken away still unopened and I never saw the toys again. He stored them, then gave them to the children of his friends instead.

Grandmother Victoria never returned in person. The last gift card I had gotten was the same year the rest of the family abandoned me.

Gertie looked at me for a long moment, then took the keys she had handed me to unlock the back. She replaced them with a crisp 20. "Always remember, Jesus loves you, Jimmy."

I wanted to snap back that if Jesus loved me, why didn't he help? Why didn't someone help? Instead I bowed my head. "Thank you, Gertie."

"Merry Christmas, Jimmy."

I started to reply when suddenly I was lifted and slammed into the back of her car. A hand ripped the twenty from my fingers, and I heard Richard growling behind me.

Gertie raised her cane, and slammed him across the shoulders, I think. All I could see was her swinging. "Let him go, Richard Grady!" She shouted.

She swung again, then the cane was ripped from her hand and thrown aside.

"When I catch my son misbehaving, I punish him." Came the snarled reply. I felt his free hand rummaging through my pockets.

"I gave him that money!"

He'd found the money I had collected that day, about ten dollars more in small bills and change, and he held it up out of my sight. "Yeah, well after rifling through my wife's purse, do you think the little thief needed it? Always sneaking around and hiding things..." He dragged me from the car, then dragged me over as he walked over, picked up her cane, and returned it. "When it's a loving father punishing his child, you stay out of it or else." He spun me around, glaring at me.

I could have called him a liar, but thanks to other children lying where they just wanted to get their parents in trouble, most people were unsure who to support. The courts always seemed to come down on the side of the parents without physical evidence. Other than an occasional slap, he'd never raised a hand to me.

"Walk." He ordered, letting me go. I walked into the store taking off my apron as we did. Mister Carter, the owner looked confused when I handed it to him.

"Jimmy?"

"I caught him whining to old lady Wagner about how mistreated he is at home." Richard lied smoothly. I said nothing. "So he's going to finish school and wait until he's of age to start looking for work again." He

took my check, brusquely ordered that anything else should be mailed, and dragged me out again.

My nightmare wasn't over. Once we got home he ordered me to sit at the dining room table while he ransacked my room. I thought I had hidden it well, but he must have been a thief as he accused me before. He came down the stairs, counting my entire stash. "Three hundred dollars. The little bastard--"

"Don't call him that!" For the first time in a long time, mom was leaping to my defense.

"Shut up." He said it in an almost conversational tone. "I sweat my ass off and he stashes enough to keep us in what we need for a month!" He waved it under my nose. "Take a good sniff, boy. You won't see money again until you get your narrow ass out of my house."

I wanted to scream that it wasn't his house, it was my father's, bought and paid for before he even arrived, but when he'd been drinking he had a temper.

I spent the weekend grounded. Then on Monday it began again. He drove to school, and dragged me into to see the principal. He wove another tissue of lies; money and other stuff, suggesting with his words that maybe we were talking booze or knives, had come up missing at home. I was of course, the ungrateful kid who stole from his parents and neighbors. The principal called the custodian, and we arrived at my locker as other kids came in to watch.

"Open it." Richard demanded.

"No." I glared at him defiantly. "You want it open, cut off the lock."

He started to raise his hand but the principal stopped him, and sent the custodian to fetch some bolt

cutters. By the time he came back the hall was crowded with silent students watching.

The locker netted him another fifty dollars with a backpack full of clothes I had stashed, and he crowed about how the 'little thief' had failed yet again. I stood there silently through it all. If I had a reputation, it was ruined that day.

"You finish your day, and come right home. We'll have a long talk about how to end your thieving ways." He said loud enough that everyone heard. He ordered that the backpack and all it contained be thrown away, and marched out.

The day was a horror of whispers beyond range for me to hear. No one came up to accuse me aloud, yet no one came to offer any support either. I decided to run away that very night.

I put my school books in the locker, not even caring if they were stolen. But in the locker was a small envelope and a new padlock. The envelope contained a letter and a key. The letter was from Mr. Lopez, the custodian.

"You want to run away, use the key and go to my gardening shed. If I never see you again, *Via con dios.*"

Tuesday morning I dressed warmly and took my heaviest jacket. I left early, almost an hour early. We were back to 'if you want to go to school, you can fucking walk to school' so Richard didn't say anything. There was nothing left in the house I wanted anyway.

The gardening shed was about the size of a two car garage, and the key opened the door. Right inside was my backpack with an old Marine Corps sleeping bag I had never seen, one of those down filled ones good for

winter weather. Atop it was another envelope, with a twenty and a note.

“It’s all I can afford, Jimmy. Good luck.”

I walked off the campus, broke the twenty at the corner convenience store so I had some hot coffee and donuts to go with two dollars worth of quarters, and walked six blocks to a bus stop none of my fellow students would use. I climbed aboard the bus, buying a copy of the bus route book, and as it rolled, checked the buses. It took me three routes and eight dollars, but finally I got off near the edge of town.

March

Being on the road is cold, hungry, and tiring. It had taken me almost three weeks to leave the state. I wished I knew Mr. Lopez’s first name when I saw snuggled into that sleeping bag. I only survived because of it when it got really cold.

I would hitchhike only between six and seven in the morning (‘I was at a friend’s house and have to get to school’ if it was a weekday, or ‘I’m going to my relatives for the day’ on a weekend) and between 4 and six in the afternoon except this time I was going home from the same places.

The rest of the time I either hid, or walked, always heading west. I had no plans, and that twenty had barely lasted four days. I spent part of each day after that going from small convenience store to gas station, always when school was out, since if I should be in school, the owner or cashier might call the truant officers. In each place, I would offer to help, sweeping and mopping, picking up trash, anything to get some snacks or drinks.

I had a success rate of about 30%. Half the time I got a flat no, or an apologetic 'the owner is here, and he would be upset', though sometimes the cashier would have me pick some stuff and paid for it. One big black guy in a store outside El Paso had me pick the stuff, then handed me a ten. "Get your clothes washed." He winked "Don't want anyone to think you're a run-away."

The other half of the time they would say yes, but a lot of them just ran me off or threatened to call the police. But I was able to eat enough to keep body and soul together.

Hitchhiking is terrifying. I'd heard the stories of kids disappearing; who hasn't? But I had assumed that this was another way the adults kept us down. Like the old original fairy stories, where Goldilocks gets eaten by the bears. If you don't listen and obey, bad things happen. But it wasn't so bad. Maybe the monsters that kill or rape children are sleeping or eating their dinners when I was out there.

Then the trucker who was giving me a lift a mile back dropped me before he hit the scales and Immigration checkpoint. He explained apologetically that I would be spotted by the police if he took me all the way there. He gave me a couple of sandwiches he had in his sleeper, and left me standing there. As the sun set.

I looked up at the sign ahead of me and the exit ramp going off into the New Mexico darkness. It was dark, I was cold, and all I wished for was a warm place to sleep and something to eat. Those sandwiches were the first food I had eaten in almost two days, and barely kept the pangs of hunger at bay. I got off the

highway, and took the road heading North to find someplace to sleep.

I would have stuck out my thumb, but the traffic had thinned to a car or truck every fifteen minutes or so. There were no farm buildings nearby, so sleeping in a barn was out. Instead of just standing in one place, I walked. Every now and then I looked for a place to hide while I slept but I have seen pool tables with more geography than that stretch of desert.

I didn't know how far I had walked, but it was really late. I saw a sign sitting in the middle of nowhere, and staggered over to it. BLISS 2 MI.

I hadn't even seen a sign on the highway for someplace named Bliss. Must be some extra wide crossroad kind of town. I kept walking. Two miles sounds like a lot, but hell, have you seen a kid run around in play? They do two miles without even noticing. I knew I could walk it, even freezing my ass off.

Ahead I saw a string of lights, and my heart leaped. Either a truck stop or a diner. Either one meant food. Of course I didn't have money, but three weeks on the road had eroded any scruples I had about stealing something if it meant I would eat.

Half an hour later, I staggered into the parking lot. It was one of those small diners with a facade of a pair of old railroad cars side by side on the front of the building. I reached the door, grabbing the handle. Locked. Blearily I looked at the sign. They closed at midnight, and according to the clock I could see, that had been an hour ago.

Cold, hungry; I didn't care any more. I picked up a rock from the landscaping, and smashed the small window in the door. I cleaned the glass away, and climbed

inside. The smell almost drew a whimper from me. Stay away from anything that needs cooking. Not that I wouldn't have liked a burger, but I didn't have cooking gear.

I pulled a pie out of the cooler. Peach. It could have been labeled Industrial Waste, and I would have stuffed it in my mouth, I was that hungry. But it was heaven. Glass after glass of milk followed the pie down. I ate the entire thing, and a slice of pecan to hold it down. I opened my bag, and threw a half loaf of bread in it, followed by a block of cheese slices, a jar of mayo and a butter knife. That would see me through a couple of days.

I flipped the thumb latch, and walked out the front door. As I went down the steps I heard a click.

A man stood there in a gray uniform, and the gun he held wasn't aimed at me, but he had cocked it to get my attention. I immediately gauged my chances; he looked like he was in his fifties, but a very fit fifty. Could I outrun him? Sure. But he'd have back up pretty soon, and trying to hide in the scrub would have been as futile as hiding on a pool table, and as the old saying goes, you can't outrun a bullet. Slowly I raised my hands.

He nodded as if he had expected it, and twirled his fingers as if to say turn around. I turned away from him, and could hear the crunch of gravel as he approached. "On your knees, hands on your head." His voice was business like. I dropped to my knees, wincing as the gravel cut into my threadbare pants. I felt the cuff lock around my right wrist then he whipped my hand down professionally, lying me on my face, but almost gently. He locked the left wrist, then his hands

went down, frisking me. He found the two knives I carried, and I felt them being taken.

"I hope you ate five years worth of food, kid." He said helping me up. "Because burglary is not tolerated in this county." He walked me over to a police car in a beige and black, with the words Mariposa County Sheriff's Department on the door. He put me in the back, got behind the wheel, and started it. The engine ran smooth almost silent. That was how he'd been able to sneak up on me. He flipped on his computer, and looked back at me. "Want to give me a name?"

"James Connors." I told him.

He input it, and read the screen. "Runaway from Texas." He mused. "Hitchhiking?" I grunted. He shrugged, then put it in gear and pulled onto the blacktop. As he did, I saw a sign;

BLISS POP 250.

He drove quietly, and I couldn't think about anything to say. Sure I was a minor, but the stories about provincial sheriffs are legion. If I whined he'd either beat the shit out of me, or he's toss me in a cell with some hard case looking for a little young meat. I decided that shutting up was my best option.

The town was larger than I expected. With less than 300 people, why would they need a Wal Mart for instance? The police station was off the City Square in a modern glass and field stone building. He pulled in, took me out of the car, and walked me inside. The guy behind the counter was short and fat with a jolly expression. "What you catch, Deit?"

“Burglar. He broke into Moe’s and scarfed one of the pies.”

“Not the peach!” He gasped as if I had pissed in the holy water font. At the nod the man’s jolly expression became a little cold. “Boy, you’re in a heap of trouble now.” He turned to the phones as Deit led me back. Processing took only a few minutes. Fingerprints, pictures, then he led me back to an empty cell, and opened the door locking me in.

“Get some sleep, kid. Tomorrow is a brand new day.”

I was so tired he could have put me in a ditch and I would have dived under the blanket. I curled up, and went to sleep.

The choice

They woke me up around eight in the morning. But with six hours of sleep and a good meal before I crashed, I felt almost human. An officer named Ramsey tapped the bars. “What do you want for breakfast, kid?”

“I have a choice?” I asked, still bleary.

“Why not? This isn’t the big city. We can afford to be nice if the prisoners behave.”

“Then how about a lumberjack breakfast?”

“Where you going to put it all?” He asked.

I wasn’t that big. Five foot five, about a hundred and fifteen. I merely smiled shyly. “High metabolism.”

“One heavyweight breakfast coming up. The Judge will see you around three in the afternoon. He’s out

fishing. We have a questionnaire you'll have to fill out before you see him." Then he was gone.

The breakfast was huge. Bacon, sausage, ham, three eggs, hash browns, a short stack of pancakes, coffee and milk. I gorged. It was the first decent meal I'd had in the better part of a week now. When I was done, he gave me the fifteen page questionnaire, and a pencil, and left me to it.

It was an odd document. Almost an aptitude test really. Some of the questions struck me as odd:

You are in a room naked and someone enters unexpectedly. Do you;

A: Shout at them to leave

B: hide

C: cover yourself

D: run

E: your own option

Every question had E above, with space to actually write down an answer. I finished it around ten and Ramsey took it. The cells of the jail were clean, recently painted, and neat. Man, if every jail were like this, I'd break the law more often.

Ramsey came for me at 2, and took me to a shower. The soap was kinda sweet, and so was the shampoo and conditioner. But I wasn't in the mood to complain. I was really squeaky clean for the first time since I left home. He patiently waited outside without looking at me, and I was thankful for that. There are so many horror stories about kids in jail. It looked like I had fallen into a good one.

Ramsey took me out and walked me across the street to the Court House. Upstairs, we came to a door marked Superior Court.

The inside was a small version of what you might see on TV. The judge was an older man reading a file. There was a court recorder seated at her desk. Ramsey walked me down the aisle, and stopped me in front of the Judge.

“So, you broke into Moe’s diner, ate an entire peach pie, stole half a loaf of bread, some cheese and mayo.” He looked over the edge of the police report. “How was the pie?”

I smiled shyly. “It was so good I couldn’t stop at one piece.”

He gave me an answering smile. “I know the feeling. But I pay for mine. How do you plead?”

“Guilty.” I said softly.

He looked at me. “Do you want to go for a full scale trial or do you want to just go straight to the sentencing?”

“I was hungry, and it was wrong, but I did it, your honor. Let’s just cut out all of the stuff in the middle.”

“All right. We have some things to clear up before I can pass sentence. Deputy Ramsey, take him away.”

I spent the next four days in the jail. Good food, a soft and warm bed, and questions. They were understandably confused when they discovered that I had run away on one day, but hadn’t been reported as missing for over a week; not until the police came out to ask Richard where I had been, since the school had reported me truant. That only happened because Richard was evasive when the school called. I had offered

to help around the station and the desk man, Hennessy after warning me that it would not go well if I ran, had supplied either a broom or mop and bucket so I could do the floors. Every night he'd repay me by buying a slice of that dreamy pie.

Then I was back before the judge There was a strikingly attractive woman in an old fashioned dress seated in the gallery when Deputy Dietrich brought me in.

The judge nodded as if to himself, then tapped the papers in front of him. "First, I spoke with Moe. While he is understandably upset about the broken window, you limited your theft to a small amount of food instead of trying to break into an empty cash register or filling your bag.

"We spent the last few days corresponding with the police back in your home town and they also talked with people who knew you. With a few exceptions you come out of it as a good kid with nothing bad to say about you, and you have no previous record.

"With Moe's permission the charges are reduced to vandalism and petty theft, but you get three years in Mariposa county for vandalism, and since you ate an entire peach pie, I am adding two years for the theft. Is that understood?" I nodded. Now the hammer would come down. "Therefore I am sentencing you to five years total, all charges to run consecutively. That's the good news.

"This leaves me with two choices. First I can send you to the County road camp for five years. You're a juvenile, and we don't have the facilities to handle the few we get. But I warn you the road camp is where we put everyone else; thieves vandals and those that like to fight, all of the low lives. You might not be a crimi-

nal when you go in, but it is my experience that you will be when you come out.

“Twenty years ago, we added a different place to send you. It is as strict as the road camp, but after five years there I can pretty much guarantee that you will be rehabilitated. But one infraction of the rules, and you will be in the road camp before you can say ‘I was only kidding’. Interested?”

I nodded numbly. He nodded as if he had expected it. “Madam Sofia?” I heard a whisper of cloth, and the woman that had been seated came forward. “I turn him over to your care. Boy, you have a chance to turn your life around. Use it.”

Madam Sofia looked at me coolly then opened her purse. She brought out a cameo choker with a pink ribbon. “Put this on please.”

“What?’ But that’s a piece of woman’s jewelry!” I protested.

“The first step to entering my facility is obedience. Put it on, or go to the road camp.” There was steel in her voice. I gulped, and took the choker. “Officer Ramsey, if you will assist?”

He reached past me, taking the steel rings at the ends and put the choker on me. Madam Sofia adjusted it so that it covered my Adam’s apple, and I heard the click of a lock. It fit tightly, and underneath the smooth velvet I could feel what might have been wires.

“You have heard of restraint bracelets such as they use on sex offenders?” She asked me. I nodded. “This is the same basic thing. If you try to remove the choker, it will immediately send a signal, and the police will pick you up. If you go outside of the bounds I set, it will signal them. Either will get you sent to the road camp. Un-

like the bracelets I mentioned, this has a secondary function." She held up a small black box. "At need this will give you an electric shock like a Taser. Now come with me." She turned, and I followed that wide skirt out of the building.

There was a large 1972 Cadillac limo, and the driver opened the door. Madam Sofia motioned for me to get in, then climbed in herself. Up close the attractive features looked a little cold. Her auburn hair was in a tight bun, and the blue dress with its high collar set off her eyes.

"Now, have you any questions?"

"What kind of, place are we going to?" I asked.

"It is a correctional facility of course. It is also a school that handles all of the nonviolent problem children of the county which is why our inmates are called 'students' rather than prisoners. Because it is a private school you are expected to excel.

"It is merely called the Academy here. We have at present forty-two students ranging in ages from fourteen to twenty-one. There are four levels of student in the Academy. There are the Pinks, which is your designation at present. They are the ones that have been in the Academy for less than a year, or who prove recalcitrant. Then there are the Yellows who are students that have been there more than a year, or have proven compliant. Then there are the Greens who are the ones that have been there for more than half of their sentence, have been compliant as well as good students or have excelled. Last are the blues, who are merely counting the days before their release, or have proven themselves in other ways.

“As they are considered senior to you, all of the girls of higher ranked colors may give you instructions. However, they cannot order you to do anything you consider morally repugnant. Only one student has been physically assaulted in the twenty years I have run the facility, and that miscreant went to the road camp that very day. You do get the equivalent of time off for good behavior, but I am the final arbiter of what good behavior is.

“There are other things you will need to know, but I will wait until we have reached the Academy.”

The miles went by, and soon I could see what looked like a Victorian mansion on the horizon. As they came closer, I could see it was actually a series of buildings, barns, out buildings and in the center the actual mansion itself. Then I saw the fence. It was razor wire and electrified.

“That is to forestall the idea that you can merely walk out.” She told him. “Not only would you get quite a jolt from the electricity, and cut up by the wire. You would also get a trip to the road camp immediately.” The driver thumbed a contact, and the gate rolled back. The entire facility sprawled over about thirty acres of land, with trees and grasslands. There were cows and sheep, and near one of the barns I saw pigs chickens and geese. Horses moved around a small corral, and I saw girls out there grooming them, riding them. Maybe it wouldn’t be so bad here.

The car pulled up to the mansion, and half a dozen girls came down to meet us. They were in dresses not unlike Madam Sofia’s, something out of the late 19th or early 20th century, and each had a choker except theirs were on either green or blue ribbons.

The driver opened the door, and Madam Sofia stepped out. I followed, and there was a rustle among the girls. "A new one." Someone said.

"Yeah, but he's cute." Another said. There was giggling, but then it fell silent as they all curtsied in unison.

"This is James. He is our newest student. Matilda, you and Sara take him to be fitted out. Then up to my office."

"Yes, Madam Sofia." A brunette with hazel eyes and a blue choker said. She reached out. "Come James. Your future awaits."

The rules

I followed the pair of giggling girls into the building. The mansion had the lived in feel that a lot of old buildings had, of being crushed beneath history itself. The only sound was the clicking of their heels as they led me upstairs. Finally they stopped at a door on the fourth floor.

"I am sure that Madam Sofia has told you that we can give you instructions, and I will give you a warning now." The blonde girl said. "You will dress as we tell you to dress, wear what you are told to wear, and you will not complain. If you do not believe that, you may ask Madam Sofia when we get to her office. If you give us any trouble starting now, Thaddeus will gladly drop you at the road camp instead. Am I making myself clear?" I nodded.

"Before we go any farther, proper introductions are in order. I am Sara, and this is Matilda." The blonde

waved toward the brunette. "I have been here since I was thirteen, and will soon be graduating, so understand that I have gone through everything you will in the next few days. It will be a bit wrenching at the start, but willingness to obey is important."



With that, she opened the door. Matilda went first, and, at a motion from Sara, I went next. The room was full of clothes on neat racks. I stopped, looking around in shock. All of the clothes were women's clothes.

"Wait a minute!" I turned. "I am not dressing like a girl!"

Sara stepped over, looking slightly down from her 5'9" in heels. "I will show you something. Before I do I will tell you now that this is neither a joke nor a come on. Is that understood?" At my nod, she bent forward, caught the hem of her dress with one hand and lifted it. As I stood there stunned, she caught my hand, and slipped it between her legs.

For a moment, I was beyond amazement. Had this girl actually... Then I recognized what I felt. In those soft panties was a cock just like mine.

"You're..."

"Yes. I am boy, and so are all of the girls here." Sara released my hand, and dropped her skirt, smoothing it automatically. "Before you decide to run screaming, I should warn you that the men at the road camp know about this Academy. They know that if a young man is sent there and the crime is not violent they probably came here first.

"Picture what that means to them; they will descend on you like vultures on a mule, and if you are lucky, they will not merely smash out your teeth to make their pleasure easier.

"So remember the rules of the Academy are strict but fair. You will not be forced to do anything beyond dressing as you are told, but if one of us-" she touched her choker, '-say you must do it, remember that we are

merely enforcing those rules. Now, please, strip down.”

As I stood there, shivering in fear, Matilda and Sara first measured me then began gathering clothing. One set was laid out, while others were folded in a pile to the side, or hung on hangers beside it.

“We have much more sedate uniforms worn most of the time and even casual dress for when we must do outside chores. However since this is your first day, you will be dressed formally. You will have three formal outfits.

“Now from the skin out. We will help you get into your clothing, but you will learn to dress yourself properly by this time next week.” Sara held out a pair of panties lifting each article as she explained. “In order, panties corset chemise, stockings garters shoes, hoop skirt, underskirts one and two, blouse then skirt. Your roommate will assist you in cleaning and make up when you feel the need to add it to your repertoire. Before you ask, no, make up is by your own decision.” She motioned to the clothing. “Now, get dressed. If you need assistance, you only need to ask.”

I picked up the panties, hand shaking. Then I pulled them up until they were snug on my butt.

“Excuse me.” Matilda reached out a delicate hand, and slid it down into the panties, pushing my cock back between my legs. “We do not want to have you sticking up where others can see, do we?” She asked.

“Uh, no.” I picked up the corset looking at it. I had seen them being worn in movies, that kind of thing. But to me it was just a flat construction of cloth with a bewildering array of laces and clips. I looked at them pleadingly.

Sara sighed. "Hold onto that pole there." She instructed. I walked over, holding the vertical pole, and Sara slid the corset around my waist. "Now I will tighten this until it is snug. There are catches on the front so that you can take it off without having to do the laces up again, but if your weight changes too much, it will have to be redone. Except for PE or chores outside the house, you will wear one of these at all times. All other times you will wear a bra."

She began tightening the laces, and I gasped, as my waist was forced inward by the pressure. Then it stopped, and I leaned into the pole, gasping.

"I, can't, breathe." I gasped.

"It will take some practice, but in a month you won't even notice, trust me." Matilda said.

She motioned toward a full-length mirror, where I could see that I was now wasp waisted with... "My god, I have teats in this!"

"My dear anyone who wears a corset has cleavage. Now let us go on..." Sara held out the chemise, an undershirt that tied in front, concealing the corset, with full tight sleeves that buttoned at the wrists.

A pair of white silk stockings was brought out, and Matilda automatically gathered one of them in until they were a narrow band in her hands. "Did you see how I did that?" At my nod, she handed me the other. "Do what I did. Make sure the toe is down and forward. The seams must run straight up your legs. Like the dress, these are formal wear only. You will have nylons and a garter belt for everyday wear."

I took the stocking, carefully made it a band as Matilda had done. Then tried to put them on standing up. I immediately realized that with the corset on, I

couldn't bend over far enough to do so. Matilda clucked, then led me to a chair, where I found that I could bend enough to put the stockings on by lifting my foot and crossing it over the other leg. Sara chided me gently, moving the stocking incrementally so that the seam ran straight up the back of the leg. They were held up with round garters. "You are allowed garter clips when you move into yellow. These like the corset are to remind you of your status."

The shoes were pumps with two-inch heels, and I almost fell when I tried to stand. "Don't worry, like the corset, you won't even notice them even when you go to three inches next month."

The linen underskirts were tied on one by one, and finally I was handed a pale green blouse. I looked at the pale greens of the entire outfit then looked at them puzzled.

"Why are my clothes green?"

"I thought you would look nice in mint." Matilda said. "And the saffron and the salmon will also look good when you wear them instead." She motioned toward the clothing that was on hangers. Only then did I realize that except for the white stockings and black shoes, everything was color coordinated.

Sara stepped back. "Now, let us see. Well enough for a first attempt. Take a look."

I stood precariously, and looked in the mirror. From the neck down, it was a vision from an antebellum world, an outfit that would have looked perfect in the old movie *Gone With the Wind*. Above it all, my own face and ratty hair.

“Well I see we will need to have you in the hair and nail parlor today.” Matilda said. “The hair must be cut properly and those nails are a fright.”

“But-” I bit my lip.

Sara nodded. “Good call, my dear. To look like a lady, you need your nails and hair fixed. Everything else is voluntary. Now, please come with me.”

The two girls led me back down the stairs. I found almost immediately that with the long skirts and heels, I had to slow down walking, and use the banister while lifting the skirt. The girls walked one before and one behind, and the one time I slipped Matilda’s hand shot out and caught me before I could fall. They reached the third floor without a major mishap, and they led me to a door marked Head Mistress. Sara knocked twice then opened the door.

Madam Sofia sat behind a desk, and seated before her a girl was taking dictation. She was smaller than I, maybe five foot five in the heels, with a green choker. “Please, a moment.” Madam Sofia said then looked at the girl. “Andrea, continue; ‘your daughter has shown an aptitude for the work here at the Academy, and has asked to work here as a teacher’s aide. We have checked with the local colleges, and in their opinion, we are fully qualified to teach her the requirements of not only a teacher’s aide, but a grade school teacher as well. Sincerely’, sign it, have it typed on my desk before the end of the day.”

“Yes Madam Sofia.” Andrea replied softly. She stood, curtsied to Madam Sofia, looked at me for only a moment, then swirled through a side door.

“Has our new student given you any trouble?” Madam Sofia asked.

“No, Madam Sofia.” Matilda said. “He did as he was told.”

“She, my loves, she.” Madam Sofia looked at me. “There was the idea back in the 19th century that if a boy could not learn to behave, that treating him like a girl might make him behave better. It fell out of fashion at the turn of the century, but in this county, there are a number of people who are shall we say, extremely well off. They fund this Academy to assure that boys such as you will learn to behave in polite society.

“There is all sorts of talk about rehabilitation in modern day society, but if you are not taught what is right and wrong by your parents, what are they to do? Locking you up in a prison with the creatures that inhabit them will not teach you respect for anything but force violence and mindless authority. Prisons have rules merely to try to keep the lid upon a boiling pot, and a lot of times, the new prisoners are merely fresh meat thrown to starving animals. If they are lucky, one man will take them under their wing. He will use them as he sees fit, but will make sure others do not brutalize them.

“But if there is no such man, you become meat for any man to take. Such is not the case here. The rules here allow you to live with the others, assures that there will be no violence, and that you can remain chaste if you wish. All you must remember is the rules are not guidelines; they are set in stone. Any breach of the minor rules by one of our students will first be dealt with by corporal punishment.

“However, the stricter rules, those against violent actions, attempted escapes or consistent failure in obedience will be punished automatically. You will be sent to the road camp. I have no doubt the girls have told

you the horror stories. I warn you that they are working from third and fourth hand accounts. The camp is far worse than they might imagine for someone who has already failed here.

“As I said in the car, all of the higher ranked colors may give you instructions. However, they cannot order you to do anything you consider morally repugnant or wrong. As they have no doubt already told you, dressing as you are, styling your hair, dealing with your nails and the way you speak to others is compulsory. Anything more will be of your own free will. Nothing beyond that will be forced upon you. If you have any doubt about what they may or may not instruct you to do, do as you are instructed, then ask someone senior to that person. That includes Andrea or myself.

“You may as others have here, do just what you are instructed to do and no more. However this will earn you no time off because all you are doing is existing; you will have shown no willingness to make something better of yourself. Good grades will earn time off your sentence, complying more with the dress code will also get you time off. Learning to treat others respectfully and going beyond what is demanded of you will also count in your favor. However a girl of a higher color can be reduced if they misbehave. Since you are already at the lowest color, for you it is punishment, or the road camp.

“Other students are honor bound to report any disobedience. We have no code of silence here when it comes to my rules. But it goes beyond that. All rooms in the facility have wired for both sound and vision by experts and everything is recorded, and reviewed. If you violate the rules, and are seen on camera, or upon review you will be punished. If anyone sees you and

does not report it, they will be punished. In comparison to what you might receive, they know it would be demotion or worse.”

“Now in other prisons they have problems with sex, because those who want will take it. You will not offer, or accept intentional sexual contact with another student before you are legally of age, also, when you are of age you will not stick that worthless piece of meat in anyone, nor will you allow another girl to do this with you. You will not play with it, for that is wrong. It will be considered unwillingness to comply.

“However we do understand that young girls might wish for a bit of a cuddle or to satisfy their needs so our rule here is simple reciprocity. You will not engage in any sexual contact with another unless they wish it. If you feel the need to indulge yourself with another, God gave you hands and a mouth, and that is what you will use, and that alone.

“If you do not wish to indulge you may run laps on the track or swim them in the pool with a lifeguard. Cold showers also help.

“There are seven men who work here, Thaddeus whom you have already seen. Mr. Marsten the caretaker who does the maintenance on the buildings, his assistant Michael, Mr. Logan the groundskeeper, and his assistant Nathaniel, Mr. McCormick the stable hand who also takes care of the farm animals beyond the basics, and his assistant John. You will have no unnecessary direct physical contact with them. If one of them tries to force you into anything I have so far enumerated, if a girl of a higher color tries, you will report it to either one of the higher ranking girls you trust, Andrea or myself. Is that clear?”

“Yes ma’am.”

"I will always be Madam Sofia. All of your teachers will be called Lady. Girls who wear blue chokers will be called Mistress unless you are in privy, when you may call them by their given names."

"In privy?"

"Alone in private."

"Oh."

"Now, Sara will take you on a tour of the grounds, explain our procedures, and show you your room assignment. Then after dinner she will escort you to the salon where your hair and nails will be done. From this moment on, you will learn to speak softly walk correctly, and act like a young lady rather than a hoodlum. You will speak when addressed, answer politely, and in classes will raise your hand and wait to be called. You must pass each class with a C+ or higher to go on to the next grade. There is no bell curve, so I mean real learning not that politically correct pap they call education outside these walls. According to your school records, you should be in tenth grade. However from the questionnaire you filled out, your reading level is around first year college, your mathematics around seventh, and your spelling and grammar around ninth. You will catch up on all of those before going to the proper grade level. Since you cannot go to your normal classes until that is done you will study deportment and etiquette.

"This school is the equivalent of a Catholic finishing school, which means if you graduate from here with a high school diploma you will be reading at what others call a second year of college level or more. Our teachers are all graduates of this Academy, so they will no doubt know what you might think or plan. So do not expect them to be stupid.

"Now, who shall we place her with?"

"What about her name?" Sara asked.

"Oh, yes, I had forgotten. We give you a female name to remind you to act like a lady, so I think Jessica. Is that understood Jessica?"

"Uh, yes Madam Sofia."

"One thing you will learn is to be concise and clear in your speaking my dear Jessica. No more of this 'uh' like a simpleton. Think before you speak, and enunciate clearly." She looked at Sara. "Who has an open space at present?"

"Anna has just lost her roommate, Madam Sofia." Sara said. "Bridgett was reduced to pink and moved to another room, as you recall."

"Oh, yes. Poor girl, and she appeared to be doing so well... Very well, escort her to her room, and have others bring her things there. Lady Beatrice will test you after your sojourn in the salon to see which remedial classes you will be taking."

I started to turn, but Sara caught his arm. "You always curtsy when given instructions by any teacher or senior student."

"Sorry."

"The phrase is 'I am sorry and will try to do better' with the proper honorific." Sara said.

I bobbed hesitantly, and Sara sighed. "Watch me, and learn." She caught the edges of her skirt, lifting slightly as she bent forward, knees dipping so that her head was even with my chest eyes downcast then rose to her full height again. "That is a curtsy, a shortening of the word 'courtesy' from the 16th century. Now give me a proper curtsy."

I bit my lip, and repeated her gesture. "I am sorry and will try to do better mistress."

"Better. Now apologize properly to Madam Sofia."

I turned back, gave a proper curtsey saying, "I am sorry and will try to do better Madam Sofia."

"Well done. Be about it girls." Madam Sofia took a file from her in box, and opened it.

Sara led me into the hall. "I can take her from here, Matilda."

"All right my love." Matilda leaned forward, pecking the other girl on the cheek. "Tonight?"

"Not tonight. I have the final in pre-law tomorrow." Sara harrumphed. She pulled Matilda back, giving her a slow sensuous kiss. "But my week end is free."

"Oh good!" Matilda gushed, then she turned to me. "Jessica, behave and this is a wonderful place. Misbehave enough, and you will not be here. Try to resist, and it can be hell. I know. Good day to you." She gave a brief curtsey, and sailed down the hall.

"Come on, Jessica. First the tour, then your room, dinner then your hair and nails." We walked to the stairway. "Take it slow. Remember that you are now two inches taller, and your heels are narrow. Use the banister. That is what it is for." She walked ahead, her own pace slow and stately. On the first floor she turned toward the back on the building, and into the sunlight.

Orientation

"You probably have never been in a school like this one-"

"That's obvious." I said.

Sara stopped, and turned. "We are alone, so I will let that comment slide. However I will warn you now that there are some of our blue or green ribbons that would have reported you for that comment alone. When I wish your comments, I will ask for them. If you feel the need to comment, you will ask politely for permission. I seriously doubt that the last school you went to expected crinolines and corsets for the boys, but here they are normal."

"Sorry."

"Must I tell you again?"

I flushed then gave a slow curtsy. "I am sorry and will try to do better mistress."

"You're learning. Good. Now, may I continue?"

"Please."

Sara began walking again. "Our curriculum is mixed because we have to deal with the product of public education in all of its stupidities. We have students that were considered grade level that cannot read at even half that. Madam Sofia has gone back to the classical form of education. We learn not only English, but also four languages each, two of which we chose, the other two are Greek and Latin. All language training is elective after your first year. If you are of a mind you can learn any European Language, Hebrew, Arabic, Hindi, Chinese, Japanese or Korean.

"This is so that we are able to converse on a widely based level and read such books as the Odyssey and Anaëid in the proper languages. Now I know part of you is asking, 'why should I learn two dead languages?' but as Madam Sofia will tell you a grounding in Greek allows you to learn Turkish and even Russian

more readily, and a grounding in Latin helps you learn French Italian or Spanish. If you learn a Chinese dialect it helps you learn the other forms of the language, and by inference, you can learn Korean or Japanese. Also, when you read a book in the language of it's author, you see the nuances that were left out when some lazy fool translates them. Greek and Latin are the languages still used for science. An education here will make it easier if you go on to become a doctor or lawyer as I myself have discovered.

"Our classes are in eight periods of one hour each, with breaks between the third and fourth for lunch and between the seventh and eighth for dinner.

"One class per day is animal husbandry, where you take care of the animals assigned to you by your schedule. One is for PE, and you have a separate uniform for that which is worn only during PE. As a pink, you will be assigned some cleaning; helping out in the kitchen, sweeping, dusting, laundry or mopping, and that is done for an hour every day. No one but a teacher can call you from either tending the animals or cleaning except for Madam Sofia, or a senior student passing on the orders of one of them. That assures that girls do not slack off."

I had been wondering ever since the conversation in the hallway above, and had to ask. "Can I ask a question?"

"The correct usage is 'may I'."

"May I ask a question?" She raised a finger warningly. I gave a slow curtsey. "I am sorry and will try to do better mistress. May I ask a question mistress?"

"You may."

“Back up in the hall, Matilda asked...” I blushed.

“If your question was, are we lovers, the answer is yes on occasion.” She stopped and looked at me for a long moment. “Does that bother you?”

“Yes it does, actually.”

“No matter. I felt as you do at first. We all did. It took me almost two years to get over the strictures society has placed on people. When the time comes, you will discover that some pleasure is better than no pleasure at all. You may think you will never indulge, but I would tell you in all honesty that the time will probably come when you will not only accept it, but do it willingly. The number of those who have resisted that impulse can be counted on the fingers of your hands in twenty years.” We began walking again.

“Thank you.” I considered. “May I ask another question mistress?”

“You may.”

“Why did I end up here rather than at the road camp?”

“Oh is that all. Well you remember the questionnaire you filled out? Did it seem a bit, odd?”

“Yes it did.”

“That questionnaire in one form or another, has been in use since the Academy’s inception. It tests not only your basic intelligence, but also how easy it would be to mold your personality. If you wish, you can ask Andrea or Madam Sofia, and they will even go through it in detail with you to explain why. I do not have the skill to do so, though I believe Doctor Mary does.”

“Doctor Mary?”

“Our resident physician. Like the other female staff members, she is a graduate of the Academy. She is well schooled in psychology and pharmacology. You will be meeting her tomorrow morning.

“You see there are versions of this facility not only here, but in other countries as well. Most of them however do not bother with teaching criminals how to behave. They are used to systematically break the will of those that have been kidnapped and force them to comply.”

“You mean, they kidnap boys and force them to be girls?”

“Oh my yes. Of course their methods are not like ours. We had a girl who reached green status without learning how to care for her clothes and hair. Then she decided that forcing another girl to satisfy her was all right because she only had a few months remaining. Since her crime was so heinous after almost five years, she was not sent to the road camp. She was sent to one of those facilities overseas.”

“You mean...”

“Right now, she probably has someone using her as she would have used the other girl here. Where we do not know.”

“But Madam Sofia said someone had been raped and sent to the road camp!”

“That girl had been here only a few months. This girl I speak of was too close to the end of her stay. The Academy punishes harshly when you have reached my stage. It is not unlike a puppy you have lovingly raised from birth that bites you for no reason when he is older. When he was still a puppy you would send him

to a loving home or shelter. But if he is older, you put him down.”

She walked quietly for a moment. “From what I have been able to ascertain, there have been five girls in the last 20 years that have received that punishment. Each committed crimes of violence against their fellow students, and were greens or blues.

“You see; we have some rules that are the same as normal prisons. If you break the more serious rules and you are a yellow or pink, you go to the road camp with additional time on your sentence. If you are a green or blue, you can get the additional time, be demoted and stay here, or...” She flicked her hand toward the horizon. “You get sent away.” She shivered. “The girl I spoke of? We received a tape of her... training. If you think it is horrible touching one of us in a sexual manner, consider having someone rape you in both mouth and anus, and they do it until you accept their actions willingly.”

“What about regular... graduates?”

“They differ. Most dress in their men’s clothes, and walk out. But they are more thoughtful than a man released from a regular prison. They don’t commit crimes, or get angry easily. All of the evil fire has been transmuted into willingness to work together. Some will even return. All of the men who work here were once students. They have accepted why it was done, and bettered themselves by it.

“Others cannot go back to normal life. They do not feel the willingness to become what they were when they take up their lives as men again. As Madam Sofia has mentioned, all of our teachers and female staff were once graduates, and have been for over fifteen years.”

“But...”

“But they are not women?” Sara laughed.

She took me by the hand, “Come back here with me.”

She led me into a deeper thicket of trees, where no one would see us. “There are cameras here, but what I am about to do is easily explained.” She unbuttoned the bodice of her dress, opening it. The corset below it was a deep rich red, with roses and other flowers along the fringe at the top. She unclasped the top two catches of her corset, and opened it wider. I stared as two perfectly formed breasts came into view.

“Those of us that have decided to stay have hormone treatments and implants if they wish. What I have now is just the hormones. My family has a lot of big-breasted women in it. When I am done, I could get married, and do everything for my husband but bear his child.” She wriggled, the breasts flowing in natural movement. “Want to touch them?”

I reached out hesitantly, and gently tweaked the left nipple. She hissed, head going back. “No more of that, my love. It is after all, your first day, and I am still a boy down below.” She did up her clothing again, then led me back out onto the path. We reached the edge of the corral fence without saying anything else.

“The horses are boarded by patrons who know what sort of school we have here. The girls that exercise them also clean the stables, so there is a down side to that. The cows must be milked twice a day, once very early around five in the morning, and again in the late afternoon. Others do the cleaning of those stalls. All of the milk is for our own use here, and fresh warm raw milk is a treat you have probably never experi-

enced. You can eat our beef raw because the animals are raised on grain, and grass they find. No chances of Mad Cow disease for us. Until you have eaten range fed beef, you have not lived.

“The chickens and geese are also for our own consumption, as are the hogs, though butchering them is left to the men. The sheep supply us with mutton and lamb, and wool so that we can learn to spin weave knit and crochet. There is nothing really heavy to do with them except for the stables and dairy barn, but even that is not difficult, merely dirty.”

I looked out at the girls running around in skirts and blouses that would have looked perfectly normal in the city. There was a deep bell sound, and I looked around, startled.

“Class change. Stand right here.”

From the house I could hear a rumble as students went from class to class. The girls that had been working with the animals gathered and waited. A few minutes later five or six came out dressed as the others were. They briefly spoke about what had been done then the new girls went into the corrals while the others headed toward the house.

“We have dances four times a year. One for Christmas and New Years combined, another for the Spring- next month actually- another in the Summer, and the last for Halloween and Thanksgiving combined. Boys are invited, and you will learn to dance, because the dances are obligatory. They are to assure that you learn proper decorum.”

“What if...” I considered; here I am, in a dress, being forced to dance with some boy. What would get into his mind?

“If he makes a pass at you?” She looked away then back at me. “He will not force you, that is not allowed. He can and will however accept what you offer. If you feel the urge to be... more friendly, that is allowed.”

“Now, is there anything else you wish to see out here?”

I shook my head.

“Then come, I will take you to your room.”

Roommate

We went past the mansion to a large building behind it. It was Victorian in design like the rest of the buildings, two stories tall, with a score of chimneys. “The entire estate was owned by Madam Sofia’s family. This used to be the servant’s quarters, and the upper level was added when the Academy was founded. We have room for eighty students.

“The Staff lives on the second floor, and except for whichever teacher is assigned the night duty, they have free time as does everyone else.

“The night duty woman assures that you do not wander the halls at night, or leap from bed to bed. There are two girls to a room, and all of the newly inducted girls stay with a girl who is either blue or green. This assures that there is someone there who can help you getting dressed, help with make up and how to do your nails and hair. They instruct you in what you may and may not wear at any time, and assure that you are clean in mind and body. To be in other words, a shoulder you can cry on when you feel the need to cry.

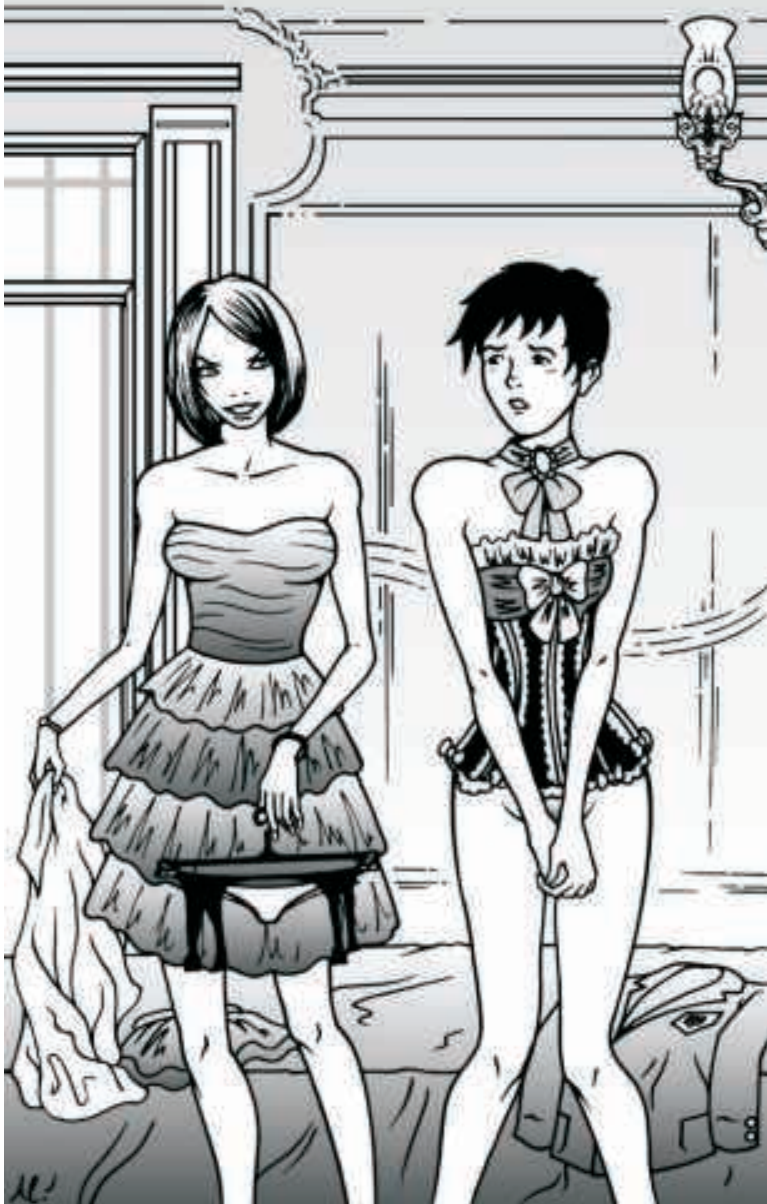
“During the weekends, you are allowed to dress less formally, as on your off hours as well. But less formally does not mean you sneak into boy’s clothes. Your roommate will instruct you in that regard.”

She led me to a room, and opened the door. It was about the size of a standard dormitory room in a college, with a stone fireplace set into the wall. “We do not have heating or air conditioning, so the windows can be opened when it is hot, and there is wood for the fire which is delivered to the rooms by one of the girls on cleaning duty. That is stored outside in the woodpile and Michael, Nathaniel, or John fills it every day. If you are on cleaning crew and the wood has fallen below the acceptable level; clearly marked on the wall, you may check their schedule and see who is to deliver it that day, and see them about it.” She opened a standing wardrobe already marked JESSICA.

Inside was a bewildering array of clothes. I had spent a month on the road with only three changes of shirts and two pair of pants. I would have needed a truck to move all of this.

“The clothes are hung in sequence from left to right. Formals to the far right corsets next to them along with an 19th century maid’s uniform, school uniforms in the middle, casual dress nightgowns and casual wear on the left. Your undergarments, shorts, and tee shirts are here.” She knelt opening the drawers and pulling them out in sequence. “Dirty clothes go in the hamper in the bathroom, and are returned either folded or on hangers laid upon your bed. You will put them away as they are arranged now. Casual dress is only worn when cleaning or in the corral, and you have time to get dressed if you learn how to do it right. After eighth class you must clean your underwear and do any

homework before you relax, and that means if you see a girl still in uniform, she is or at least should be studying.



“So, let us get you dressed in a proper uniform first, shall we?”

I looked at her. “Are you going to leave the room?”

“Modesty is becoming when you have reached green or blue. Until then you had best expect to have people watching you get dressed and undressed because we are critiquing you as you do. So, out of the formal wear, into a uniform!” She turned her back on me and took out another pair of panties, garter belt, black skirt, white blouse, a neckerchief and a jacket with a blazon on the pocket.

I blushed even worse than I had when there had been two of them helping. Maybe it was because beneath those clothes, she not only had breasts, but also had let me touch them.

I was down to the corset and started to unclip it, but her hand stopped me. “As I said. Except in casual dress or PE, you wear the corset at all times. It forces you to stand up straight. That is an important lesson in deportment. Besides, your roommate will probably spend an hour or more sizing all of the other corsets to you this evening.”

“How many corsets will I have?”

“Six. Five for every day, and one for formal wear. You are allowed more because by the time a girl has been here a while, she wants something with more color than these bland little white ones.”

I remembered her corset, and unbidden I felt myself get hard. She looked down, smiling gently. “One day perhaps. But today I must use harsher measures.” She cocked her middle finger, and gave my cock a sharp smack. I winced shouting in pain, but the erection sub-

sided. She handed me the new pair of panties, and I slipped them on.

“Place your dick back between your legs. Unless you want some older girl to assume you might be willing, even if you are underage.” I reached down, placing it as instructed. I put on the garter belt, threading the clips through the panties, then slid on the nylons. They didn’t have seams, for which I was grateful, and I clipped them. The skirt hung to about an inch above my knees, and the neckerchief was square knotted to hang even with what would have been my bust line.

“You have bras, and when you are not wearing a corset, you will wear a bra. If you do not, it is punishment.” She lifted a wrist and checked her watch. “We have a short while before the end of seventh period, so why don’t we go to my room, and once I have changed, we can go to dinner.”

We went down the hallway to a room four doors down, where Sara immediately began getting changed. I didn’t want to watch, but it was both appealing and disturbing to see the prim and proper girl I had been with for the last hour become the staid student she was beneath it all.

I felt my erection trying to come back up, and I thought of baseball scores and election returns. But when she knelt wearing only that corset and stockings, I groaned.

She looked up, and I saw her smile gently. She chuckled then turned. I couldn’t see her erection, but I could see the upper slopes of her breasts, and just that sight brought a whimper to my lips. “You will have that problem for a while. I would help you but it will be painful.”

"No!" I backed up, and felt the door smack me across my back as I almost ran through it. She walked toward me, her hips swinging oh so slightly, the walk and the view screamed woman to my eyes. I looked away flushing so deeply I was surprised my knees didn't turn red too.

Her hand came up, gently turning my head to face her. "You like what you see. That much I can tell. But unless you are willing to return the favor, I cannot touch you there. Those are the rules." She bent forward, and I felt a ghost of a touch as she kissed my mouth. "It's a pity. I think you are going to be beautiful properly made up." She looked deeply into my eyes. "Shall I help you?"

I nodded wordlessly. She reached down, and I felt her nail dig into the flesh between the scrotum and the shaft. I bit my lip, trying not to scream. But my traitorous flesh went limp again.

Then she returned to the closet, getting into her uniform.

"Why... Why were you dressed like that before?"

"When you move up to green or blue, some of the work is done as an assistant to a staff member. When you are in the mansion working, you dress formally. I was working as assistant to Doctor Mary."

"You're a nurse too?"

"Heavens no! I was helping with the filing and keeping the computer files updated." She finished dressing. "How do I look?"

"Beautiful."

"Thank you." She stepped over, a hand gently running along my cheek. "In a few years; if you wish, I can

show you a better way to deal with that problem you had." She kissed me again, oh so gently then caught the doorknob. "We had best go."

We reached the mansion as the loud bell tolled again. Here it was even more disturbing as there was a flurry of motion. Girls seemed to explode from everywhere, books clutched to their chests as they hurried toward the door we had entered. Some older girls gave me an appraising look. Very few, mainly girls with pink and yellow looked as if they had never touched make up and had done nothing with their hair. They glared at me as they stalked past, and I looked at Sara in confusion.

"It's not unlike a race, track and field style. You already have soft features, and with your hair done properly, you will merely look like a girl without make up. Some of the girls have to really work at it." She waved, and an auburn haired beauty came over. "Anna, this is Jessica. She is the new girl, brought in only today. Your new roommate."

The green eyes watched me levelly. The voice was soft but low. "She has yet to go to the salon."

"After dinner. Then she will meet Lady Beatrice, and arrange for her testing." Sara looked at her watch again. "Say seven?"

"Very well. I will be in the room then." Anna looked at me somberly before walking on. She had not smiled during the entire conversation. I was merely a chore to her.

"She misses Bridgett." Sara sighed. "What a pity."

"What happened with Bridgett?" I asked.

"Well what I know is this. Bridgett has been here almost three years now. She was trying, or so we all

thought. She was promoted from Pink to Yellow long before her first year was over, and they had just decided to promote her to green just a few months ago. Since we had no new students, it was allowed that she and Anna could stay in the same room together, even though the rules say otherwise.

“They had become lovers, but according to the ones who review the tapes, Bridgett had been playing mind games with Anna almost from the moment she had been promoted to green. She had been flirting with Anna but not allowing Anna to touch her. Think my love. Let us say you had become infatuated with me. I let you look but not touch, flaunt myself in your face, but you are unrequited. Instead I would drive you to frenzy of need, then go and satisfy myself with Matilda. Or I have you bring me to completion, yet you do not receive that in turn.

“Anna stopped eating, she stopped studying. Madam Sofia had discovered what was happening, and decided to move them into separate rooms. But when they came to get her, Bridgett boasted about what she had done, said that Anna was so needy that she would beg to suck her off, and deserved nothing but scorn. Anna slapped her, then broke down in tears.”

She looked at me somberly. “Anna was punished for that blow, but her heart had been cut out of her by that sanctimonious bitch. So Bridgett was demoted to pink, and all she needs to do is speak the wrong word and she will be in the road camp, or worse.”

She opened a door and we walked into a spacious hall with five rows of long tables. I remembered the Harry Potter movies, and Hogwarts, but these of course didn't have to be that size. Along the far wall

was a long steam line with half a dozen girls busily setting out trays full of food. Sara led me over, and she leaned on the counter a bit. I noticed that it made her already long legs look longer somehow.

“Do you need any help Margaret?”

Another girl in casual dress with a paper hat on shook her head. “Except for the milk, it’s all good, Sara.” She looked at me, and her eye twinkled. “New blood?”

“Yes, this is Jessica. Jessica, this is Margaret, One of the three best cooks in the Academy.”

“One of the three?” Margaret gave a soft chuckle. “I should be at least one of the two best.”

“Matilda’s quiche is better than yours, and Halley makes much better roast lamb. But the three of you are much better than the other four cooks.”

“Seven cooks?” I asked.

“Yes, one cook per day.” Sara explained. “All are Blues who have shown a talent for it.”

“Ah! Eve is only a green!”

“Ah that is true.” Sara replied. “But if she would merely study and wear less make up she would have been a blue ages ago!”

“There is that.” She motioned toward the large institutional sized pitchers at the end of the line. “If you would take the milk out, my girls would be most appreciative.”

Sara led me down there, and lifted a pitcher gently. It was filled with foaming milk, and I sniffed. “It looks... I don’t know. Strange?”

“Here.” She got a small tumbler, and poured an inch. “Remember what I said about fresh warm milk? Try this!”

I sipped, and then looked at the glass in shock. All of the milk I had ever tasted was water in comparison!

“When they take milk these days, they process it. Remove almost all of the butterfat and cream, then they take what little is left and homogenize it. Then they cook it but that kills even the beneficial bacteria. That is what it means when they have pasteurized/homogenized on a milk carton. We skim off the cream and butterfat to make our own butter and cheese, but most of it is still there, and it is not pasteurized. Did you know that a baby gains his resistance to disease from his mother’s milk? Anything disease you can catch that a cow can also catch can be resisted if you merely drink whole milk. Modern day refrigeration takes care of that problem here. We drink almost all of our own production every day; it honestly does not keep long enough here to go bad, so all of the horror stories you might have heard about drinking unpasteurized milk are just that; stories. We even sell our surplus to Moe’s Diner.

“Now take that pitcher over to a quarter of the way down the Head table. I will start on the far table. We will meet in the middle.”

There were three pitchers per table, one in the center, and one at about where one quarter would be, three chairs I finally estimated. I had started on my second row when a pair of girls both with pink chokers came out to finish it up.

“Thank you.” One said. “I an Donna, this is Blanche.”

I looked at them. Donna was a titian redhead with a wicked look in her eyes, and almost no make up. I had gotten used to recognizing what it looked like. Blanche was a pale strawberry blonde with her hair in little Shirley temple ringlets no make up, and a slightly sour expression.

"Jessica." I said.

"Falling all over yourself to suck up, aren't you?" Blanche hissed.

"I am sorry?"

"You should be!" Blanche was turning red. "I at least fought them when they did this to me!"

"That is why they put you hair up that way." Donna said giggling.

"Hey!"

"You were warned." Donna told her. "They told you either take care of your hair or you would get ringlets. Are you going to make them spank you again?"

"Yes are you?" We turned. Sara stood there, toe tapping. "I see milk still waiting to go to the tables, and you seem to think that any new person that doesn't get punished for just being here is beneath you." She looked coolly at Blanche. "Shall I inform the Headmistress of this lack of enthusiasm?"

"No, mistress." Blanche curtsied. "I am sorry and will try to do better mistress."

"Then finish your duties. Tonight at nine I would like you to come to my room with Angela and we will discuss your... problems?"

Blanche went pale at that. "Yes, Mistress." Blanche curtsied again, and hurried off.

The girls began coming in, each taking a tray and going down the line. I picked one up and followed Sara. Dinner was pot roast, roasted potatoes, gravy, a mixed vegetable salad, and a small cup of pudding. I didn't comment, but the portions seemed small to me. Margaret who was at the end of the line reached over, setting a small cup with fruit ambrosia in it on my tray, and I thanked her. "Every new girl gets a treat their first day." She huffed, but I could tell she was pleased.

Sara led me over to a table. There seemed to be no order to seating, you sat where you wished. Matilda was already there, as was Anna and another blue introduced as Shannon.

"Until you are settled in, most of those that will speak freely to you will be blues and greens." Shannon told me. "They have already settled in, and will no doubt be more accommodating to your being new. The Yellows will tend to be a bit standoffish, because they remember when they were pinks, and they tend to be rather shy. It takes some of them like that. The other pinks, well there are problem girls there. Blanche has only been here a month and she is still restive."

Anna wiped her mouth. "Excuse me, please." She took her tray, scraped it into the trash, and sent it into the kitchen.

"Poor Anna." Shannon sighed. She held out the pitcher, and at my quiet thank you, she poured me some more of that delicious milk. "Bridgett put her through hell."

"Which girl is Bridgett?" I asked.

"Don't turn around, but when you leave the dining hall, you will see a brunette girl who is washing dishes. That is Bridgett."

We finally finished eating, and I was reduced to chasing a last smidgen of gravy that had gotten away. I felt not overly full, but satisfied. "Why am I not as hungry as usual?" I asked Sara. "That plate should have been only my first!"

"The corset does it at first. Compresses your stomach so that you feel full. After a while you will adapt. Now, are you ready for a new look?"

"Not really." I said. "But if I behave, I can be free sooner."

"That's the ticket." Matilda said. "Remember, you can get out of here faster by being a good little girl."

I started to rise, but stopped. Three sets of eyes were watching me, and I realized I had almost screwed up. I looked down. "May I please be excused?"

"Of course. Excuse me ladies." Sara stood, and we walked over to the trashcan. Through the steam I saw a dark haired girl dragging a tray of cleaned cups out of the industrial sized dishwasher. She looked angry at the world.

First tentative steps

The salon was on the first floor a short distance down the hall from the dining room. There was a squeal from a pair of girls who had been sitting talking, and they floated toward us. One was a blue, the other a yellow.

"Ah, Sara, bringing in the new girl?" The blue looked at me critically. "She hasn't done anything to deserve the Shirley Temple look, has she?"

“Oh Heavens no Jasmine!” They laughed together. “Look at her, what do you think?”

Jasmine looked me over, and I found myself blushing, and looking down. “Oh she is so cute and shy! How about a long fall combed from the front with a pony tail except in formal wear?”

“If you think so.” Sara waved airily. “You are our resident genius.”

“With that face she needs to show it off more. Such clean bone structure. She would be wonderful with a full makeover.”

“You know the rules.” Sara chided. “If she asks for it.”

“I know I know, but it is like painting the background to the Mona Lisa instead of the woman herself. Maybe a little tint?”

“Jasmine...” They looked at each other, and giggled. Sara looked at me, and shook her head. “Jasmine is a wizard when it comes to making you look better than you did before. She has already applied for permission to go to cosmetology school, and has been taking courses by mail with the help of Lady Beatrice, who learned the same skills during her time here. She could make you a blond goddess and have half the girls on their knees before you in supplication. The other half...”

“They would hate your guts.” Jasmine finished. “Now if you will take off the blazer and sit in the chair please?” She pushed me over, stripping off my blazer, seating me in the chair. “Decisions, decisions. Salma, your suggestions.” Jasmine picked up my hand, showing her my nails. They were torn and battered, clipped short. “What colors shall we start her on?”

The yellow came over, looking at the floor shyly. She stood with both hands clasped before her. "What color are her formal gowns?"

"Salmon, mint, and saffron." Sara told her.

"Then might I suggest a slightly darker green, such as forest green for the mint, mauve for when she wears salmon, and buttercup for the saffron?" She looked at me then looked down blushing. "The buttercup and mauve for everyday wear unless she would prefer red like some of the girls."

"Excellent choices. So begin the manicure, girl!"

Salma hustled off, then came back with a stand and chair. Silently she first cleaned, then buffed the nails as Jasmine kept up enough talk for all three of us as she washed then trimmed my hair. It was already a bit long, not quite to my shoulders, and she seemed incensed by that.

"Can't even use extensions without your permission." She huffed. "It is like fixing your dress using super glue!" She puttered about then went to get Sara who had stepped out. She brought the girl back in then stood at the head of the chair and waved at my head. "If she had shorter hair, it would be allowed automatically, if she were bald or had a crew cut I could use a wig. But it is just too long to merely allow the expression of my art!"

"Jasmine, I know it might have been a difficult decision, but would you like my advice?"

"Oh, please!"

"Have you asked her?"

“Have I...” She looked at me from her upside down perspective. “I had forgotten that. My dear, would you mind if I lengthened your hair?”

“What do you mean?”

“Remember the Lord of the Rings movies? The elf Legolas? They made his hair long by using extensions. I can do them, and they are easy to remove in a few months when your hair grows out, but I cannot do it without your permission.”

“I always thought Legolas was kind of cool.” I admitted. “Could you just extend it about an inch or two? Until it is below my shoulders?”

She leaned forward, giving me a quick peck on the lips. “Oh you are going to be divine!” She immediately opened a drawer, and took out strands of hair with minute clips. I couldn’t watch her, so instead I looked at Salma.

The girl noticed my attention, and blushed furiously. “Please, do not look at me.” She whispered. She buffed the nails of my right hand, and began to add the extensions.

“Never mind the poor girl. She broke her fast just a month ago, and she is still horribly embarrassed about it.” Jasmine teased. Salma blushed even deeper.

“You...”

“Yes.” She looked at me defiantly. “I wanted relief so badly, and Monica was willing, so first she sucked me, then I... I sucked her.”

“Then they spent the rest of the night sucking each other!”

“Please, Jasmine. Enough.” Salma begged.

“All right my love.” Jasmine stepped away from my head, lifting Salma’s face to kiss her. For a long moment, it was only the touch of lips, but Salma moaned, and her mouth opened. I watched in fascination as their tongues dueled, and Jasmine leaned back away from her. “And why didn’t you ask me?”

“I was afraid you would say no.” Salma said plaintively.

“To one like you or this little treasure I would never say no.” Jasmine said seriously. “Nothing shuts me up like such a sweet morsel.” She kissed Salma delicately again then looked at me. “After a while, sex will prey on your mind my young thing. Just go with the flow, and if it feels good, do it.”

Two hours later, Jasmine helped me up taking me to stand before a three sided mirror. My hand came up, and the vision of feminine delight in the mirrors lifted her hand to touch her face gently. I stared in amazement. It was still my face, but long brown strands that fell in a sheet to just above my bust line framed it. I was not only dressed like a schoolgirl, I looked like a schoolgirl. The nail polish was a soft yellow, like the petals of a daisy on my cheek.

“Oh god.” I whispered.

“Like it?” Jasmine asked. I nodded wordlessly.

Sara came in, and smiled shyly. “Oh my yes.” Then she shivered as if mentally changing gears. “Now come along, Jessica, you have to see Lady Beatrice before your day is done.”

I was given a small carry bag with four colors of nail polish and remover, shampoo and conditioner, and finally a bottle of moisturizer. I was told that when I decided to use make up that would be supplied along

with instruction on it's use. "The lotion is for your skin. Even if you don't use make up. You use it every day, and your roommate will make sure you use it correctly. You remove the nail polish every evening and redo it every morning. You do not have to wear the same color, but you will be properly made up or you will be punished."

"Ringlets." I said softly.

"Oh there are much worse hairdos! I can make you look like a bouffant dame of the fifties, or give you the huge hair of the B52s! Or bleach it ash blond or have it down to your waist. For the older girls this is just fun to have hair that long or that color. But for a new girl it is a pain in the ass." Jasmine looked at me with that mischievous expression. "Though an ash blond would look so good on you!"

We left, going up to the second floor where a door was marked ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR. Sara knocked then led me in.

Lady Beatrice like all of the girls I had seen so far was willowy, yet her hips were filled out more, as were her breasts. She was wearing a woman's business suit, with the jacket hung over her chair, and three buttons on her blouse opened to reveal the tops of her breasts. She looked up, and pointed at the chair across from her. I had only been wearing the corset for a few hours, but already I was trying to sit up as straight as possible. The boning cut into my legs or chest if I did not, and I didn't need too many sharp pokes to learn that lesson.

"You are Jessica. I have your school reports from Texas here, and I see you will need some remedial education. Don't feel too bad; every girl that comes here does. For the next month or so, your courses will be in those subjects you are remiss in, along with P.E. clean-

ing and outside chores of course. You will also take elocution with Lady Shawna, and deportment with Lady Beth." She handed over the schedule. "Starting tomorrow morning, we will take the first half of the day learning what remedial learning you must have. You will work on cleaning inside for the next few days, so you will not wear casual dress except when on duty with the animals. In the afternoons you will clean, take elocution and deportment, and of course P.E. We do have team sports, but few of them, primarily soccer softball basketball and field hockey. Every other organized sport is to teach you self-reliance, so we have swimming and track teams. You need not join any team.

"When either Lady Shawna or Lady Beth deem you satisfactory, you will be transferred to classes you are up to date in, so that you can continue your education. You cannot be promoted to Yellow until you have passed the elocution and deportment classes, no matter how good a student you might be here. Please keep that in mind.

"But that is by no means all you need to do. There are other courses, elective courses, which you may take, and some you are obliged to take. You are obliged to take home economics so that you can learn to cook. Lady Charlotte will test your abilities when you take your first class with her, and she will determine whether you need improvement as time goes on. You are obliged to take sewing so that you can learn to repair or make clothes. Neither of these is a pass/fail situation. You can learn to cook well enough for yourself, or go on to become a cordon bleu chef. You can learn to darn your socks and fit your clothing more comfortably, or you can go on to learn how to make clothing for any situation. Two of our graduates are profes-

sional designers making quite good money, and five of them work in major restaurants. These are the only classes in the Academy that are set up in this manner. You can as the poet said, settle to your own level of mediocrity in them.

“Our elective courses can teach you to work as an office assistant, as a nurse’s aid, cosmetology and hair styling, or as with Sara who brought you, teach you the beginning of a career in the law or medicine. If you take such a course and show promise, you can be promoted to Yellow very rapidly. The shortest time I have seen a girl take to go from pink to yellow was two and a half months. The longest was four years.

“Are there any questions?”

“No, Lady Beatrice.”

“You are starting off well. Continue and I will be seeing you in yellow or green very soon. You are dismissed.”

Sara led me back toward the dormitory. “She is a petty tyrant in some ways, but she makes sure you learn what needs to be learned.” Sara opined. “She changed the curriculum ten years ago because the outside attitude of social promotion almost slipped in. Like a Catholic school, we do not graduate to the next grade because our peers did. If you cannot learn, you can leave here with a tenth grade education. However those girls never get above basic green. If you will not learn, you are punished.”

The dormitory was bustling as we came in. One large reading room was filled with silent girls of all four colors studying. The elder girls were sometimes sitting beside the younger ones, tutoring them. Sara nodded at a couple that waved to her.

"I have Blanche and Angela over in my room at nine for that discussion. You will attend."

"Mistress?"

"A lot of the punishments are meted out by the Blues, so that it need not be addressed by Madam Sofia or a teacher. You will get to see how it is done. Hopefully it will be a minatory lesson."

"Minatory?"

"Meaning you will learn by watching what might happen to you. It is in the nature of a threat." She touched my cheek then leaned forward, brushing her lips on mine. "Learn from it and behave. As much fun as it might be to have you across my knees and warm your backside, I'd prefer to save it for fun."

"Well, it is now just before seven. Anna should be waiting in your room. Go on."

"May I be excused?" I asked with a curtsy.

"You may."

I walked down the hall, and opened the door. Anna was in a pair of high cut shorts and a tank top leaned forward over the desk as she studied. "Come in and close the door." She said. I did. She placed a bookmark in the large book before her before turning. "You are the new girl, and it is my responsibility to assure that you follow the basic rules. I will not force you, but if you do not I will report it and you will be punished. Is that clear?"

"Yes, Mistress."

I saw a gleam of approval in her eyes. She stood, and my eyes locked on her breasts. Like Sara, she must be on hormones, because she swayed gently before my eyes. But they were stiffer than Sara's. She looked

down, then at me. "Implants. It's just..." Her look hardened. "No matter. It would be more painful to remove them than to keep them."

"Bridgett wanted something larger to play with." I said softly.

"Do not speak that bitch's name in front of me again." Her voice was cold with fury. "If I had reported her at the start she would have learned better!" She spun slamming the book closed. "You will shower every night and you will moisturize every night. You will shave if you need to shave every morning, and shave your legs and armpits as needed. You will clean and redo your nails every morning. You will wear a corset at all times except for when you are in P.E., on outside work, or sleeping. When you have proven to be willing enough, I will allow you to remove the corset during off hours but I will decide when that will be.

"You will wash your undergarments every day, and hang them on the rack in the bathroom on the rods that have your color on them. You will always wear a nightgown, but it is your choice of what style you wear. If I tell you to do something, you will do it without question. Is all of that clear?"

I nodded mutely.

"You will always answer a superior. Either no mistress or yes mistress."

I curtsyed "Yes Mistress. I am sorry and will try to do better, mistress."

She looked at me almost as if she had wished I would misbehave. "Now, hold onto the drain pipe, and we will adjust your other corsets to fit."

I stood there meekly as one by one she put the corsets on me and tightened them down. Finally the last

had been completed, and she had me wear the one I had begun my day in.

"You may dress in casual clothes at the moment. But if I see you in casual clothing later this week or after that, you had best have all of your homework completed and have it ready to show to me. You may study in this room, in the library, in the common room, or in the study room down the hall. You may also study if you do not have a class, or outside when the weather permits. If you do not do your homework, I will punish you. You will get to see someone punished soon enough- yes?" As she had spoken I had raised my hand tentatively.

"Sara is going to punish Blanche at nine."

"And no doubt you have been ordered to attend."

"Yes, mistress."

"Then you will get your first look at that punishment tonight." She seemed to deflate. "If you don't mind, I would like to be alone until lights out."

I looked at her woebegone face. "Is there anything I can do to help, mistress?"

She gave me a sad smile. "I thank you for your gentle pains, but no." She made a shooing motion. "Go to the common room, relax."

"Yes mistress. May I be excused mistress?"

"You are excused."

I walked out then realized that I had forgotten to get changed. Well, the uniform wasn't that bad.



Punishment

The common room had separate areas for people to talk, read, or watch television. I came over to the TV, but it was on a woman's soccer match. "Nothing else to watch." One of the pinks complained. "We have a satellite dish with 500 channels, and about all we can watch is chick flicks, cooking shows, decorating shows and women's sports."

"Hush, Rachel." Another pink commented, looking askance at me. "You don't want to be reported again."

"I know, I know. Jasmine wants to try the B52 haircut on me." She sighed. "I'll be good."

I wandered over to the bookshelves. They were heavy on history and romances, some science and even a book six inches thick on genetics. The only light reading was the romances.

I could see that there was some separation in the girls. The pinks tended to sit alone, or with other pinks. The yellows sat together, closer together as if they had become used to their situation. Some sat with blues or greens. Over in the corner, a pair of girls, one yellow the other green were looking soulfully into each other's eyes. I almost expected them to begin necking as I watched.

Bridgett sat off by herself. No one wanted to sit near her. She saw my look and glared at me. I chose a book, a history of the Roman Empire. I went to the reading area, sat where I could see the clock, and opened it.

"Psst." The girl across from me, a yellow motioned down. "Smooth your skirt under."

"What?"

She stood, sliding her hands down the back to push the skirt forward, and sat again. "Like that."

"Oh. I stood, repeated her movement, and sat again. "Sorry. I'm new."

"We all know that, silly. I am Janice."

"Jessica." She reached across taking my hand by the fingers rather than shaking it. "Pleased to meet you."

I was just getting interested when I noticed it was almost nine. I closed the book, and returned it to the shelf.

"Going somewhere?" Janice asked.

"Someone is going to be punished, and I am supposed to watch."

"Blanche again?"

"You know her?"

"We all know each other after a while, dear. Blanche got spanked just last week because of her hair. If she's being spanked again, it is serious."

"Why?"

"If they spank you the first time, it's with their hand. A second is with a paddle. Last week she was paddled."

"What will they do this time?"

"Probably the strap." She shivered. "I haven't been spanked with a strap before. Not since I came here at least. I was spanked a few times as a pink. Even got paddled once. But the strap..." She shivered again.

With great trepidation, I walked down to the closed door of Sara's room. I knocked, waiting to be called in.

Sara lounged in a pale green baby doll nightgown. Beside her seated on the bed was a pink also in a nightgown, though hers was a full-length flannel.

“Ah, Jessica. This is Myra. She has been here almost seven months now. Myra, this is the new girl Jessica.”

Myra started to shake my hand like a man but there was a warning cough, and she immediately caught my fingers instead. “Pleased to meet you.”

“Likewise.”

“Move over a bit, Myra, Give the girl a seat.”

“Yes Mistress.” Myra moved closer to Sara, and I sat beside her.

“Why are you still in uniform?” Sara asked.

“Anna had told me to get changed, but she was... despondent about Bridgett, and I left rather than spend time making her feel less comfortable.”

“Good choice.” Sara said. Well, how has your first day been?”

“Not too bad.”

“Today will probably be your worst day if you learn to behave.” Myra said. “The teachers and Madam Sofia want you to succeed, so they will not punish you out of spite. Even the older students are doing what they can to help.”

“I realize that. Thank you, mistress.”

“Come my dear, you need not address others in pink or yellow in that manner, and after all, we are in privy.” Sara leaned forward, and my eyes were drawn to her breasts again. “What is my name?”

“Sara.” I whispered.

"Is this still bothering you?" She asked gently. I nodded mutely.

"One day you will decide to do something about it." She husked. "Myra has gotten past the involuntary stage, but it took her forever."

Myra giggled. "I can look at her and see a girl with-out... you know."

"Yes, that is the first step in becoming comfortable here actually." Sara sighed. She reached out, rubbing Myra's cheek. "Then..."

"Not yet, Sara." Myra said softly. "Not yet."

"I remember when she said never." Sara teased.

There was a knock, and Sara sat up, all business. "Come in please."

The door opened and Blanche came in. Behind her was a tall African American girl with a green collar Her hair style reminded me of Beyonce Knowles. She saw me, and looked curious.

"Angela, this is the new girl, Jessica. Jessica, this is Angela."

I stood, and Angela took my hand. She looked at my eyes, then bent, kissing the back on the knuckles. I almost flinched away. She smiled. "Pleased to meet you, Jessica."

"Likewise."

"Do have a seat." Angela caught the other chair, pulling it out, leaving Blanche standing. Blanche was dressed in a coordinated almost uniform way with Angela. A sundress in a bright yellow balancing the same dress in a teal blue on Angela. Both wore

three-inch heels. Unlike Sara and Anna, Angela's chest was flat.

"Blanche." Sara focused on the girl. "You berated the new girl, without considering the consequences. Have you anything to say?"

"I am sorry, Jessica." Blanche looked down. "I was rude to someone that had not been rude to me." She curtsied toward me. "I am sorry and will try to do better."

"So do you think this apology is sufficient?" Angela asked sharply.

"No Mistress." Blanche answered softly.

"What happens to bad girls?"

"They are punished mistress."

So what do you deserve?" Angela stood, walking around the trembling pink. "In the last month you have been punished three times. Your bottom was spanked in front of the class for talking back to the teacher. Your hair ended up in ringlets because you would not bathe, and I was forced to spank you yet again just a few days ago with a paddle." Angela stopped in front of the girl, lifting her face. "Hand, then paddle. What comes next?"

"Please mistress--"

"What comes next?" Angela insisted.

"The strap." Blanche whispered.

"Since Jessica has not seen this, I will explain." Angela turned to me. "If you are spanked with the hand, you lay across the knees of the one giving the strokes to you. Just like any bad little girl. If you are

paddled, you must go further." She turned to Blanche. "Kneel and present."

Blanche turned to face the door and knelt sitting back on her lower legs. Then she reached down, flipping up the dress she gave us a terrified look over her shoulder, and hooked her panties with her thumbs, pulling them down to reveal her bottom before leaning all the way forward, her face flat on one cheek, her bottom upraised and exposed. Angela stood over her, looking down. "But the strap is harsher. Stand."

Blanche straightened her clothes and stood up, and Angela took her chair turning it so it faced the door. "Present."

Blanche turned with the back of the chair against her stomach, then bent forward until her hands clasped the seat of the chair firmly, her legs straining upward. Angela flipped up the dress then pulled the panties down to again reveal the girl's bottom.

"The count is always ten, but there are rules. The girl must count them and if she loses count, it begins again. She is not allowed to speak except for that count. If she does, it begins again." Angela looked at Sara, who went to her closet, and pulled out what looked like a razor strop. She handed it to Angela. The black girl looked at Blanche, her hand touching the girl's cheek. "It won't take that long, girl."

"Please." I whispered. The strap was Richard's instrument of choice for punishments.

Angela looked at me. "What did you say?"

I met her eyes for only a second before I looked down. "I accept her apology, mistress. Please, not the strap."

Angela stood there, hands on hips toe tapping. "Still she must be punished. Was her apology good enough to forgo the paddle as well?"

I looked up. Behind Angela, I could see the mute appeal on Blanche's face. "I would say yes, but that is for you to decide mistress."

"Dancing between the raindrops with that answer." Sara said.

"But thinking of others. After all, how many of our girls were self centered bitches when they arrived?" Angela said. She looked slyly at Blanche. "Like so many we have dealt with." She reached out, cupping Blanche's chin again. "Where you gave her harsh words, her gentle words have gained you that at least. It shall be the hand. But if I must raise a hand to you again, it will be the strap, and twice the count." Blanche's eyes widened in fear. "Is that understood?"

"Yes, mistress."

"Release." Blanche let go of the chair, stood, and straightened her clothes.

"Present."

Blanche caught her panties, pulling them all the way down, stepping out of them. Angela sat on the chair, and Blanche draped herself accordingly. Angela looked at me, flipped the dress out of the way. Her hand came up then down sharply.

"One, Mistress."

As she spanked the girl, her eyes stayed on me. I flinched at every sharp crack, every sound heightened so that I could hear Blanche gasp in pain before she counted, the whip crack of each blow, the sobs that proceeded the last few.

“Ten, Mistress.”

“Do not make me do this again.” Angela warned.
“Release.”

Blanche stood, rubbing her butt, tears streaking her face.

“Now what do you say?”

“Thank you mistress. I will try to do better.”

“And to your defender?”

Blanche threw herself on her knees, hugging me fiercely. “Thank you, Jessica.”

I hugged her back, looking at Angela. “Is there anything beyond you’re welcome I should say?” Angela shook her head. “You are welcome, Blanche.”

She loosened her arms, moving away, then leaned forward kissing me on the lips. “Thank you.”

“Why does everyone kiss me?” I asked plaintively.

“Affection is allowed, even encouraged. And you are an attractive morsel.” Angela commented. “I would bet that there is a pool already forming.”

“Pool?”

“On how long you remain celibate.” Sara said.
“And when you fall, who will catch you.”

I blushed, and the older girls laughed. “Don’t worry.” Angela said between her chuckles. “You are safe from us unless you decide to fall. In which case, someone you like shall catch you.” She turned, rubbing Blanche’s cheek. “And you my dear have been punished properly. Come, we are for bed.”

“You should go as well.” Sara told me. “The routine for going to bed takes some getting used to.”

"Yes, Mistress." I stood, and Sara held out her hand. I took it shyly.

"Don't worry so."

I walked to my room, and knocked on the door. At Anna's call, I came in. She looked at me with red-rimmed eyes. "I apologize for what happened earlier. I sent you away before you could change."

"It's all right, Mistress. I understand how you must feel."

"I don't think so." She whispered. "Have you loved someone unreservedly? Someone that took your love and treated it with scorn?"

"Yes." I replied. "My mother loved me until she met my step-father. After he came into her life I was a thing to be endured."

She looked at me. "I wonder if that is true." She said. "Come, you must get ready for bed."

Sara had been right that it was odd getting ready for bed. The average boy merely showers towels off, and dives in. But a girl isn't so lucky. After cleaning the polish from my nails I had to put my hair in a shower cap. Then I was handed a pink razor and soap, and was shown how to carefully remove the hair from my legs and armpits.

Anna took the moisturizing lotion, and rubbed in into my back and legs, while I did the front and my face and arms. Then I did the same for her. I chose a long flannel nightgown such as Myra had been wearing, and stood hands clasped, looking down as Anna inspected me.

"Well enough for a first time. I will help you with your back at your request from this point on, but I ex-

pect you to learn to do it faster. You don't have to shave that often, so that is a help." She showed me my bed, which was separated from hers by a nightstand and on the same side of the room as my wardrobe.

"May I ask a question?"

"You may."

"Why do Sara and you have... teats, but Angela does not?"

"You don't have to take hormones or get implants. That is your choice. Angela has proven obedient and quiet, and that is pretty much all you absolutely need to do to succeed here." Anna had put on a long silk nightgown, the front plunging almost to her navel. "Any more question?"

"Not at the present."

"Then good night." She climbed into her bed, turned off the light and faced the wall intentionally shutting me out. I laid back staring at the ceiling in the darkness. I could hear the wind whipping through the trees, keening like a lost soul.

I had just started to drift off when I heard the door open. A figure moved toward the beds, and in the faint moonlight I could see Bridgett.

"Anna."

"Go back to your bed, Bridgett." Anna said softly.

"I have to talk to you--"

"Bridgett if you do not immediately leave this room and go to bed, I will report you."

"Fine." She stood, stalking out, though she didn't slam the door.

I lay there, thinking about love, and how some people can make their partners so miserable without even trying. When Bridgett had left Anna huddled down under her covers as if to bury herself. I could hear her sobbing.

I slid from beneath the covers, and padded over to Anna's bed. I touched her arm, and she stiffened. "Go back to bed, Jessica."

"Anna." I whispered, kneeling as if in prayer. "I am so confused. I am stuck in a jail where everyone wears women's clothes, and half a dozen of the prisoners have kissed me. I am afraid and alone."

Anna lay for a long moment then rolled to face me. She reached out, touching my face gently. Then she lifted her blanket and I scooted in to lie against her. I could feel her breasts, her limp member against me, and all of what had happened to me that day crashed down. I cried against her, feeling her hand run along my hair, hugging me to her as I cried for all I had been and all I would have to become here.

Confrontation

I awoke suddenly during the night. I could feel Anna spooning me from behind, her breasts pressed into my back, her knees curled up behind me. But what had awakened me was the press of her erection into my butt, and her hands running gently on my stomach. She was breathing softly, and I was sure she was still asleep. Her arm tightened, and she arched, pushing her lower body harder against me.

“Bridgett.” She whispered. “At last.” I felt a gentle kiss on my neck, her hair mingling with mine. Was she going to... use me? I could feel my own erection tenting my panties, and her hand ran along my stomach, then- I gasped.

“Oh my love you are so hard.” She whispered against my cheek.

“Anna.” I whispered. She stiffened, then her hand moved away from me.

“Oh god, I’m sorry.” She gasped. She tried to move away, but the bed was too small. I turned to face her, cupping her cheek.

“Anna, I know she hurt you. Please, don’t hurt me in return.”

She looked at me then she leaned forward, brushing her lips against mine. “I awoke and thought it was Bridgett.”

“I know. I’m not complaining about that.” I kissed her gently, then snuggled. “I’m just so confused.”

“About what?” She leaned her head on her hand, looking at me.

“Both of us dressed as girls, you with... with...”

“Teats?”

“Yes... teats.” I knew I was blushing, but it was too dark to see. “I see them, feel them, and want to touch them. They make me horny. But we’re not girls.”

“For the duration of our time here, we all are. Some go through the process, become women in truth. Others spend their time toeing the line and no more. I...” She sighed. “and I have these. They can be removed, but that will cause scarring and anyone who knows

how implants are put in will know what was done. I am trapped.”

I leaned forward, my face between her breasts. She stiffened, and then cuddled me closer. “I wouldn’t care.” I said.

“You may eventually wish to play with them, so I don’t see why they would bother you.”

“I mean if I were a man outside and saw your face and your figure I would assume woman. If I were really a woman, I would try to see the person. This place is about making up for your mistakes, right? Don’t assume people will judge you until they have.”

“You’re sweet.” She kissed my forehead.

I caught her face, and kissed her on the lips. “I just don’t want you to hurt anymore.”

She looked into my eyes then leaned forward. Our mouths met, and her lips parted with a gentle sigh. I kissed her, feeling her body arch against me, her arms encircling me. “Jessica... May I...” She looked silently as her hand reached down.

“I’m not sure if I want to...”

“I didn’t ask for you to return it did I?”

“It’s not right to have you do that if I won’t make you just as happy.” I whispered. “And besides, we’ll get in trouble because I am still underage.”

She looked at me for a long moment then she released me, kissing me gently. “I can wait.”

We snuggled back together, and drifted back to sleep.

I don't know what I expected for an alarm. A loudspeaker shouting at us, a Drill sergeant screaming at us to get up, bells ringing stridently. What I got was a gentle repeating tone, pleasant actually. I awoke to find Anna still hugging me close. Her eyes opened, and I looked at her.

"Time to get up. What is on your schedule for first today?"

"I don't know." I slid from the bed, shivering a little in the cold, looking at the printed schedule on the door. "Farm."

"So we just have to get you into casual dress. But first your nails and hair."

"But if I'm going to be out feeding the animals and cleaning up after them why do I have to have perfect hair and nails?"

"The rules say so." She shook her head. "Remember, you are being punished. When you become a Yellow or green, the rules are relaxed, but as a pink, you just have to obey them." She sat me down, brushing out my hair. "Extensions?"

"Jasmine was so distraught yesterday about the length of my hair. I agreed to make her happy."

"Be careful about trying to make others happy." She bound my hair back with a tie. "There are those that can use the tendency against you."

The casual dress were sundresses or colored skirts and blouses. In them you were also allowed to wear flat shoes. I looked like some hick farm girl, and still felt silly dressed as a girl. I protested when she handed

me a bra, but rules were rules. Corset or bra at all times. We joined other girls walking over to the mansion, and went to the dining hall.

Breakfast was pancakes hash browns sausage bacon ham and eggs. I started to fill up my plate, but Anna stopped me. "It won't be fully digested when you get back in, and putting on a corset over a full stomach is painful." I settled for smaller portions. We moved to a table, and sat. Bridgett headed toward the table, pulling out a chair, but a cold voice stopped her.

"Bridgett, you are not to go anywhere near Anna." A large woman stood to one side, dressed in shorts and a tank top even in the early morning chill. Bridgett was facing us so the woman didn't see the sudden flash of fury in her eyes.

The woman walked to another table, pulling out a chair. "Sit here."

Bridgett's face went from fury to sweet in an instant, and my blood ran cold. "Of course Coach Shannon." She looked at us again, all sweet and light except for a brief flare of anger, then she flounced over to the designated seat, and began eating.

"She's terrifying." I said.

"What do you mean?"

I looked at Anna. Hadn't she seen that quick change? "Bridgett is insane!"

She looked at me, then at her food. "It takes some of us that way. We want to be male, but we're not allowed to be. She has three more years thanks to being punished again. She will get over it."

I wanted to scream that she wouldn't. That she reminded me of my stepfather when he'd had too much

to drink. That she would explode like a bomb, and I suddenly realized that if anyone were blown apart by that blast, it would be Anna.

I ate breakfast, my mind working fast. Someone like that needed a target. As long as Anna was the target she was in danger. It came to me as I finished. "May I please be excused?"

"You may. Just go out to the barn and ask Mr. McCormick or John what they wish you to do."

"Thank you." I stood, and as if it were on impulse, I leaned down, and kissed her on the cheek. I heard a few gasps. Anna stared at me, blushing furiously.

"Run along." She said, turning back to her food, ignoring the grins and one furious look as I walked to the trash bin, and scrapped my plate.

The girl behind the line at that end saw me. "Going out to the corrals?" I nodded. "There's a dolly there. Take the can with you, please."

I found the dolly, lifted the can, and took it out and down the ramp to the side of the stairway. The out-buildings were already lit, and I clutched my jacket tighter as I walked across the open area.

Mr. McCormick was tall and thin as a rail. He pointed out where the cans went, and checked his list.

"Jessica. Someone put you down for slopping the hogs." He looked me up and down, and scribbled on the clipboard. "But small as you are, you need toughening up first." He went inside, and got a bucket. "Grain in the bins, fill the feed troughs for the horses sheep and cows, hay in the mangers, break the bales as needed. You're here early, so you get out early. More time to get yourself dolled up."

It was tedious and after a while tiring, but it wasn't hard work. The cows sheep and horses pushed forward to eat, and ignored me. I was just the delivery system. When I finished, he handed me a broom, and I swept out his office. As I had worked, others had come out. Bridgett protested because she ended up slopping the hogs instead of me, but McCormick merely repeated himself, and pointed at the sties.

I finished the office, and was sent to help another girl muck out the horse barn. She handed me the pitchfork, and ran the wheelbarrow back and forth to the midden as I filled it.

Before I knew it McCormick came, and told me to go get dressed for second period. I ran to the dorm, changed into my school uniform with that damnable corset, and headed into the mansion.

My first day was easy. First there were tests of my education followed by deportment. Then more tests followed by cleaning. Then P.E. followed finally by elocution.

At that time there were forty-two girls not including myself as I had been told, split almost evenly between the colors. Now that I knew what to look for, I could pick out the girls that were just 'toeing the line' as Anna had described it. Their hair was styled, but as bland as possible. None of them wore make up, and all tended to move alone, as if afraid to allow others close to them. There was a middle ground, girls like Angela who wore make up, moved in giggling little clumps, but that was the only difference between them and the more sedate girls.

A few, only about seven had been surgically altered, and those were easy to spot. Sara, Anna, Matilda, a couple more. They were all older girls.

The cleaning wasn't that hard. I was dressed in a 19th century maid's uniform, and had to sweep and dust part of the second floor where most of the classrooms were. I could hear the drone of teachers imparting their knowledge, and the scratching of pens and pencils on paper. It was nothing like the school I had been in back in Texas. No screaming in the halls, no bullies. Everyone in skirts and blazers moved from class to class smoothly and efficiently.



I finished my cleaning; changed clothes again, then went to P.E. where coach Shannon (Annabelle Shannon, the only teacher called coach and by her last name) tested me on my physical condition. I found that Anna had been wearing her P.E. clothes when she had been studying the night before. The swim suits depended on the girl. Those who were in green or blue were allowed the choice of bikinis or uniform Catalina suits. Everyone else wore a Catalina in a shade of their rank color.

I climbed out of the pool at last, and Coach Shannon marked it on her clipboard. "You're in pretty good shape considering. What was your favorite sport?"

"Track."

"Running toward or away?" She asked.

"I don't understand, coach."

"Every runner I ever met was either running away from something, or running toward it. Whether it was a ribbon, to allow yourself time to think, or just the thrill of the endorphin high of a miler."

"I never really thought about it." I replied honestly.

"Well you're usual class will be right before noon. We have four classes per day and the students go by color." She looked at the suit I was wearing. "You know, hot pink doesn't suit you. Talk with your roommate, and pick a color that is better for you."

"Is that allowed?"

She motioned toward a group that was headed for the pool. Most were blues, though there were greens and yellow mixed in. But the colors ran the full gamut of shade from taupe (A yellowish black) to sunflower to what could only be called a gold for the yellows. The

greens and blues were just as colorful. "The advantage a woman has over a man is if a color looks good they can wear it." Coach Shannon said. "Until you do, pink is going to be it. Interested in joining a team?"

"The reason I went out for track was I wasn't a team player, Coach." I shook my head, and sighed. "When you're the only one out there, it's you who wins or loses, and if you lose, the other person is better. It's that simple."

"Ah, pragmatic." She made another note. "You can also swim or run laps with supervision. I'll see you in class."

I showered and went to dinner followed by elocution class. Like deportment, it was aimed at making us 'proper little ladies'. Deportment made us 'walk the walk' and to continue the analogy, elocution was to teach us to 'talk the talk'. After listening to me talking for several minutes, Lady Shawna set me in front of an oscilloscope with earphones. She programmed a line on the screen, saying it was the 'unacceptable range' and watched as I talked. I had to pitch my voice so that it did not violate the line she had drawn, and I found it was easier to speak softly rather than trying for a falsetto, but you can't answer in a whisper in class so I had to work on it. By the end of class I was dragging, and my throat felt as if I had been gargling razor blades.

Anna was at the desk in uniform when I came in. She smiled at me, and motioned toward the other seat. "How was your first day?"

"I didn't know how hard it was to be a girl!" I said. "Balancing books on your head, talking softly or with a high pitched voice. I don't know how they deal with it."

"Most women these days don't." she made a note, flipping several pages. "But Madam Sofia is... old fashioned. If you had gone to school in the 1920s, you would have taken these same classes. Women were supposed to be quiet little obedient creatures that did what the men wanted."

"So why are we doing this?"

"That is what the questionnaire was for. Real girls and those boys who have been arrested for crimes with shorter sentences are sent to the normal juvenile facility over near the Country Seat. Those who committed violent crimes were sent to the road camp. But those who were not assumed to be naturally violent, those who are merely young boys with a bit of the devil in them or as with you committed a crime that was non violent, and the questionnaire shows that you can learn to behave properly, you get sent here."

She made another note. "When you reach green you usually get the history lecture. Back in the 19th century, some families used what was called petticoat punishment on their boys when they misbehaved. They would take the unruly little monsters, and dress them as girls, then make them do girl things. After all, when you're wearing a full dress like those," she pointed at the closet, "you can't very well roll in the mud and fight, now can you? When Madam Sofia organized this facility, her reasoning was that for some the method would work best than merely incarcerating juvenile offenders.

"After all, if you take a boy like yourself and put them in a facility where everyone else is already a criminal, what will become of you? She pointed out that most of what society call career criminals started out being put in juvenile detention, and learned there how

to be not better citizens but better criminals. Eventually they end up in real prisons, but there the process is accelerated, and soon you have someone who cannot understand why they should behave any other way.

“Because women before that era had learned to be polite ladies our time here is to teach us to be calmer than the average citizen by making us conform to those female values. What prison is supposed to do, but does not.” She turned the page. “You may change into casual clothes.”

“Thank you.” I picked at the corset, but couldn’t get it unclasped. “Would you help me please?”

She turned, fingers deftly loosening the clips. She opened the corset, and gasped at the raw places on my torso. “Oh my dear, it was too tight. I am so sorry.”

“It wasn’t that bad.”

“No! Chafing must be nipped in the bud immediately.” She went into the bathroom, and returned with the skin lotion. “Lay down on the bed.” She ordered. I did as she bid, and she began massaging the lotion into my back where, if you believed her, the chafing was even worse. I felt so relaxed, her hands running across my skin gently I sighed.

“So you like that, eh?” She asked.

“Obviously.”

“Turn over.” I turned, and she straddled me and began at my neck, rubbing in the lotion. I wanted to tell her that the corset only came up to my bust, but she was smiling as if daring me to comment. The hands ran down over my shoulders, then to beneath my arms. Her thumbs were thrust out, and her movement caused them to brush my nipples.

I gasped, arching against her.

"Whatever is wrong?" She asked.

"As if you didn't know, you tease."

"I don't tease." She bent forward, lips brushing mine. "I am always willing to deliver."

"So you say." I teased her back.

She bent forward, her breasts rubbing my chest, lips locking to mine in a kiss with such passion I found myself returning it. "I don't care what you think. If you ever decide to let me, I will show you."

"Anna."

She moved up, pecking my cheek. "I just... I am sorry."

"Don't apologize!" I snapped. "I enjoyed it, as you very well know."

She leaned up, her breasts in front of my face. Then we both froze as the door opened. Bridgett stood there, and for a moment, I could see disbelief in her eyes. I leaned up, my tongue flicking across Anna's nipple. There was a whimper of need. Bridgett stood there staring in what was rapidly becoming fury then she slammed the door.

"Oh dear." Anna sighed.

"What's wrong?" I leaned up, hugging her. "We're roommates. If I were to give myself to anyone, why should she be surprised that it was to you?"

"She is very jealous."

"So what?" I moved her over, hugging her. "She is not even remotely sane. She would hate anyone you enjoyed, and I just made sure that when that explosion occurs, she will not hurt you."

“What do you mean?”

“I kissed you at breakfast to make her angry at me.”

“Was that why you...”

I nodded then caught her face as she gave me a heartbroken look. “She will keep coming back until she either gets what she wants, or you get hurt. I have to stop her.”

“Jessica...” She shook her head. “You don’t know what she might do!”

I stood and got dressed, telling her of my stepfather. I told her of learning the thin line you must walk to assure that the person’s temper did not flare up. Like waving a red flag in front of a bull. All I had done with Bridgett was cross the line so blatantly that Bridgett would have to do something immediately. I got dressed. “Where are you going?” Anna asked.

“The common room for a while.”

“I will come along.”

“Anna, I would rather you do not.” I replied. She started to speak but I raised a hand. “Bridgett is going to try something. Maybe in the next short while, maybe next week, it just depends on when she gets up the nerve. I have already made myself a target, but if you are there, she will turn on you again.” I walked over, dropping to my knees, cupping her chin. “I will not let you be harmed. Please. Do as I say.”

She sighed, and nodded. I stepped out of the room. Sara was walking with Myra, and waved. I hurried over. I told her what had happened, and Sara’s eyes grew cold. “I’ll talk to that bitch-“

“No, please.” I begged her, and explained my plan. She sighed. “All right, we’ll visit with Anna until you return.”

I walked toward the common room as if to the gallows. Janice saw me, and nodded with a smile. I picked up the same book I had been reading before, and opened it at random. I had flipped through to Caligula when someone stood blocking the light.

“The new girl.” I turned slowly. Bridgett was standing there, glaring at me.

“Yes. I am-“

“I don’t give a fuck who you are. Touch Anna again and I will fucking kill you.” The room fell silent. I knew every eye was on us.

“Bridgett-“ A blue began.

“Michael! My fucking name is Michael you whore!”

“Bridgett-“ Someone else said.

“Shut the fuck up Stacy!” She spun, glaring at the green that was addressing her. “I don’t give a shit how long you went before sucking a dick, you’re just a suck up like all these other bitches!”

“That is quite enough.” We all looked at the door. Madam Sofia stood there, her face cold. “Girls, bring her.”

“Bring him you old faggot!” Bridgett screamed.

Madam Sofia lifted her hand. In it was a control box. She flicked a switch. Bridgett caught her neck, gasping in pain, then collapsed to the floor. Two men I didn’t recognize came in, and carried her out.

"I think that is quite enough excitement for tonight. Go back to what you were doing girls." Madam Sofia turned and flowed out of the room.

"Poor bitch." Someone said. I looked over. It was Stacy that had spoken. "You can't get lower than pink. Not and stay here."

"Oh god, you mean..." I remembered Sara's story about other 'harsher' schools. Stacy looked at me, and I looked around. Every face was as haunted as mine. I hadn't thought of that!

I trudged back to my room. Sara saw my face, hastily excused herself and almost dragged Myra out. I sat heavily on the bed, head in hands.

"Jessica?" Anna came over, sitting beside me.

"I see myself in Bridgett. Most people who are abusive were abused when they were young. I see myself mistreating you, screaming at anyone who interferes..." I began to cry silently.

"What did Bridgett do?"

"She threatened to kill me if I touched you again." I whispered. "In front of the whole common room at the top of her lungs."

"Madam Sofia-"

"She was there to hear it." I whispered. "Bridgett called her names, and they... took her away."

"Oh my god..."

"I'm so sorry." I whispered. "I... I knew what she would do. I set her up to get rid of her. But I didn't think!" I stared at her in horror. "I forgot that you couldn't go lower than pink. That the only choice left is..." I sobbed, hands against my face. "I sent her into

hell because if I didn't she would hurt you again. It was only a matter of time."

We went through our nightly routine, and I went to bed alone, curled up in my misery. I had sent another person into a hell I didn't even want to imagine to save someone else. Sure, a noble sentiment. Why did I feel like shit?

I felt a gentle hand on my shoulder then Anna's breasts were pressed into my back. I spun, clutching to her desperately as I cried. I cried for myself I cried for Anna but mostly for Bridgett.

May

I was the new girl for almost three weeks. Then suddenly we had seven more. They had to have greens sharing rooms with the last few. I graduated elocution, then deportment. I was in a full school again, and was eager to prove I could do what had to be done. I understood the idea of placing a new girl with an older one. It gave you a role model. Anna was the mirror I aspired to, the person I wanted to prove myself to the most. Sleeping together had become not a habit but commonplace for us. In all the first month she had never pressed her suit. She had cuddled me as if I were a younger sister, and many nights we ended up arms interlaced, her breasts pressing into me, cocks gently dueling, lips brushing each other's faces before we drifted off. When she suggested a touch of eye shadow I did it primarily to please her.

That gentle touch of make up seemed to affect the older girls like bees to a flower. There were thirteen blues at that time out of the now fifty students, twelve greens five yellows and twenty pinks that month, and if I had been willing and old enough almost thirty of them would have been between my legs in a trice.

As the weather turned warmer, the uniforms changed, with a sleeveless sweater over the blouse. The routine never really varied, so it was up at six, then breakfast, working with the animals, classes, Gym, everything that a normal school had. Some of the newer girls were a problem at first, but Mr. McCormick compared it to gentling horses. I watched it being done, and was amazed. He walked into the pen where a new horse had been brought in and tied down, then rubbed it down with his hands, speaking to it gently as if to a lover. The animals would start snorting and flinching at his approach, but by the end of the session, they would be standing, allowing that massage.

It didn't work miraculously of course. They didn't go from a ton and a half of anger to gentle obedience with a touch. But by the end of two weeks or so, they would allow even the girls to touch them, and by carefully adding tack, within a month or two they were ready to be ridden.

Mr. McCormick compared our situation there in the Academy to the horses because a normal prison doesn't worry about anything but obedience from the start. Everything is regimented true, but we were not locked in with animals in human form and expected to survive as we may. All we needed, he would tell us, was a gentle hand, and a firm lead.

Tiffany, one of the new girls showed what he meant. She had almost screamed when they dressed

her the first day, had immediately ruined her hair style, and was starting to work herself up into a tirade when Madam Sofia appeared like the wrath of god.

She looked at the barefoot girl and crossed her arms, tapping her toes. "I see you won't wear your shoes."

"I won't!" Tiffany shouted. I won't! And you can't make me!"

"Oh dear." Sofia said in a soft voice. A blue behind her paled at the gentle tone; I didn't know why yet. "Then I think we will have to convince you to be more compliant. Sasha, get the special shoes and bridle."

A green left the room, and came back with a pair of seven-inch heels and a handful of straps. Two men, Mr. McCormick and Mr. Marsten, accompanied her.

They bore down on the girl, and she tried to run, but other girls both greens and blues caught her. She screamed, fighting them as McCormick caught a leg, and Marsten caught the other. Both men began sliding the shoes on her, and locked them on with padlocks. Madam Sofia came around her, and bent over her face. I couldn't see what was happening, but the screaming cut off suddenly, now only a muffled whimpering came from her. Madam Sofia moved away, and I saw that she had inserted a ball gag into Tiffany's mouth. Then she snapped a pair of handcuffs linked to a strap around her waist on the girl. The girls that held her pulled her to her knees, then stepped aside.

Madam Sofia stood before her, then gracefully knelt so their faces were inches apart. "My dear, you will comply, or things will get worse. If this does not convince you, it is the road camp. I deal with disobedient girls harshly."

Tiffany glared at her, and tried to scream, but only a muffle wailing came through the gag.

“Since you won’t wear you heels, something that is not much higher than an average cowboy boot, perhaps you need to have a salutary time of pain. You will wear those shoes locked on your feet until I have them removed. You will need to be fed bathed and helped to the bathroom, since the chains and cuffs will remain on all of that time as well. Brenda,” She turned to one of the blues, “we haven’t had to do this in so long. Find the robes she will wear instead of outer garb.”

“At once, Madam Sofia.” The girl curtsied, and hurried from the room.

“Elsbeth?” The green that had been Tiffany’s assigned roommate came forward, curtsying. “I see we will have to use sterner methods on this one. Take her to my office, and get out the new tape.”

I shuddered. I had never misbehaved this badly, but I knew of the tapes. Sara had told me of the one she had seen, and I still had nightmares of the hell I had sent Bridgett into.

Madam Sofia looked at me, and suddenly I realized she had said the ‘new’ tape. This one must be... I spun, running from the room, down the hall, into my dorm room, and collapsed in tears. I could see it in my mind. It was so horrible I wanted to scream.

The door opened, then closed gently. There was a rustle of clothing, and a pair of arms pulled my to a soft bosom. It wasn’t Anna; I knew that because these had the feel of natural breasts, not implants.

“You know who is on that tape. It is horrible, I know.” Madam Sofia whispered.

I clutched her, crying against her as she gently patted my back. I wanted to die.

“My dear girl, I will tell you a secret few of the girls know. But only if you promise never to tell another.” I felt her cheek rub against mine. “I was a boy as you are though, much younger. I was taken to one of those horrible places. I was castrated, brutalized, forced into abject slavery, used in every way a sadist can imagine.”

I leaned back, looking at her. I didn’t want to believe it. Her face was too perfect, her poise and presence too striking. “How did you escape?”

“I did not. The one who called me slave, whom I had to address as Master for thirty years died, and in his will he set me free with a trust fund. I returned to find that my family had all died, and that I now owned all of this. I had no skills in this world except the ones I had learned as his slave. The ability to detect within a new boy the possibility that he would make a good girl, no matter how bad he was. The knowledge of how to break that boy’s will, make him a compliant slave to yet another master.

“But I could not bring myself to destroy another human being in that manner. I could have been an incredibly wealthy woman if I had, for I am still known in that world. Instead I saw that part of what I had learned, the ability to at least change the course of that young boy’s life, had use in a proper society. That is why I started the Academy.”

She brushed her lips against my cheek. “You feel regret that Bridgett is being tormented, but I feel it even deeper. If you must blame someone for that, blame me, not yourself. For while you arranged her fall I am the one who sent her into that hell on earth, consigned her to perdition. I regret the necessity more than you can

possibly imagine, my sweet. To send her there is to admit my own failure.”

She leaned back, cupping my chin in her hand. “Such a pretty one you are, and so gentle.” She kissed me on the cheek, and stood, leaving me there.

Anna came in a time later, and I threw myself into her arms. She held me, gently stroking my hair, whispering to calm me down. I leaned back, and our faces were less than an inch apart. Close enough that all I could see were her eyes. They looked like a wounded animal in pain. She had understood the same thing I had, and her own mind had brought forth all of its own horrors.

July The Ball

The next week was somber. For the first four days of it, we got to witness Tiffany mincing about in those heels, tears running down her face almost all of the time. Unable to dress herself; wearing not only a corset, but one pulled so snug it made her waist 17 inches around. The teachers tended to ignore it, not bothering to call upon her in class, though a couple would make her get up to write her answers on the chalkboard. I didn’t understand the agony she went through until Sara suggested I stand on tiptoe until she allowed me to rest my feet on the floor again. After a few minutes, I was in agony. As Sara pointed out, I didn’t have to stand that way but the heels forced Tiffany to stand that way all of that time. The padlocks stopped her from removing them even when she slept, and with the chains she had to be bathed by Elspeth. At meals

the gag was removed so that she could be fed then was buckled back on. She never gave a verbal word of complaint, but that did not stop her from crying at night. Many of us heard her, or at least thought we did.

Then on Friday the shoes were removed, the chains and gag taken off, and a cowed Tiffany came to class with us. But she was no longer the defiant girl she had been. She was terrified now.

That Saturday I found her curled up under a tree in the garden, crying. Instinctively, I took her in my arms, shushing her, patting her back as she cried against my shoulder. I felt a wave of tenderness for this girl barely my own age. We became friends, and I helped her with her studies. Many were the times during the next months when I had to tutor her. It amazed me that she had reached her grade without learning some of the simpler math. Anna shook her head at the sight, but said nothing. Summer was approaching, and again our uniforms changed. The sweaters were hung up, and now we went to class in crisp linen blouses and skirts, though we still wore our neckerchief ties. I had been wearing three-inch heels for almost a month by that time and had just become comfortable with them. Tiffany looked at them in horror, but I reminded her that unless we were being punished, this was as high as they would get.

Tiffany and I were tracking the exploration of America when Anna came in. "Are you ready for the ball this weekend?" She asked lightly.

"I was hoping they had forgotten." I admitted. One class we took, but only once a week, was dance. Madam Sofia always taught it, and none of the dances

we were taught were modern. All were of the get up close and hold your partner tight variety. All of the blues and greens portrayed the male partners and it seemed to take forever to learn to allow the other person to lead. I found I was a popular dance partner especially among the blues. Anna, Matilda, Sara, Elspeth, Andrea, Shannon even Angela, would swirl me around the circle, eyes locked on mine, arms extended as we waltzed polkaed fox trotted and reeled. Each dance ended with a kiss, and I found that everyone wanted to kiss me. The kisses were all different, all exciting, and all alarming.

My first ball had been terrifying. I had gotten the obligatory one dance over as quickly as possible, then hidden in a corner until the end.

"No they would not forget the ball. What girl has lived without at least one cotillion in her lifetime?"

"Cotillion?" Tiffany asked gently.

"A grand dance." Anna sighed, stretched out her left arm, and swirled in a circle as if dancing with a partner. "To look into a young man's eyes. To know that his eyes see nothing but you, to know that he is yours for the asking." She finished her dance, extended her arm as if he had stepped away, and curtsied deeply to him.

"Oh yuck." Tiffany said.

"You have only been here a few weeks, Tiffany." She chided. "This has been my life for almost eleven years." She sighed. "Only four more to go."

"Fifteen years total?" I asked.

"A story of misspent youth. I will tell you some day."

The Friday before the ball came, and we only had a half-day. The older girls immediately began preparing. Make up sessions, checking to see if their gowns had to be altered, a flurry of motion that left us poor girls in pink totally confused. A couple of us were older. Patricia had been through three of the balls and was somber.

Tiffany had taken to hanging on me like a limpet, and she was terrified. "We're going to be forced to dance with boys?"

I took her off to the side. "Tiffany, I have been to only one dance so far, but I have been told over and over that they will not force us to do anything. The older girls have told me that you must dance at least one dance with a boy. After that you can hide in the corner the rest of the evening."

"But I don't want to dance with a boy!"

I took her by the shoulders. "Yet you danced with all of the blues and some of the greens at least once. They are boys under these clothes. Here." I put out my arm, my hand around her waist. I was leading but I didn't think they would complain when they watched the tape. I hummed the dance music from *Sleeping Beauty* as I led her into a smooth waltz. Then I stopped, still holding her. "I am a boy as well, remember? But once the music began, you allowed yourself to be led into the dance. Picture them as one of the other girls."

"I will try." she said. I pecked her on the cheek, and she blushed furiously before running to her room.

Anna had chosen the mint dress for me this time, and had it hanging on a stand. "Here, put this on so I can check the fit."

I changed, and she knelt. "The length won't need to be adjusted. The waist is still good." She stood, hands on my hips. "Once we have your hair done, you will be the belle of the ball, my love."

"I'm afraid." I whispered. "What if he..."

"He won't." She promised.

I hugged her. Anna... Why are you in here so long?"

I felt her stiffen. She moved me over to the beds, sitting me down facing her. "Why were you sent here?" She asked.

"I broke into a diner and stole food. They gave me five years."

"I murdered my younger brother. I got fifteen."

"You... murdered someone?"

"It wasn't intentional. I was a wild young boy, and my brother was always following me, tattling on me." She looked away, her voice so soft that I had to lean forward to hear her. "One evening when I was ten, he followed me when I left the house without permission. I was going to a friend's house to play video games. We had to cross a bridge over the wash, and I was half-way across when I saw him behind me. I was mad. He'd always been interfering. So I shouted at him. I backed him against the bridge rail, and screamed at him. He told me he was going to tell and I hit him. I didn't mean to hit him that hard, but he went into the rail, then over it."

She looked at me, tears in her eyes. "I ran to a phone, called the police, and they brought his body up out of the wash. He looked so... small after that. I didn't complain when they arrested me, or when they took

me into court. I was sentenced to serve until my 25th birthday. My parents disavowed me. I was a monster that killed the child they loved better. They made me a ward of the court, and left.

“But I was a juvenile. There are homes for orphans, but they are almost as harsh as the road camp. Madam Sofia offered to take me in after my parents left. The court allowed her to.” She looked at the room. “But none of them realized what that would do to me.

“One thing I have read is the psychological texts in the library. A habit is formed by doing something repeatedly and takes three times as long to break as it does to form. What do you think will come out of this Academy when I am twenty-five? You will spend maybe three and a half years dressed like this. I will spend fifteen. You could break the habit by avoiding the clothing. I will have spent most of my life dressed this way.

“I will have spent more time as a woman than man when I leave, and there’s nothing to do unless I follow Bridgett into hell.” She grabbed her breasts, squeezing them harshly. “Bridgett thought these were for her. All of the others do, even you did! But I’m going to be a woman for so long I will never really remember being that stupid angry little boy! This is my suicide. I am killing yet another young boy, and the woman that did it will walk out of here in four years.” She ran into the bathroom slamming the door. I left her alone.

Saturday morning was spent with the girls fixing clothes, getting them cleaned, or planning what to do with their hair. Anna was silent, refusing to face me. I spent Friday alone in my bed for the first time since I had come to the Academy, and I understood what she

meant about habits. I had grown used to waking up with her gentle breath in my face or on my neck.

Neither of us felt comfortable sleeping alone anymore. Our habit had always been to comfort one another, and we had seen no reason to change that. Our daily ritual began with a morning kiss, painting each other's nails, making sure we were turned out smartly in uniform, sitting together at meals, rubbing lotion into each other's bodies, showering together so that we could scrub the other's back, then curling up in one bed or the other, breath flowing across the other's cheek. It was late in May that I noticed that I sometimes awoke with her stiffened member pressed into my flesh, or mine into hers. When it happened we would give an apologetic smile, and remove it. Not that I wasn't now considering it. Merely that neither of us was sure if we should take our relationship to that level.

Maybe that was the problem. She would wake up in the night, and her sudden stiffness would awaken me. We would lay there in the dark, looking silently at each other, and I think by then both of us wanted to close that gap, to caress that flesh. She didn't because she wasn't going to push me into anything. I was still afraid.

Starting at lunch on Saturday we were given appointments for our hair and nails. Jasmine had brought in six other girls who were either learning to be stylists, or were good enough to help, and another six who were helping with manicures or make up. Otherwise we would never have been ready. Sara and Angela caught me when it was my turn, brought me over to the salon, and made me take a chair. At Jasmine's fervent requests, my old hair weaves were removed, and longer ones added. Once they had lengthened my hair

to my waist, Jasmine began curling and tweaking it. I saw Anna come in, looking toward me, and starting to turn away.

“Anna?” I called. She looked at me, and then came over to stand beside me.

“What color lipstick should I wear with my gown?” I asked.

“Peach.” She replied. “Why?”

“I want to look good for you. I think Jasmine will help me with the rest of the make up, but I wanted your opinion.”

She gave me a small sad smile, and walked back out.

“What about earrings?” Jasmine asked. “Clip on or pierced?”

“My ears aren’t pierced.”

She held up the piercing gun. “That can be arranged.” She warned me.

“Then what is stopping you?”

She gave me an unbelieving look, and bent over my head. By four in the afternoon I was done, when I walked out my now lengthy hair was in a bun that made me look like Jane Seymour from the movie *Somewhere in Time*. My post earrings were delicate fairies with lattice wings.

Then, Jasmine signaled me to wait, and got out a different kit. I sat there as she worked silently. When she was done, both she and Salma stepped back.

“I knew it.” Jasmine whispered. I leaned up looking into the mirror. There was nothing that said ‘male’ to the viewer. My eyebrows were a delicate arc that

framed the eyes below them. Both were deep pools of brown with softer tones radiating from them in the eye shadows used. I looked like a delicate flower awaiting the hand that would pluck it from the branch.

“Oh, my god.” I whispered

“I’m sorry, I had to know.” Jasmine looked worried. “I’ll remove it-”

I waved a hand. “No worries, Jasmine. I’ll wear it tonight.” I stood, and left the salon.

I went back to the dorm. Anna was already dressed in a wine red gown with lace and frills. She paused for a moment, staring at me surprised, then shook herself and helped me into my gown, and stood back. In the mirror there was a vision of loveliness standing behind me with a sad expression. I turned, holding her hands. “I’m terrified!” I gasped.

She hugged me, and I could feel the stiffness in that normally casual embrace. I leaned back to look her in the eyes then I leaned forward, laying a gentle kiss on the slope of her right breast. I heard her gasp, then again as I laid another on the left. I leaned back again, looking at the two lip prints barely visible against her flesh. “Don’t wipe them off.” I husked. “I want to remember the taste of your flesh as some man holds me, to know that I have marked you for myself. To know and pray that you will hold me again tonight, and for every night that I am here.”

She flushed, then leaned forward, pulling my gown out, laying a kiss of her own on my flesh. The lipstick the same color as her gown was a livid slash of red on my breast, but when she let the gown go, it was hidden from view.

“As long as you allow me to hold you my love.”

As the sun began to set, the limousines began to arrive. There were twenty or more within minutes, and we were brought out to meet our guests. There were older men, younger men, and boys our own ages, all in suits or tuxedos. As they came in through the front, we came in through the back. The dining hall had been cleared, and the wall panels from the back had been moved, making the room twice as long as it had been before.

A buffet had been set up on the back wall, and half a dozen girls of the greens and blues watched it. I knew from talking to them that this would be on shifts, so that every girl had a chance to have her required dance.

All of the pinks were clustered in one corner, and as one of them, I was as terrified as any. Elspeth came over, handing each of us a card. I saw my name at the top, and a set of lines below that calligraphy name.

“Girls, it is simple. This is your dance card. It lists every man you dance with. It used to be that this would be left at the door, and every man who wished to dance with you would have already written his name. It was polite for you to dance with as many as you could. But the Academy rules are changed. There will be at least one such name on this card by the end of the night.”

She motioned toward the ceiling that was invisible in the soft candlelight. “And remember that you’re being watched.” She kissed each of us on the cheek. “It isn’t the end of the world. It’s just a dance.”

Tiffany shuddered, and I walked her over to the punch bowl. “I don’t know if I can do this, Jessica.” She was wringing her hands as she stood there, looking toward where the Greens and Blues had already begun

to mingle. Music began, and I recognized a Virginia reel.

"Tiffany, dance with me."

"Oh Jessica, I know you are just trying to calm me down--"

"I'm, trying to drum up my own courage." I corrected her. "This is my second dance." I took her out, and we danced. We were hesitant, but after a few moments, she began to relax. She giggled as we bumped someone else, smiling gaily.

A hand trapped my shoulder, and I looked behind me. A young man bowed. "May I cut in?"

I stood aside, but instead of Tiffany he started to take me in his arms. "Pray, sir. You tapped my shoulder, which is the way to get a man's attention. That means you were asking to dance with my partner." I curtseyed. "Dance with my dear friend first. I promise the next will be yours."

He grinned then turned to Tiffany, bowing. She was hesitant, but I had broken the ice for her. I was watching her spin around the floor with a gentle smile when a hand touched my shoulder. I looked up into a pair of glorious blue eyes. He was a head taller than I was even with my heels, with broad shoulders, long black hair tied back in a ponytail, and a wide generous mouth.

"May I have this dance, my dear?"

Numbly I allowed him to take me into his arms, and we became a part of the colorful swirl. He smiled down at me, holding my extended arm instead against his chest.

"You're new."

"Yes, sir. I am."

"One of the more beautiful girls too." He said.

I looked down blushing. But that meant I was looking at that broad chest instead. "Sir, please." I whispered.

He chuckled. "Don't worry." He chided me. You are as safe as you wish to be in my arms." He said. "I am sorry, I have not introduced myself. Matthew Benquist."

"Jessica, sir. I am pleased to meet you."

The music ended, and I found myself staring up into his eyes. He bent, kissing me gently on the cheek. "Perhaps later we can dance again?" He looked past me. "The first young man is coming back, fully intent on treading on your toes."

"Oh I hope not, sir."

"Matthew." He said.

"Matthew."

The young man had indeed been bent upon his dance, and I found myself being guided gently around in a foxtrot by him. He did not tread on my toes.

The music ended, and he kissed my cheek. I left the dance floor, hurrying over to the buffet. Tiffany hugged me, giggling. "I did it!" She whispered.

"And well." I replied. I took a small plate, and took some food, sitting down to nibble on it. Oddly I didn't feel as nervous any more. Perhaps it was trying to help Tiffany. Maybe it was just that I had slipped further into the role of a girl. I wasn't sure why, but I was enjoying myself.

Three dances later I was in my element. I had allowed my masculinity to be subsumed by the sheer joy of the movement. I saw their names as they were added, and Matthew had danced with me twice. I felt comfortable in his arms.

I had seen Anna near the buffet earlier, but I didn't see her now. I stood, moving around the edge of the dance floor to the French doors that led onto the veranda. Each door led to its own little discreet alcove, as I had been shown earlier in the week. I looked in the first, seeing one of the greens speaking to a man in soft tones. In the next I saw Sara hugging Matilda. In the third-

An older man was seated on the bench. A girl was kneeling before him, her head bobbing as she sucked him. I looked at that wine red gown, the Titian red hair.

I walked numbly back to the buffet. I sat there in a funk, staring across the room. My entire existence here had come crashing down. Anna. The one I had considered doing... that with. She was back there, her mouth sucking him, drinking his sperm.

A hand held out a cup, and I looked at it for a long moment. Then I looked up into Matthew's face. "You look like you've just lost your only friend."

I stood, running across the room. I found myself in one of the alcoves, thankfully alone. I was crying, bawling like a baby. What was I to do?

A hand touched my shoulder, and I turned. Matthew was standing there looking so worried that I leaped into his arms, holding him as I would have held Anna. He held me, hands running through my hair, gently shushing to me as if I were a child.

I finally stopped, sniffing as he continued to hold me. My stepfather had never been supportive. If my dad had lived, maybe he would have been.

I told him what I had seen, and he tilted my face up. "Your friend has needs. Had you ever considered that?"

"Yes." I whispered. "But I was scared! I still am."

"If you decide to do that would you love only her?"

"I'd like to think so."

"But have you told her this? Asked her to wait for you?" He asked gently.

"No." I said softly.

"Look at it through her eyes. So don't get mad; talk to her. What probably happened was she just was so desperate for you that she couldn't resist." He lifted my chin, wiping my eyes gently. "Especially since I do know the rules of the dance. The man would not force her." He had me blow my nose then touched my face. "Because I would love nothing more than to be your first and I will not force you. Now come on. Go to her."

I reached up, touching his face. "Thank you."

He pecked me on the cheek. "Just remember me." Then he leaned into me and kissed me. It was so different from the girls of the Academy. Their kisses were gentle, so hesitant. His was a burning fire that ignited my blood. I moaned, my lips parting, and his tongue ran across them. I felt my arms tighten, felt him pull me deeper into the embrace. He was a man, I was a boy, and it didn't matter. If I had said the word, it could be him I was suckling tonight. Rules or no rules.

And suddenly I so wanted to say those words.

If Anna had kissed me like this I would have already been hers in every way. He pulled back, hand touching my face again then he released me. "Go to her." He repeated.

I stepped back in as another type of music began. I recognized it as a tango beat. The blues gave a chorus of giggles as they were led out, but I noticed all of the other girls with the exception of a few greens stayed in their seats.

I watched in amazement as they danced. I have seen someone doing the tango a few times on television or in the movies. But when done before you it is almost like seeing the couple making love. Oh I don't mean like the modern dances where all they need to consummate the act is remove some clothes. The tango is foreplay. The couple will dance, but they are saying with their grip and movement that later, a word will consummate the act.

Anna came by, dancing with an older man. Their eyes were turned forward, but her poise, the movement as he directed her through the swirling throng, bespoke her control.

I looked at her, really seeing her for the first time. Woman by choice not of birth, she ruled that dance floor. She caught my eye and gave me a smile meant for no one else. I watched her like a mouse watching a cat patrolling in front of a mouse hole. She would pounce I knew, bear me to the ground, eat my flesh, rend me with her passion.

She drew me and terrified me at the same time.

The music ended, and she disengaged, accepting a kiss. She turned, her eyes on me. I smiled, gently giving her a curtsy. The music began, and she came forward,

hand out. I reached out, our fingers interlacing, and she drew me close, her arm around my waist. "The last dance." She whispered.

We danced; my head against her bosom, feeling her heart hammer in my ear. Her hand loosened from mine, joining the other at my waist, pulling me closer. I felt my head rise, the mouse with the cat now right before it. She looked into my eye, then as we moved leaned forward, lips touching mine gently.

I felt my body move into hers, felt her lips opened, sighed into it as her tongue gently played across my lips. I could taste the sperm she had swallowed on her tongue, and she started to pull away, but I caught her head, holding her to me. The music ended, and we pulled apart and stood there, looking into each other's eyes.

"I am sorry." She whispered.

"I am not." I reached up, touching her face. "When I am ready, I will want this mouth upon me. Your lips upon my mine, your sperm in my mouth instead of his." I leaned in, my tongue slid across hers. "Will you be gentle with me?"

She sighed, shivering. "I will treat you like an antique glass bowl."

I leaned forward. "What, leave me on the shelf until you are ready, then wipe me down and fill me with your love before washing me out and putting me back?"

Anne giggled. "Behave, or I will lick you into shape."

I leaned into her again. "Promises, promises. Will you show me?"

“When?” She leaned away.

“When I can get up the nerve.”

“When you grant me the joy.”

September

Of course it didn't happen that night. I had too many issues. But she was patient, and I knew that the day would come as sure as dawn will.

Very early in September I finished my last home economics class. Unlike a typical school where the girls would spend a year learning how to cook, Lady Charlotte merely had to assure we were adequate cooks. We learned how to make meat dishes more complex than a burger or steak, and how to make casseroles or stews more complex than dumping a jar of cheese sauce over noodles or rice. If you could read a recipe and knew the difference between a salt spoon, a teaspoon and a table-spoon, you could turn out quite tasty dishes.

After the first month or so, the classes were almost like a musical jam session, with everyone trying variations on the recipes. Some were excellent, but some were horrid. One girl with an excellent memory recreated a horrible cookie dish based on an episode of Ranma ½ where the female lead has mixed so many things you wonder what she's attempting. We all agreed she was attempting murder by food poisoning. By the start of September a number of my classmates had already done their finals and left.

The final test was to make a dinner from appetizer to dessert. What Lady Charlotte did was take recipe cards and put them in boxes divided by types. Soups or

salads were added to the appetizer box unless they were main dish types such as taco salad or soup in a bread bowl. The last sounds very simple until you understand you had to make the bread as well as the soup. When you were ready she would hand you the appetizer box, and you would reach in like someone picking the lottery winner, and take a card. Then the main dish one, then (If it were a meat dish) a separate box for side dishes, and finally the dessert one.

You were allowed to reject menu selections if they didn't go well together. The worst combination I saw was a Taco Salad with Haggis and steamed vegetables followed by chocolate fondue. The girl that got that one turned green when she saw how haggis was prepared, and decided to replace it with a beef stew and fresh vegetables with dressing, even if she had to make the dressing from scratch. After she had left one of our more adventurous members made the haggis and any with the stomach tried it. The dish turned out surprisingly well, though a number of us agreed with the hoary joke that all Scot's cooking was based on someone centuries ago betting someone else they wouldn't try it.

When it came time for my attempt, I asked if I could pick 'from soup to nuts' as the old saying went. Lady Charlotte agreed, and I began. When I was done, the class gathered around. We had enough in the class (Some of the blues and greens had not yet mastered this skill) that everyone was only offered a bite of each selection, as we had to make enough for a quiet dinner for two. My menu was a mixed platter of meat bread cheese and vegetables with three different dressings, Ranch, Russian and Blue Cheese all home made. The bread was added for those who liked bread with what would later be called salad dressings; what was called

a posset, at least in the 16th century. Following that was steak and kidney pie, followed by my own version of Moe's Peach pie.

Everything went as I had anticipated with the first dishes. I garnered many a kudo for the meat pie. But everyone who had taken their bites of appetizer and meat pie had paused as they reached the fruit pie. It was as if they didn't know what to say. Each girl took a forkful of the pie, then would stand there as if frozen.

Finally, Lady Charlotte came over. She had been one of the first to take a bite, and had waited to talk to the others. "Graduate with honors." She said.

That might have ended it, but I was still felt bad about the diner I had robbed. I made four pies, two of them peach, and asked that they be sent to the owner in apology.

End Part One