

Femdom Trilogy

three
BDSM
novels



Femdom
Fascist

Femdom
Mistress

Femdom whips
the
White Slavers

Catherine de Bourg

FEMDOM TRILOGY

FEMDOM FASCIST, FEMDOM MISTRESS, FEMDOM
WHIPS THE WHITE SLAVERS

CATHERINE DE BOURG



FEMDOM FASCIST
FEMDOM MISTRESS
FEMDOM WHIPS THE WHITE SLAVERS

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FEMDOM FASCIST

ONE

THE PRISONER

Rupert Houndsditch, crime novelist, was in a spot of bother. He was chained, naked, in a granite-walled dungeon in the depth of a gothic castle.

'Best not blubber. Stiff upper lip and all that,' he said to himself. But despite telling himself to be brave, he cowered on the iron bunk, with his eyes screwed shut in an effort to stop tears escaping. His heart beat faster and his nerves jangled as he heard a key in the lock and the heavy door scrape open.

'Stand.' The command was in German which Rupert could speak. Her voice had terrified him since she had taken him into the interrogation room on the first occasion.

Still keeping his eyes shut, he pushed away the coarse blanket, which had kept him from dying of cold, and stood up on his manacled feet.

'Piss.'

Obediently, he shuffled to the corner of the cell and urinated into a bucket.

'Shit?' The intonation was that of a question. He shook his head to say 'no'. They had not given him much to eat in the twenty four hours he had been in their clutches.

Turning around, with urine still dripping, he faced the guard with his eyes downcast, not daring to look at her face, but glancing at her gloved hand which held the coiled whip.

'Come.'

He followed her out of the cell. The guard was a pigtailed blond, almost six feet tall in boots with high heels. She was wearing a white military-style blouse and beige jodhpurs with wide thigh-flaps. A holstered gun rested on

her curvy, right hip.

He had struggled with her, briefly, when she escorted him down to the dungeon shortly after his abduction. And he knew that she was an expert in how to cause disabling pain below the belt.

The guard strutted to a door at the end of the passage. He shuffled behind her as fast as his chains would allow. A bald man and a blond youth stared at him from behind the bars of their cells.

At the end of the passage, he stood beside a water tap with an attached hosepipe. The guard picked up the end of the hose and turned on the tap. He pivoted slowly as a jet of icy water doused him from head to foot. He had been washed in this way on the previous occasions he had been taken to the interrogation room. Soaked, he bent forward and touched his toes, as though he was about to be caned. The hose-nozzle came close to the cleft in his buttocks and the water jet streamed around his anus. The hosepipe was wiping his bottom for him, something he was unable to do when sitting on the bucket in his cell, as his hands were manacled in front of him.

Satisfied that her prisoner was now clean, the guard gave a curt nod of her head as an indication that he should follow her. His chains clanked up the stone steps to the ground floor where he knew the dreaded interrogation room was situated. But the guard led him past that door and opened another door. This room resembled a doctor's surgery. An attractive woman in a white coat sat behind a large desk reading a sheet of paper. She did not look up when they entered.

The guard made him stand midway between the door and the front of the desk. He stood, dripping onto the carpet, waiting for the white-coated woman to acknowledge her visitors.

Eventually, the woman closed the folder and stared up at him. 'Go to bed,' she commanded.

The instruction surprised Rupert. He looked around the room. An iron-framed bed with a mattress was against a wall. The guard gripped him by the back of the neck, as an unkind owner might grip a dog, and propelled him towards the bed.

'Lie on bed,' the guard ordered in German.

He edged his buttocks onto the bed, swung his manacled ankles up and lay back. The guard raised his arms above his head and linked the chain between his wrists to a ring on the wall behind him. Then she went to the foot of the bed and did the same to the chain between his ankles. He was now

stretched out on his back, helpless.

The guard stood at the foot of the bed as the white-coated woman pushed back her chair and stood next to the guard. Both stared down at his penis. His stomach churned as it occurred to him that he might be about to lose his little 'playmate'. Already scared-limp, his penis shrivelled as if trying to hide, like a mouse looking for a hole.

'I am doctor,' the white-coated woman said in English, without any trace of a bedside manner.

His terror increased as the doctor took a pair of rubber gloves from her coat pocket, and donned the gloves with the look of a rat catcher about to bait a trap.

'What are you going to do to me?' he asked in German.

His mumbled question went unanswered as the doctor went over to a side table and picked up a tray covered with a cloth. Bumps in the cloth indicated that the tray held various articles. The doctor, holding the ominous tray, stood next to the guard. Again, they both stared down at his penis. He shivered even though he had more or less dried after his dousing with a hosepipe, and the surgical-room was considerably warmer than his damp cell.

His shivering increased, and his heart rate went into overdrive, as the doctor sat on the edge of the bed, next to his midriff, and her rubber-gloved fingers lifted his limp shaft. The doctor said something to the guard in a language which Rupert did not understand but assumed was the language of the country in which he was now a prisoner. The guard laughed. He felt like vomiting and defecating at the same time, but swallowed hard and managed to delay doing either.

'I am a famous novelist. I came to your country to do research for my next book,' he said, almost to himself. And then said in a louder voice, 'My embassy knows I am in your country.'

Without warning, the guard slapped him hard across his face and said in German, 'Do not speak unless you are asked a question.'

He gulped and swallowed down any more words, and raised his head slightly to glance down at his penis as if to say 'goodbye' to an old friend who had given him extreme pleasure over the years.

The doctor let his penis drop and squeezed his testicles causing stabbing-pain, and his buttocks to rise six inches off the bed.

'Please don't.'

Both women laughed at his discomfort; the first time the doctor had

laughed. Then, with the look of an evil magician about to take a rabbit out of a hat, before broiling it with carrots and onions, the doctor lifted the cloth covering the tray. He closed his eyes as she picked up a syringe. A few seconds later he felt a prick. His reflex-response was to open his eyes wide. He saw that the doctor's thumb was pressing down on a syringe and the liquid in the opaque barrel was emptying into his penis.

His eyes closed, and his mind was sucked through an unreflecting mirror into a dark forest. He was lying on his back amongst dead leaves, naked. His penis was pointing up to the stars. Slowly, in a shaft of moonlight, his penis became wood instead of blood-pumped flesh. A scaly bark appear on its trunk as his testicles turned into acorns. The wooden trunk began to grow, taller and taller, until it was half as tall as the tallest pine in the forest. Demented woodpeckers, with the faces of women he had known, flew down from the trees and pecked away at the trunk. And then - horror of horrors - a woman wearing a white coat and carrying a woodman's axe, came out of a bush. He screamed himself awake.

Slowly, he opened his eyes and peered through glistening tears; his vision also blurred by the naked lightbulb in the ceiling. He raised his head and looked down at his groin. His penis was still erect and pointing upwards, but it was thicker than normal and a putty-grey colour. He looked around the room. He was alone, still stretched out on his back on the bed, with his wrists chained above his head and his ankles chained to the foot of the bed.

The door opened and the doctor reappeared followed by the guard. 'Sleeping Beautiful is awake,' the doctor said in heavily-accented English, and her mouth stretched into a half smile. The guard laughed at the doctor's joke, as she closed the door behind her. Both women came to the side of the bed and stared down at him.

'What have you done to me?' he asked in a barely-audible, croaky voice.

Neither woman answered. The doctor looked stern. The guard gave a smile, which he interpreted as confirming his worst fear that he had lost a treasured part of his anatomy. He closed his eyes and felt nothing in his groin. A few minutes later he felt a thump on his shoulder. 'Open your eyes,' the guard commanded. 'Look at your cock.'

He open his eyes half-way and his tear-distorted vision saw what appeared to be his pink-red penis still standing. He opened his eyes wider. Whatever the doctor had injected into it had caused it to resemble a Scottish caber prior to being tossed.

'Stand,' the guard ordered, as she unlinked the wrist-manacles from the ring on the wall above the bedhead. He waited until she had unlinked the ankle-manacles, and swung his feet off the bed groggily, and planted them on the floor as firmly as he could. He stood, shaking and trembling, as it dawned on him what his captors had done to him. They had not castrated him; they had taken a plaster cast of his erect penis.

The doctor was standing behind him. Her palm patted his buttocks lightly and then progressively harder. His penis began to tingle and the tingling increased at each slap. The doctor was now slapping his bum really hard. He felt ashamed of his penis as it twitched appreciatively at each slap.

The doctor stopped slapping his bottom. He looked down at his penis. Its one eye seemed to wink at her as if to say 'that was nice'. He blushed as red as his slapped-bum. Then the doctor went to a medicine cabinet and picked up a bottle from the top shelf. She came close in front of him; so close, that the tips of her breasts brushed against his bare, hairy chest. She stared down at his groin. Then, using one rubber-gloved finger she raked the underside of his erect shaft causing it to twitch but not to emit.

Then the guard stepped forward and slapped him hard on his buttocks with her leather-gloved hand. Immediately large dollops of semen spurted into the wide neck of the specimen bottle. 'He like woman spank,' the doctor said in disjointed English, as she took charge of the bottle, and the guard gripped him by the arm and led him out of the room.

In the corridor, the guard slapped him hard across the back of his head to make him walk faster, but his stride was inhibited by the relatively short chain between his ankles, and all he could do was a stumbling-shuffle instead of a quick-step. In the dungeon, she pushed him roughly into his cell and disappeared leaving the cell door open. A rat crouched in the corner. Rupert eyed the single blanket which did not keep him warm. His guard appeared again, standing backlit against the light from the corridor. She threw another blanket at him, and slammed the iron door shut with a 'bell-ringing' clang. He listened to her boots click away, then picked up the second blanket. He would not be so cold and he still had his penis.

TWO

KIDNAPPED

Surprisingly, he slept well under the two blankets, and dreamed he was back in his cottage writing his next novel and shagging his housekeeper, Mrs Mountford who provided him with good food and even better sex. What else could a man wish for.

Not having neighbours within hearing range, and few visitors, they usually played a spanking game after the evening meal. On the odd day of the month he would feign dissatisfaction with his meal and take her into his bedroom, make her raise her skirt, take down her pantaloons and roll up her girdle. Then he would give her a minimum of twenty slaps with a tawse; his favourite spanking implement. After her spanking he would ejaculate into whichever part of her anatomy he fancied on the evening in question. On an even day of the month, Mrs Mountford would get even, for example, by becoming his teacher and making him wear short trousers. She would then order her mock-juvenile to take down his trousers and underpants, lift up the tail of his shirt, and bend over the back of a chair. She would then cane his buttocks with a school cane. This was followed by the teacher ordering her pupil to ejaculate into which one of her three orifices the teacher fancied on the evening in question. That was the reality of his home life.

In his incarcerated dream, Mrs Mountford was 'the lady of the house' and he was her submissive manservant. Displeased with the meal he had cooked, she took him into her bedroom, made him take down his striped trousers and underpants, and striped his buttocks with one of the several birches she kept in her wardrobe. After birching him severely, Mrs Mountford made him lie down on the bed on his back. Taking off her knickers, she knelt astride his midriff in her open-bottomed girdle and impaled herself on his plaster caste

penis, all the while complaining that the plaster was not firm enough.

Dreaming of Mrs Mountford in a dominant role caused him to have a wet dream. He was on the point of another unaided ejaculation when he awoke, chained and shackled in his cell. The rat had spent the night with him. It was plump and looked well fed; not unlike Mrs Mountford. The memory of his housekeeper, making him touch his toes preparatory to being birched, caused him to grip his erect unplastered penis. He was about to climax his wank just as the cover of the observation window in the cell door slammed open with a metallic clunk, and his guard's blue eyes were upon him.

He and his penis subsided with fear as the key scraped in the lock and the door banged open, and she stood framed in the doorway, like a military-garbed 'angel of death'. The rat cowered against the wall then dodged past the guard's boots, presumably to make its home elsewhere.

The guard stepped into the cell. Rupert stood politely remembering his manners as a lady entered a room. And shivered with fear at her entrance. Her pistol rested snugly on her hip and the whip in her gloved-hand was like a snake about to uncoil and bite.

Without looking at him, she picked up the extra blanket she had kindly tossed at him before he snuggled down for the night. She sniffed it. Then picked up and sniffed the blanket underneath. Neither blanket smelled sweet. Her nostrils twitched, like those of a haughty vixen. Then she looked closely at a still-damp patch on the blanket which had been underneath, and grimaced. She dropped the blanket on the wooden board on its iron frame - his bed - and stood in front of him, staring angrily. He dare not return the stare but kept his eyes down.

Her gloved hand - the one without the whip - took hold of his limp shaft and squeezed it, almost gently. Her ministrations had the desired effect. It swelled to its full potential. Then, with the look of a nurse squeezing puss from a boil, she gave one last expert squeeze and raked a gloved thumb against the stretched flesh of the trigger point. She stepped back hastily as the barrel fired 'cannon-balls' of spunk in her direction.

One dollop landed on the toe of her highly-polished boot. She glared at him even more ferociously, and imperiously pointed a finger at her blemished boot, and protruded her tongue. He knew what he was required to do without a further mime. He collapsed to his knees in front of her boots, his mouth hovering over her toecap and licked off the white spots. Then, with a brown tongue, stared up at her for further instructions. She was now smiling down at

him, and angled her boot sideways, which signalled to him that he was to lick clean the rest of the boot. He did so. She then presented her other boot to be licked.

'Up,' she demanded when he had finished licking. His knees trembled as he staggered to his feet. 'Come.'

He followed her into the passage. As far as he knew, there were only two other prisoners; a muscular bald man who looked Slavonic and a slim blond youth who looked Germanic. Since his arrival in the dungeon, he had seen only three guards: his beautiful guard; a very pretty girl aged about eighteen; and a pretty, but very plump, woman in her twenties.

The young guard and the plump guard always seemed to be together and work as a team. They were overly sadistic. He had seen them make the blond youth kneel and tip his bucket of excrement over his own head. Then they had doused the youth with water, and made him scrub the flagstones in the passage on his hands and knees.

Rupert's guard had made him watch the incident from the other end of the passage, and smiled at him as if to say 'this is what I will do to you if you don't obey me'. But, his guard appeared to be the least vicious of the three guards. She had shown him a modicum of kindness in giving him an extra blanket. His guard was also, in his blinkered opinion, the most beautiful of the trio.

As he anticipated she would, his guard doused him clean with the hosepipe, and then ordered him to follow her up the spiral stone steps to the floor above. They entered the doctor's room.

As before, they both stood in front of the doctor's desk, he still dripping wet, whilst the doctor finished reading papers on her desk, without any acknowledgment of their presence. Then the doctor put away the papers in a file and looked quizzically at the guard, who said something to the doctor in their language.

The doctor laughed in a way which gave Rupert cause for concern. It was an amused laugh tinged with a hint of menace and foreboding. She took a shiny-metal object from a desk drawer and stood in front of him. She touched his penis with the object. It shrivelled at the touch of cold steel, enabling her to fit a penis-restraint.

The doctor stood to one side to view her handiwork, and to allow the guard an uninterrupted view. Both women laughed as the doctor handed a small key the guard, who fitted the key to the keyring on her belt, and

ushered him to the door.

The guard took him into a room next door to the doctor's room. This room was brightly lit with whitewashed walls, and furnished like a gymnasium with various types of exercise machines and bodybuilding equipment. She led him to a large wheel which resembled a modern version of a treadmill fashionable in Victorian prisons.

She made him stand in front of the wheel and fitted and locked a chain around his waist, effectively chaining him to the treadmill with his feet on a step. Then she bent down to his bare feet and unchained the manacles around his ankles, leaving his legs free to 'tread the mill'. She flicked a switch and the wheel began to turn. Manacled to the wheel, he had no option but to keep treading. Behind him he heard the door open and close. He looked over his shoulder. He was alone in the room. He lost track of time as his legs began to ache as though he was three quarters of the way to Marathon.

He was in danger of stumbling because of fatigue in his legs, when the guard returned. He gave a sigh of relief when she stopped the wheel. She unchained him and took him over to a weightlifting machine. She sat him on the seat of the machine, and chained his wrists to a bar above his head which rested on a frame with weights at either end of the bar. He realised what he was required to do; push up the weights. He strained himself with the effort of the first push-up and let the bar fall back onto its frame. She indicated with a hand gesture that he had to keep lifting. He managed another five lifts before his arms went limp and he was unable to lift anymore. He was being forced by her to become fitter and more muscular, and wondered why.

During the course of the following week, he was taken by the guard to the gym each day, and made to use the exercise machines. And when he finished his exercises, she took him into a small room adjacent to the gym, where a plate of meat and potatoes and a glass of fresh water were on a table for him. This was food in addition to the gruel-like soup he was given morning and evening in his cell. For some reason, the guard was giving him extra rations. She made him eat the plate of food quickly, and seemed unusually nervy while he did so, as if anxious that no one else should come into the room. After his extra meal, she took him back to his cell and his two blankets.

In his solitary confinement, he kept himself sane by working out a plot for his next crime novel, in the belief and hope that, eventually, he would be released or would escape. Surely, he thought, the British Embassy must be aware of his disappearance in this country called Femdom. It nestled between

Germany to the West and Austria to the East. A small, beautiful country, comprising a range of mountains, dense woods, a flat plain, picturesque villages and a small town, named Frauberg, which was also the capital. An un-navigable tributary of the Danube flowed through the country. Its culture was Germanic, although it had its own language called Femdom. It was hostile to Britain despite the Great War having ended four years before. The country was ruled by a middle-aged archduke who had absolute power. His wife, the archduchess, by all accounts, was younger and very beautiful, although she was seldom seen in public.

Using Machiavellian methods, reputedly instigated by the archduchess, the archduke had retained his position despite the overthrow of the Kaiser in neighbouring Germany and the collapse of the Hapsburg Empire in neighbouring Austria at the conclusion of the Great War.

Rupert found solace by reminding himself that his captors could not keep him locked up indefinitely. He was too well known a novelist.

He had no light in his cell. The only light came from the naked bulb in the passage, filtering through the observation grill in the cell door. But as time went on he became used to the gloom. He could now see better in the dark, and that was without any carrots. Captivity had made him fitter with better eyesight. Not being given an opportunity to shave, he had a week's growth of beard and, he assumed, resembled a hermit.

He had not seen himself since he had viewed his reflection in the full-length wardrobe mirror in his hotel room in Frauberg. He had looked dapper and dandy and distinguished. On his way out of the hotel lobby for an evening-promenade and a visit to the casino, a bejewelled, beautiful girl had viewed him with evident admiration. He had tipped his hat to her as he passed and she had returned an engaging smile. A man was with her. He looked like a rough bodyguard, albeit smartly dressed.

As Rupert had sauntered along the fashionable promenade beside the rock-strewn river, he felt danger in the shadows. A sixth sense told him to be watchful. He has several hundred pounds - a small fortune - in his wallet, ready to try his luck at the roulette wheel after his perambulation. He also had a small revolver in his breast pocket and a walking stick which concealed a rapier blade. Frauberg was not an uncivilised town, but the rest of the country was known to be lawless. Foreigners had been kidnapped and held to ransom, and sometimes killed if the ransom was not paid.

In the bracing night air, he had walked almost to the end of the tree-lined

promenade. There were no other walkers within a hundred yards. A Rolls Royce was driving slowly along the road parallel with the promenade. He had decided to turn back towards the bright lights of the town just as the Rolls came up behind him and stopped. He saw the shape of a man in the driver's seat. The man leaned across the interior of the car and wound down the passenger window. And called, 'Herr Houndsditch.' His friendly tone of voice was that of a person bumping into a friend in the street.

Rupert paused as the driver exited the car and came towards him. They met under the beam of a streetlight, Rupert recognised the man; it was the rough-looking person who had been in the lobby with the beautiful girl a few minutes before.

'Good evening, sir. Are we acquainted?' Rupert asked.

The man's answer was to take a gun from his coat pocket and point it at Rupert's chest. 'Go to car.' The man's tone of voice was now that of a footpad ordering a victim to be quiet.

Rupert was forced at gunpoint to the back of the Rolls, his wrists were handcuffed behind his back, he was gagged with a scarf, and then forced - the gun jabbing him in the ribs - to climb into the boot. Just as he was made to lie down, he saw, through the rear window of the car, the back of a girl's head. And so it was that Rupert was abducted by a girl.

THREE

A HANGING

That night he had another wet dream; this time he dreamt of his guard. He wished he knew her name. In his dream, she had become his wife, although Mrs Mountford had stayed on as his housekeeper. His 'new wife' and Mrs Mountford had become very friendly; frequently putting their arms around each other's waists in the kitchen. And then one evening, without warning, they came into his bedroom and together overpowered him, stripped him naked, tied his hands behind his back, fitted a penis restraint on his genitals, and made him bend over the back of a chair as his 'wife' tawsed his buttocks and Mrs Mountford birched him. With his buttocks glowing red-raw, they made him stand in a corner, with Mrs Mountford's pantaloons on his head, whilst his 'wife' and Mrs Mountford kissed and cuddled and pleased each other in his bed.

He awoke at the sound of an alarm bell, which turned out to be the cell door clanging open. His guard stood framed in the doorway, hands on hips, leather whip dangling on her wrist. She looked displeased. 'Piss yourself,' she commanded. 'And shit.'

At first, he had been embarrassed when she had made him urinate and defecate into his toilet-bucket while she watched from the doorway. But, he thought, 'one gets used to doing most things in life if one has no choice but to do them'.

Having sat uncomfortably and performed, he picked up the bucket as she stood well back, pinching her nostrils, to allow him to leave the cell. She watched as he shuffled to the far end of the passage where the prisoners had been taught to deposit their 'deposits' into a sluice. He rinsed the bucket using water from a tap and returned the emptied-bucket to his cell. In passing, he

noticed that the doors of the other cells were wide open. He wondered why.

The guard beckoned him to follow her through the door at the end of the passage where he expected to be hosed down, but she kept walking and he followed. Without his freezing wash, he felt smelly and unkept.

He had seen little of his surroundings since being kidnapped. After a bumpy journey travelling in the boot of the Rolls over potholed roads, he had arrived in a courtyard, and been manhandled by the thug with a gun, along a dark passage into a small room where he encountered his guard for the first time. After making a respectful bow towards the guard, as if to signify that she was his superior, the thug left, leaving the guard and Rupert alone in the room.

They had stared at each other for a long moment, she haughtily, he fearfully. He was also dazzled by her beauty. Slowly, she had taken a step towards him, still staring into his eyes without blinking, and turned the handle of her whip, so that the knob of the handle protruded towards his stomach and jabbed him in his soft solar plexus. He had doubled up, gasping for air, as she waited for him to recover. 'Next. I hit you on cock,' she had said in German. Then, without bothering to unholster her gun, but lightly flicking him with her whip, she made him undress.

Soon, his expensive clothes had lain piled on the floor as he had stood, naked, in front of her. Using hand signals, understandable in any language, she had made him close his eyes whilst she chained his hands in front of him, and then chained his feet with a chain long enough to enable him to walk. Then she had taken him along the passage to the cell block and his new 'home'. That was only seven days ago but it seemed like an eternity.

The guard now led him into the room in which they had first met. She surprised him by making him stand still as she knelt at his feet and unlocked the manacles from his ankles, and then stood and unchained his hands. He was free to attack her, but he dared not do so. He stood, meekly, with his arms by his side and his chin up, as if standing to attention.

He watched out of the corner of his eye as she unhooked a jacket and trousers from a peg on the wall and dropped them at his feet, with a wave of her hand which instructed 'put them on'. He pulled on the trousers and tightened the string which acted as a belt. His waist was leaner than when he had first arrived. Had he been wearing his favourite leather belt it would have been two notches tighter. He pulled on the jacket. The material of his new 'suit' was coarse and felt scratchy against his delicate skin, and made him

look like a tramp.

He stood, expecting her to refasten his manacles around his hands and feet, but she opened the door, and he followed her out of the room like an obedient lapdog. Without chains around his ankles, he was able to keep up with her long strides. He was beginning to feel slightly happier. He was wearing clothes and was no longer manacled, and his guard was not too hard on him compared to how he had seen the two other guards treat their two prisoners.

But, as they got closer to a door at the end of another passage, he heard male screams. He was unchained and could try to get away; maybe dive threw a window into the moat? But he knew he would be shot like a swimming duck.

His guard seemed to sense that he was thinking of escape. She slowed her pace, so that she was level with him, and slapped him a hard slap around the back of his head with her gloved hand. His brain reverberated with the thud.

They had reached the door to the room from whence came the screams. Despite his fear, he moved forward and put his hand on the iron ring which served as a door knob. As the door creaked open he stepped to one side to allow her to enter first; a gentleman should always open a door for a lady. She slapped him hard again around the back of his head to make him enter first. He did so with his eyes closed, and tripped over the threshold.

When he opened his eyes, he saw the bald prisoner standing on a rickety, wooden chair. Both the prisoner and the chair looked as though they could collapse at any moment. The bald prisoner was naked with a noose tight around his neck. The rope was taut over a beam with the other end tied to a ring on the wall. His hands were chained behind his back, and he would surely hang if the chair was taken away.

The young guard was behind the prisoner with her hands around his waist. Deliberately, she was making him wobble. The plump guard was standing in from of him laughing at his evident distress. His huge penis was stiff, possibly because the plump guard had it gripped in her fist.

The two guards turned to stare at Rupert as if he were fresh meat in a butcher's window. He stared back at the young guard who was about to hang the bald prisoner. She had a beauty-queen smile to complement her beauty-queen curves. And she smiled a lot as if she enjoyed her work.

The plump guard was also pretty, but with a much fuller figure; broad hips and a heavy bust, which strained the seams and buttons of her uniform.

Instinctively, Rupert inched closer to his guard as she looked less threatening than her two colleagues. But she gave him another slap on the back of his head to make him move closer to the 'hanging' chair.

Obediently, he stepped a pace forward and stopped. She prodded him again with another thump on the back of his head; this time from the handle of her whip. He took several more paces forward, and the plump guard moved out of the way so that he was right in front of the bald prisoner.

The plump guard stood to one side of the chair as the young guard took her hands away from the bald prisoner's waist. Rupert swallowed hard, and took in a deep gulp of air, as the young guard put the sole of her boot against the side of the chair seat, as if about to kick away the chair and leave the bald prisoner dangling on the rope.

Rupert moved his head slightly to the left where the other prisoner, the blond youth, stood like a statue. Like Rupert, he was unchained. The blond prisoner and Rupert, could have rushed at the guards, not giving them a chance to draw their guns. But then Rupert realised that the blond prisoner could not rush forward. His trousers were bunched around his shins. If he had tried to rush, he would have stumbled over, giving the guards time to draw their guns and shoot.

So Rupert watched with horrified eyes as the young guard pushed her foot, harder, against the chair, thereby levering two chair-legs off the stone floor, and making the chair seat slant so that the bald prisoner had to readjust his feet to keep his balance. She kept her boot static, staring up and monitoring her victim's reaction. And then pushed another couple of inches. The bald prisoner made an indistinct plea in a croaky muffled voice. Then the young guard's smile disappeared and she kicked away the chair. The plump guard had to step back quickly to avoid the toppling chair hitting her shins.

Rupert watched in horror as the bald prisoner's toes angled towards the ground, like a leaping dancer unable to land, and he lost control of his bodily functions. Rupert just about managed not to lose control of his own bodily functions.

But the bald prisoner did not die. He was saved by Rupert's guard. As his desperate jerking on the rope lessened, indicating that he was losing consciousness, she strode to the ring on the wall and used a knife to slice the rope. The bald prisoner crashed to the stone floor, still alive.

The plump guard was now standing in front of Rupert, looking down at his penis-restraint. With a grin, she said something in the their language to

Rupert's guard, who did not look pleased at what had been said. The plump guard then moved away from Rupert, with a shrug which seemed to convey the message 'he's all yours'.

'Fetch buckets and mops,' Rupert's guard said to the blond prisoner in German. And then said to Rupert, 'Go with him.'

Rupert followed the blond prisoner into the passage to a water tap. He watched as his companion filled two buckets to the brim. 'I am English,' Rupert said in a low voice in English.

'No speak,' his companion said, taking one of the mops leaning against a wall.

Rupert glanced back along the corridor. The guards were still in the room. He whispered again. 'Did they kidnap you?' he asked in English. And then repeated the question in German.

His companion nodded to say 'yes'. And then whispered in English in a voice so low that Rupert had to put his ear almost to the youth's mouth to hear what he was saying. 'Girl in big car.'

'Do you mean a cream and black Rolls Royce?' Rupert whispered. The man nodded again.

The clicking of high heels indicated that they were not alone in the corridor. Rupert risked looking behind him. He saw the doctor in her white coat approaching the 'hanging' room from the other end of the corridor.

Both fearing that they might have been seen talking, and each taking a heavy buckets of water and a mop, Rupert and the blond prisoner returned to the room.

The young guard was amusing herself by kicking the bald prisoner in the ribs as he lay on the floor, unconscious. The doctor was staring down at him. She too kicked the bald prisoner in the ribs and said in German, 'Get up. You are not dead.' The young guard and the plump guard laughed at the doctor's comment, and then the plump guard took a bucket of water from the blond prisoner, and threw the freezing contents in the face of the bald prisoner. Then Rupert's guard told Rupert and the blond prisoner to clean the floor.

Eventually, the bald prisoner managed to stand, as if in a daze. The doctor un-looped the noose from around his neck and examined the ligature marks. Then she slapped him hard across both cheeks, like a second reviving a boxer in his corner after being counted out.

Rupert's guard 'cracked' her whip and Rupert watched as the two naked prisoners both put on a jacket and trousers similar to the ill-fitting clothes that

Rupert was wearing, and then the three prisoners were made to put on wooden clogs. Clothed and clogged, the other two prisoners stood one behind the other, facing the door. Rupert's guard then pushed him into position as the last in the three-man line. He hitched up his trousers, and tightened the string around his waist. It looked as though they were in for a trek.

The plump guard fitted neck-irons around the prisoners' necks, one by one, and the young guard linked the chains together so that the three prisoners formed a chain gang. The gang was then marched out of the room, led by the young guard, the plump guard at one side of the 'chain' and Rupert's guard bringing up the rear. All three guards now had rifles slung over their shoulders. Rupert wondered if he would be facing a firing squad.

FOUR

ANOTHER HANGING

A stallion stood in the courtyard next to a farm cart with a donkey between the shafts. Rupert's guard mounted the stallion and the chain gang mounted the cart and squatted on the floor. The plump guard and the young guard sat on the driver's bench. Slowly, the stallion and the cart proceeded over the drawbridge and out into the countryside, through meadows and fields, ignored by the cows and the sheep and the few toiling peasants.

After a mile or so, the cart bumped its way along a track into a thick wood, then stopped on a ridge overlooking a quarry. A narrow path led down to the floor of the quarry. Rupert looked at his ungainly wooden clogs. If one of the chained-together prisoners slipped on the way down they would all fall into the quarry.

But his guard, still on her horse, came up behind him and leaning in the saddle, unlinked Rupert from the other two prisoners. She held one end of the chain attached to his neck-iron. Then she backed her horse away, pulling Rupert with her, like a dog on a lead. Both the other guards looked surprised and annoyed at Rupert's guard. Seeing their look, she said something in their language in a terse voice. The plump guard shrugged her shoulders and dismounted from the driver's seat of the cart. The young guard also dismounted. Then the two guards made the other two prisoners go down the path into the quarry, leaving the Rupert and his guard on the ridge.

Rupert and his guard watched as the two prisoners reached the quarry floor. The two guards followed with their rifles. Then he felt a tug on his neck iron, as his guard spurred her horse into a walk with Rupert stumbling in his clogs by the side of the horse.

He thought about trying to escape. His hands were free. He was shackled

only by the neck iron. One pull on his chain might tug his guard off her horse. Her rifle was slung on her back; her pistol in its holster. 'What is to stop you trying to escape?' he thought to himself; and gave himself the answer, he was terrified of her.

The horse followed a path deeper into the wood with Rupert trying to keep up to avoid being dragged along the ground, and possibly trampled by the horse's hooves. The guard reined in next to the thick trunk of an old oak tree, and dismounted. She did not bother to tie the horse. Both Rupert and the stallion could have run deeper into the wood, dodging bullets, by neither tried to run.

Rupert stood facing his guard as she came towards him, hips swaying in her jodhpurs. Keys jangled on the large ring dangling from a clasp on her broad leather belt. She stopped close in front of him, and took a key from the ring and unlocked his neck-iron and let it drop to the grass. Then she untied the string holding up his trousers and they fell down around his ankles.

'Step,' she said.

He took this to mean that he should step out of his trousers. He kicked off his clogs, and with one hand on the tree trunk for support, he pulled off his trousers and stood, naked from the waist down, waiting for a further instruction. She pointed at his jacket, so he took it off. He was now entirely naked except for his penis-restraint covering his modesty. She took the small key from her ring and unlocked the penis-restraint. Immediately, his unrestrained penis was primed for action. Both he and the guard looked down at it, then she put her gloved fingers underneath his chin and pushed up his face so that she was staring into his frightened eyes.

'Fuck.'

He was not sure whether she was swearing at him, uttering a curse or instructing him to engage in sexual intercourse with her.

'Fuck me,' she said in English.

Her command of the Anglo Saxon vernacular led him to believe that this was an order he could not refuse; not that he would ever wish to refuse such an order. But he was naked and she was still uniformed in a white military-style blouse, a size too small to accommodate her bulging breasts. The narrowness of her waist being emphasised by her broad leather belt with its holstered pistol and jangling keyring. Her long legs, encased in black, flap-sided jodhpurs and highly polished riding boots with spurs made her look like a hunts-woman.

Rupert, in his younger days, had been enamoured of the wife of the master of the Brackshire hunt. On a memorable occasion, when they had been together at the back of the 'chase', they had lost the scent of the fox and had dismounted near a broad oak, whereupon 'the mistress of the hunt' had rolled down her jodhpurs to allow Rupert to use his 'hunting horn'.

His penis skin stretched to beyond its theoretical maximum dimensions thinking of the encounter and his fondness for a female in jodhpurs, off her horse and pushed up against the trunk of an oak.

He watched in surprise as his guard undid her belt and let it, and its attached gun and keyring, drop to the ground. He made no move to grab the gun even though it was within grabbing-range. Somewhat rudely, she pushed him out of the way, so that she could plant her back against the wide trunk of the tree. She pointed at her right hip. He was being invited to undo the side buttons of her jodhpurs. With fumbling fingers, he managed to undo the buttons and loosen the waistband and pull her jodhpurs down to her knees. She was wearing virginal-white knickers. He pulled those down as well revealing a triangle of blond pubic hair.

In what appeared to him, and his penis, to be a gesture of surrender, she lowered her eyelids, smiled coyly and placed her palms on top of her head and widened her thighs as far as the restricting jodhpurs and panties around her knees would allow. Now he really did have a chance to escape. Her gun and holster were on the ground. Her rifle was also on the ground. He was an accomplished horseman. He could leap onto the stallion and gallop away.

But his penis did not want to run away with him. It pointed, stiffly, at the soft stomach in front of it, ready to slot into place. So he put one hand on his shaft, the palm of his other hand on the trunk for support and guided his 'boss' into her. Immediately her arms entwined around his neck and upper back like a sex-crazed boa constrictor. Her mouth glued to his making him gasp for oxygen.

Rupert prided himself on two aptitudes; being able to write a novel to a timescale laid down by his publisher, and being able to fuck a woman seriously well. Because he was now in his late thirties, he was nowhere near as 'trigger happy' as he had been in his youth. By some strange quirk of memory, Mrs Stannard, his mother's best friend, sprang to mind as his orgasm was close to reaching its zenith. Your first fuck is one you always remember.

Fucking his guard was also unforgettable. She was gurgling with delight

and then emitted a scream which almost pierced his eardrums. He assumed that she was in the throes of an orgasm and did his best to stand firm and keep her firmly impaled until she had exhausted herself. Four knees sagged as the respective orgasms subsided. His shaft slithered out of her, semi stiff and almost ready for another not-so-brief encounter.

They looked each other in the eyes, both panting. Then she pulled his mouth against hers as her tongue tried to get down his throat. He worried, briefly, that he had not cleaned his teeth since being kidnapped, and that possibly, bearing in mind the unwholesome food he had been given since he was kidnapped, that his breath was not as sweet as it might be. Also, that he had an unkept beard. But she did seem to mind. Possibly, she liked a 'bit of rough'. Certainly, she seemed to like 'rough' sex.

At last, their lips parted. Her naturally rosy complexion was flushed to the point of being florid. Her cheeks were wet as tears of joy had dribbled down. He was now fully primed for another engagement, and her blood-pumped lips pouted in anticipation of another orgasm. He impaled her again, shoving it in like a stallion with a mare on heat. After a few seconds they began a joint orgasm, and he felt an enormous sense of achievement, as he always did when a woman came with him.

When their mutual orgasm subsided, they clung together in another impassioned kiss. But his mind was not on kissing, it had strayed back to the thought of escape. He would never get a better chance. She looked exhausted, as if she had run a mile in under five minutes. Her jodhpurs and panties had slipped below her knees. Her gun belt was close to his right foot. Slyly, he kicked it further away. Her eyes were closed as she lolled into him, her arms weakly around his neck and upper back. He looked sideways over his shoulder. The still-saddled stallion was now grazing, on tufts of grass, just behind him. It was now or never.

Untangling himself from her arms, like 'a bounder' rebuffing an infatuated damsel, he vaulted onto the horse, disregarding the pain in his testicles as they hit the saddle. He jabbed his heels into the horse's flanks and the steed galloped towards the path leading back to the stony road. But then the horse responded to a short, sharp whistle, ignored Rupert's frantic pulling on its reins, and swerved in a semi circle back to its starting point.

The guard had pulled up her knickers and breeches, faster than a demimond in an alleyway in the Rue St Denis spotting the kepi of an approaching gendarme. She was ready with her rifle as the horse came to a sharp halt in

front of her, almost catapulting its rider over its head. After recovering from clutching the horse's neck, Rupert found himself staring down the barrel of a rifle. She jabbed him in the ribs with the end of the gun. He raised his hands and placed his palms on the top of his head, in a gesture of surrender, much like she had placed her palms on her head just before he had first fucked her.

'Stand down.'

He took the instruction to mean that he should dismount. With fear and trepidation, he climbed down from the horse and stood facing her. She jabbed him in the stomach with the gun, and then spoke softly to the horse which trotted a short distance away to resume grazing.

Judging by the displeased look on her face, Rupert expected her to shoot him then and there. She took a step forward and jabbed him again in the gut. He felt grateful the gun did not have a bayonet. He took several steps backwards, and sat down heavily, his heel having clipped an exposed tree root. She laughed unkindly as slowly he got to his feet.

Unexpectedly she lowered her gun and leaned it against the tree against which he had fucked her. Then she stared undressing, taking off her blouse to reveal a large bra which strained to accommodate her breasts. He had not seen her top half in the flesh before and felt the same sense of wonderment as he had felt when viewing the peaks of the Matterhorn. She undid her belt and, as before, dropped it to the ground, sat on the grass and pulled off her boots, and then stood, and wriggled out of her jodhpurs and knickers. She was now nude from head to toe. He stared in open-mouthed admiration, entranced at the overly-curved figure. Was she going to require him to fuck her again?

The answer was 'no'. She came close to him and simply kneed him in the groin. He clutched his genitals, partly to protect them from another 'kiss' from her knee and partly to alleviate the stabbing pain in his groin. He bent at the waist as he clutched his 'privates' leaving his chin a prime target for an uppercut which she delivered, with bunched knuckles, causing his head to jerk upwards. This was followed by a body blow; a chop with the flat of her hand in the kidneys. He staggered backwards and raised his fists. He had boxed at Camford University. He was not a pushover. He jabbed a half hearted fist at his opponent's oval face, which she ducked with ease, grabbing his arm in a judo lock and twisting it in one movement, causing him to collapse to his knees with his arm close to breaking point.

'Please,' he gasped, in a voice which he hoped would convey abject surrender.

She let go, as he stayed on his knees sobbing, partly from the physical pain and partly from the humiliation of being brought to his knees by a woman.

She walked away from him as he remained kneeling. He feared that if he staggered upright he would suffer another assault on his person and more pain. Through watery eyes, he looked to see what she was doing. She was getting dressed. When she came back to him she was in her full uniform, her gun holstered and her rifle still leaning against the tree. It was clear that she did not need firearms in order to subdue him. She kicked him in the ribs as a signal that he should stand. He staggered up as she pointed in the direction of the quarry, from where gunshots could be heard.

She walked ahead of him, unconcerned at the possibility that he might try his luck again and make another attempt to escape, or even attack her. They reached the rim overlooking the quarry. He quaked at what he saw. The blond prisoner was standing, as if to attention, balancing a round stone on his head. The plump guard was twenty yards in front of him with her rifle, aiming at him as if she were a one-woman firing squad. She fired, hitting the stone which flew off the prisoner's head on the bullet's impact. The blond prisoner bent down, picked up another stone and placed it on his head and she raised her rifle again.

The young guard, also carrying a rifle, was overseeing the bald prisoner. She was making him do push-ups with a heavy flat stone on his back.

Rupert's guard called down to her two colleagues in the quarry. They both looked up at her and then, in response to her order, set to work chaining their two prisoners together using neck irons.

Rupert received a thump on the back of his head, which was his guard's way of giving an order. He followed her back to the tree. As before, she marched ahead of him in her shiny boots.

At the tree, she whistled to call her horse to come over to her, reached in her saddlebag and took out a pair of handcuffs. Then she looked pointedly at Rupert and gave a whistle, which he took to mean that he should go over to her as the horse had done. He did so. She twirled a finger to indicate that he should turn his back to her. He did so. Roughly she pulled his arms behind his back and cuffed his wrists. The horse was still standing obediently next to her. She opened her saddlebag again and took out coiled rope. Rupert eyed the rope with deepening alarm, as the other prisoners trudged into view with their guards.

The young guard was at the head of the column. Rupert's guard said something to her as she approached and handed her the coiled rope. The young guard beamed. Rupert's heart sank to his bruised soles. He remembered the bald prisoner swinging by his neck before they had left for their jaunt to the quarry and the tree. Any doubts that Rupert might have had as to the purpose of the rope disappeared when the young guard, still smiling broadly, fashioned a noose.

The plump guard, who had been at the tail of the escorted prisoners, came up to her two colleagues. Rupert's guard said something in a low voice to the plump guard, who grinned, and then turned back to the two prisoners. She unlinked their chain and signalled that they should take the place of the donkey between the shafts of the cart. The prisoners unhitched the donkey and let it wander off and graze next to the horse. Then the two prisoners took the donkey's place each holding a shaft. They were now 'the donkey'. Again following orders, they tugged the cart around and trundled it over to the tree against which Rupert has fucked his guard, and rolled it into place underneath a thick, overhanging branch.

Rupert resolved to meet his death bravely and tried to blank all thoughts from his mind. As she was prone to do by way of giving Rupert an order, his guard banged him around the back of the head with the flat of her hand and pointed to the cart. His limbs froze until he received a heavier thump, and he climbed into the back of the cart, with some difficulty as his wrists were cuffed behind his back. He expected his guard to climb into the cart with him, but he stood alone in the cart as she went over to her horse and climbed into the saddle.

It was the smiling, young guard who climbed into the back of the cart with the noose. Standing next to Rupert, who stood handcuffed and shivering with fear in the hot sun, the young guard tossed the rope high up into the air and over the branch. When the rope stopped swinging the noose was dangling in front of Rupert's face.

The young guard placed her hands on his shoulders and manoeuvred him so that the noose was beside his left ear. The plump guard was standing by the side of the cart holding the other end of the rope. She waited whilst the young guard looped the noose over Rupert's head, and tightened the knot behind his left ear. Then the plump guard pulled taut the end of the rope and tied it around the tree trunk. Rupert closed his eyes and waited for death. His last thoughts would be the scintillating fuck he had enjoyed with his guard

against the tree from which he would soon hang. His penis stiffened. If he was offered a last request it would be a wank.

With his eyes still closed, Rupert heard the young guard jump off the back of the cart. He half opened his eyes and looked over his shoulder, and saw both the plump guard and the young guard pick up whips, and position themselves on either side the shafts being held by the two prisoners. The young guard flicked her whip lightly across the backs of the prisoners and they shuffled forward a pace pulling the cart with them. Rupert's feet were now close to the back of the cart. Then the plump guard used her whip and the 'two-man donkey' shuffled forward another pace. Rupert wondered why the guards only ever lightly whipped; he would have expected all of the prisoners to have been whipped severely; the thought had not occurred to him before. This would be one of his last thoughts. As least he was keeping a stiff-upper lip and not blubbering.

In response to the young guard's whip, the prisoners moved the cart forward a couple more paces,. Rupert had no option but to shuffle his feet to the edge of the back of the cart. The plump guard then used her whip and the cart moved further forward another short distance, leaving Rupert balancing on his heels with his toes overhanging the edge of the cart. When the cart was trundled any further forward he would have nothing to stand on. For a moment, he thought about jumping to bring about a quick end, but he hesitated. Then the young guard raised her whip, held it aloft for an eternity and then slashed the buttocks of the prisoner nearest to her. The cart lumbered forward, leaving Rupert spinning in the air, his rope-burned throat gasping for oxygen, his toes twelve inches from the grass. He blacked out.

FIVE

ASTRID

Unbeknown to Rupert, just as he was strangling, his guard spurred her horse forward and slashed the rope with a knife, letting him crash to the ground. When Rupert regained consciousness, his guard's fingers were feeling the pulse in his neck. He half opened his eyes, and through blurred vision saw her wide mouth moving. He was unaware of what she was saying, but then two pairs of male hands picked him up and dumped him unceremoniously onto the floor of the cart. He lay sprawled, his limbs refusing to work, wondering why he was still alive. He tried to say something but his vocal cords were still in the process of recovering their powers of speech.

After, an indeterminable time, the cart moved slowly and bumpily over the stony ground pulled by the donkey, with the plump guard holding the reins and the young guard sitting next to her on the driver's seat. Rupert's guard was on her horse. The other prisoners were walking in a chained-line behind the cart.

The sun was hot as the procession trudged slowly back to the castle. Rupert began to recover, and raised himself a little and took a peek over the side of the cart. In the distance, he heard the smooth engine of a car, and recognised the distinctive shape of the radiator grill and the cream and black bodywork as it approached behind the cart.

The plump guard, driving the cart, had steered it to a stop on the grass by the side of the road as if to allow the car to pass on its way. The chain-gang slumped in exhaustion.

Rupert put his head down and lay prone. He heard the car come to a halt by the cart. Rupert still had his head down as the car engine was switched off. A few moment's later the car door opened. He heard footsteps on the stony

road and a voice he recognised; the thug's voice speaking in German.

Then to Rupert's horror the thug came to the rear of the car and looked at him. 'Hello, my friend, you travel good, yes,' the thug said in English, laughing. Then he climbed into the cart, and stood looking down at Rupert. 'You have neck marks,' the thug said, pointing to the rope burns on Rupert's neck. 'Who did marks?'

The plump guard, sitting on the driving seat, turned around and said in German, 'Astrid say we hang him by neck.'

Rupert had not heard his guard's name before. He liked the name. Even if he did not like its owner, who had just nearly hanged him. But the thug did not seem to like hearing this name. He scowled, then jumped out of the cart and went back to the Rolls. Rupert peeked over the side of the cart again. The thug was at the rear door speaking to a female silhouetted on the back seat.

The thug finished speaking and moved away from the car as the occupant wound up the window. Then the thug went over to Astrid, sitting calmly on her horse. He said something to her and returned to the driver's seat in the car. The engine started smoothly and the Rolls drove away in a cloud of dust. Astrid spurred her horse and galloped after the Rolls, leaving Rupert in the cart.

The two other prisoners, standing chained, looked relieved at the car's departure. The plump guard and the young guard, were giggling to each other, sitting on the driver's bench of the cart, as if they were very pleased at Astrid's sudden departure.

Rupert expected that the cart would set off again at donkey-pace to the castle. But the cart did not move. Instead, the two guards whispered to each other, nodded in agreement, and got down from the driver's bench. They came around to the back of the car and eyed Rupert.

'Up,' the young guard said.

As he clambered unsteadily to his feet, Rupert wondered what the young guard's name was. She was very blond and pretty. But she was also extremely sadistic. The style of the guards's uniforms reminded Rupert, as he put one foot hesitatingly on the ground, of the black uniforms he had seen in Rome, and also the uniforms of the rowdy 'brownshirts' that had started to appear on the streets in Munich.

The plump guard was also very blond and pretty, with dimple cheeks and a cherubic mouth. But she was unsmiling. She gripped Rupert by his upper arms and turned him around so that his back was to her. Using a key, she

unlocked the cuffs from his wrists and pulled his arms in front of him and crossed his wrists, and then went to the cart. Meekly, he kept his wrists crossed until she stood in front of him again with the dreaded length of rope from which he had hung from the branch. Expertly, she tied his wrists and then tied the other end of the rope to a ring in the back of the cart.

Flicking them with her whip, the young guard made the other two prisoners clamber into the back of the cart, still chained. The two guards then resumed their seats at the front of the cart. The plump guard picked up the reins and the cart trundled forward. Rupert was now the only one walking, apart from the donkey. The plump guard flicked the donkey's flanks making it canter and causing Rupert, tied as he was to the back of the cart, to trot behind in his clogs. It was not a pace he could keep up for much more than a few strides and he stumbled falling to the stony ground, losing his clogs in the process, and was then dragged along the ground on his side. He wished he had been wearing a penis restraint to provide protection to his penis as it bumped and scratched along the stony ground.

The donkey seemed to sense that it was dragging a body's weight in addition to the cart, and slowed, at which point the guard with the reins looked over her shoulder and saw Rupert being dragged along the ground. She let the donkey walk on a hundred yards or so, before reining in.

Rupert was too bruised and bloodied to stagger to his feet as the young guard got down from her seat and approached him. 'Up,' she said in English and kicked him in his already-bruised ribs to emphasise her instruction.

Eventually, after a few more kicks, he managed to get to his feet like a punch-drunk boxer getting to his feet after being counted out. But he knew his body would not take much more of this treatment. It would have been preferable to have died swinging from the tree with Astrid in attendance. He missed her already. She was the only one of the guards who had been halfway-kind to him. And she was a delicious fuck. Thinking of which, he worried about the safety of his penis.

The young guard put her beauty-queen face close to his and spat at him, the spittle hitting him on the nose, and dribbling off the tip. His only response was to flinch. 'Get cart,' she almost screamed at him, in the tone of a housewife remonstrating with a husband who has just rolled in drunk from a pub with the dog, the pooch not having had a decent walk.

Giddily, he shuffled - which was now becoming his normal gait - to the back of the cart and climbed in. His wrists were still tied in front of him by

the rope which had dragged him behind the cart. His fellow prisoners, sitting with their backs to one side of the cart, eyed him warily and sulkily, almost as if his presence presented a danger to them; as if they might be dragged along behind the cart instead of him. But they need not have worried. The young guard resumed her seat and the cart moved slowly towards the castle with all prisoners 'present and correct' in the back of the cart.

When they arrived back in the castle courtyard, Rupert was the last to climb out of the cart, exhausted in mind and body. He stood with the other prisoners in a line as the plump guard walked along the line, like a sergeant-major with a group of conscripts, stopping and staring into each face. Rupert was at the end of the line. She stopped in front of him, and like her colleague had done earlier, spat into his face. Then she untied his wrists.

'Kneel.'

He remained kneeling in the middle of the courtyard, untied and unchained, as the two guards escorted the other two prisoners away. He assumed they were being taken back to their cells. He feared he had been singled out by the two guards for more punishment. He would be proved right.

He had no means of telling the time but estimated he was on his sore knees for at least an hour before the two guards returned to deal with him. He found it immensely painful to keep kneeling but he dare not stand or rest on his haunches. He heard them giggling before he saw them. No doubt the joke was at his expense.

The plump guard stood in front of him. Her face and lips were redder than usual, and she looked as if she had just consumed an inelegant excess of strong drink too quickly. She burped but made no apology. The young guard was standing to one side of him. She too looked as though she had been drinking. Both guards were carrying uncoiled whips. The plump guard raised her whip above her head as if ready to slash him with it.

'Stand.'

As he stood upright the plump guard turned and began marching, boot heels clicking on the flagstones, towards a door in the corner of the courtyard. The young guard flicked his buttocks with her whip, which he took to mean that he should follow the plump guard. As he shuffled towards the door, he wondered again, why these guards whipped only lightly. He was sure they would have loved to have whipped the prisoners severely, but something - or somebody - prevented them.

Despite his frayed nerves and poor physical condition, he viewed the ample rear and swaying hips of the plump guard in front of him. She was swaying a little too much and seemed unable to walk in a straight line. The young guard was also flushed and grinning like people do when they have had too much to drink.

The young guard pushed him through the door and, after he had stopped stumbling and regained his balance, he found himself in another passage in an area of the castle he had not been in before. The passage was granite-walled and dimly lit; similar to the passage in the cell block, but in this passage there were wooden doors instead of cell doors.

The plump guard paused at the nearest door and stood waiting, hands on hips, for him to shuffle up to her. It was clear from the smile on her face that whatever was in store for him she was going to enjoy. He slowed his already funereal pace. The young guard behind him flicked his buttocks with her whip encouraging him to speed up. He reached the plump guard. The door she was standing next to was ajar. Staring intently into his frightened face, she kicked the door open. Electric lights, in the shape of flaming torches, illuminated a torture chamber furnished in a medieval style. Tomás de Torquemada would have felt at home.

He collapsed painfully to his knees sobbing. The two guards stood over him, waiting for him to recover his composure. The young guard flicked his back with her whip, and the plump guard repeatedly prodded his ribs with the toe of her boot, as if to say, 'you might as well get up because the sooner you get up the sooner it will be all over'.

He remained slumped, unable to move. Eventually, the guards lost patience waiting for him to recover, and each gripped him under his sweating armpits and hauled him to his feet. They pulled him into the torture-chamber. Despite being untied and with his arms free, he did not struggle. They pulled him past an iron-maiden to a pair of blood-red velvet curtains at the far end of the room. The curtains were closed. The young guard made him stand in front of the heavy drapes as the plump guard went to the wall and tugged at a tassel-ended cord. The curtains opened slowly to reveal a guillotine. The plump guard let go of him as he fainted.

SIX

GRETEL AND HEIDI

He recovered consciousness gradually and opened his eyes. He was on a carpet. The two guards were sitting, looking bored, on two chairs against a whitewashed wall. He opened his eyes wider and looked about him from floor level. He recognised the room. The white-coated doctor was writing at her desk. She peered down at him over her half-moon spectacles when she noticed that he was awake.

'Gretel and Heidi thought you had died of fright,' the doctor said in German with a laugh. 'They had to get the other prisoners to carry you here.' The two guards giggled. The plump guard stretched her leg towards him as if measuring whether the toe of her boot would reach his already bruised ribs, and the young guard flicked her whip at him. He was slightly out of range of both the boot and the whip. He wondered which guard was Gretel and which was Heidi. Not that it mattered. He was unlikely to be introduced formally.

The doctor pushed back her chair and came around her desk to stare down at him. He noticed, not for the first time, that she had long shapely legs. From his position on the floor he could see part way up her skirt. Despite his fear and pain, for some reason, thoughts of Mrs Mountford, his housekeeper returned to mind. The doctor was not facially or physically similar to his housekeeper. Mrs Mountford was more attractive facially and much plumper and heavily-structured especially when wearing a foundation garment. The doctor was tall and slim. But they were both about the same age, early forties, and both wore glasses. Thoughts of sex with Mrs Mountford were overcome by thoughts of food. Just at that moment, he would have given anything for a plate of Mrs Mountford's steak and kidney pie with fried onions and chips followed by apple pie. Saliva slobbered down his chin like a dog smelling

sausages frying on the stove.

He glanced up at the doctor's arched eyebrows. The doctor in her white coat, with her needles and potions, was even more frightening than the two guards with their guns and whips. The guards never used the whips except lightly.

The doctor turned towards the two guards sitting behind her so that he had an even better look at her shapely calves encased in seamed stockings.

The doctor said something in their language to the guards who both grinned broadly. He and his penis shrank with renewed terror. 'What had the doctor told the two guards to do with him?' Whatever it was, he knew from the look on their faces that he would not like it.

'Stand up,' the doctor ordered him in German.

The three women waited as he struggled to his feet. Then the doctor surprised him. Her fingers stroked his penis, like a collector of fine china fingering a piece of Sèvres porcelain.

He heard the young guard give a snort as though she disapproved of the doctor stroking a penis. He had the feeling, born of experience of women since puberty, that the young guard preferred female company. Which meant, that she would be quite pleased to have seen his dead body swinging in the hot sun. And probably she would be pleased, as an alternative, to see him stretched on his stomach on the guillotine's chopping board.

The plump guard was also staring at his fully-erect penis as well as the doctor. Realising that it had two female admirers, his penis perked up even more. The doctor said something in their language to the two guards. The plump guard grinned; the young guard scowled.

'Gretel and Heidi will take your exercises. You obey, yes,' the doctor said in German. She looked at the plump guard and then looked back at Rupert, 'Obey Gretel, yes.'

Rupert nodded. He now knew the plump guard was called Gretel and, and by process of elimination, that the young guard was called Heidi. He looked from one to the other. If he had been required to choose one as his companion for the night he did not know which one he would choose. Gretel, plump and curvy, could have been the barmaid on a poster he had seen at the main railway station advertising the frothy local brew. Heidi was prettier but not so curvy and probably sapphic. On balance, he thought he would have preferred to fuck Gretel. Rupert always went for the body rather than the face. But he would like to thrash Heidi's boyish arse, especially as she had been so vile to

him. The more he thought about it, the more he thought he would like to fuck and spank both, one after the other.

He came to his senses. There was no possibility that he would get to fuck or spank either of them. They were his guards. He was in their power and in the power of the doctor who seemed to be in overall charge now that Astrid was absent. These women were about to subject him to some more humiliating treatment. And he doubted that any women would want to fuck with him, bruised and cut as he was, after being dragged along the ground behind the donkey cart. He was also sweaty and unwashed and probably looked like Robinson Crusoe as he would have looked years after becoming shipwrecked.

The plump Gretel opened the door. The young Heidi thumped him on the back of his head, which he took as a signal that he should follow Gretel out of the doctor's room. He did so, with Heidi behind him.

In the passage, Gretel opened the door to the gymnasium. Astrid, the guard he now missed, had taken him into this room with its exercise equipment. He guessed he was going to be made to do some more exercises designed to sculpt his body. Despite his ordeal at the quarry and being dragged along behind the cart, Rupert was feeling quite fit and sprightly, as was his penis. It was naked, untied, and in the company of two very fanciable females.

'You step,' Gretel said. She pointed to the treadmill to which Astrid had chained him on his previous visit. A thump on the back of the head from Heidi encouraged him to go over to it. Gretel patted his buttocks as they walked. He was not sure how long his stamina and his legs could keep going on the treadmill. He stood with one foot on a step ready to begin treading. The 'mill' revolved. They had not bothered to chain him to the treadmill. But they knew, as he did, that he was not capable of trying to escape. He suspected that if he did try he would dangle on the end of a rope, and Astrid was not around to cut him down at the last moment.

A large padded mat took up most of the central floorspace. He assumed that the mat was used for bouts of wrestling or even boxing. As he would discover, his assumption was correct.

Leaving Rupert treading, the two guards went to the far side of the room. He could see what they were doing by glancing over his shoulder. They were both undressing. He kept glancing, until both were naked except for their knickers. Their uniforms and guns and whips were piled on two chairs. They

were both coming back across the mat towards him. He stared at the wall in front of him as he treaded, wondering what they were going to do to him, or possibly - hopefully - require him to do to them.

Gretel flicked the switch to stop the treadmill, much to his relief. His legs were aching almost beyond supporting him. Unsteadily, he stepped off the machine and turned to face the women. Gretel was in white panties and Heidi wore pink panties. They were staring at his face with the semi-amused smiles of courtesans in a painting by François Boucher. They were both rosy-cheeked with pouting mouths. Gretel had large but firm breasts with rosy nipples. Heidi's breasts were small with delicate pink nipples. He stared from one to the other. His penis twitched not knowing which way to point. Gretel was the bossier and Heidi the more cruel.

'Stand,' Gretel said, pointing to the centre of the mat. Feeling his feet sink into the cushioning he stood in the centre. He watched as Heidi collected two pairs of boxing gloves hanging from a rack on a wall. She handed one pair to Gretel and the other pair to him. 'Wear,' she ordered. Gretel put on her gloves and was on one corner of the mat, waiting for him to put on his gloves.

This would be an unequal contest he thought. He had been a boxing 'blue' at Camford University in the middle weight class, famed for knocking out his opponents with an uppercut. He finished putting on his gloves and eyed Gretel as she came close. She stopped a punch-length-apart from him. Heidi stood to one side of the pugilists as if she was the referee.

Rupert had never hit a woman, except that he had spanked Mrs Mountford, his housekeeper, on her ample backside. But that was a game they both enjoyed. He saw the look in Gretel's eyes. Somehow, he knew that he was about to be humiliated. He raised his gloves and took a stance like 'Gentleman Jim'. Gretel took a stance like 'Gentlewoman Jemima'.

He made the first move, a half-hearted jab at Gretel's chin, which she evaded with ease and, failing to observe the rules laid down by the Ninth Marquess of Queensberry, she kicked his in the testicles causing him to bend at the waist, and then 'landed' an uppercut to his beard which knocked him senseless. He hit the canvas and was out for the count. The fight had lasted all of thirty seconds.

When he recovered consciousness, Gretel was sitting on his chest, slapping his face to encourage him to wake up. She had taken off her knickers. The pain in his groin was still reverberating as was the ache in his jaw. He stared up at her.

She was grinning down at him. 'Fuck,' she said in English. As she said the word she put her hand behind her back and felt for his penis. It stiffened at her touch, despite the pain it was still feeling. Kneeling up, she shuffled backwards on her knees so that she was in a position to insert his penis into her. She took a sharp intake of breath as she slid down his shaft and sank onto his stomach, impaled. Then she proceeded to slide up and down the shaft, slowly at first and then progressively quicker. He tried to think of something unsexy as he did not want to climax before she did. He suspected that a gentleman coming first might incur the lady's displeasure and the gentleman a punishment. But it was becoming harder not to ejaculate as she was now jerking up and down with urgency, until loud moans indicated that she was climaxing. He ejaculated as she slumped onto his chest, taking deep breaths as if she had just broken the finishing tape at the end of a race. She stayed in this position until she had recovered. Then disengaged from him and stood up, her pubic hair glistening and semen dribbling down her inner thighs. 'Is good fuck,' she said to Heidi, who scowled.

Heidi gave Rupert a dangerous look as if to say, 'don't think I'm going to do that'. And then said to him, 'Stand.'

He got to his feet as Heidi came very close to him and adopted the stance of a wrestler about to wrestle. Taking his cue from her, he adopted a similar pose. She was a slim lightweight. He was a hunky middleweight. This contest would be uneven. He was right. Instead of wrestling, she kicked him in his kneecap, causing disabling pain, then held him in a headlock so tight that he could not breath. It was like a young boa constrictor squeezing the life out of a donkey. He scrabbled at her arms to no effect, and she kept him in the vice until he sank to his knees. She did not let go until he had passed out.

He semi-awoke on being doused with a bucket of freezing water over his face, and on being kicked - not too gently - in the ribs. He was lying in the middle of the mat. Gretel and Heidi were standing over him in their uniforms.

Gretel, the plump guard that he had fucked, looked particularly aggressive; much as Astrid had appeared more aggressive towards him after he had fucked her.

Heidi, the young guard, was smiling as she flicked his upper body with her whip. He opened his eyes fully and managed to get to his feet and stand facing the two women. Gretel unhooked handcuffs from her leather belt and held up her hands together to signal he should do the same. He did so and she clicked the handcuffs on his wrists. As Gretel handcuffed him, Heidi went

behind him and flicked his buttocks with her whip. He sensed that, she was longing to give him a severe whipping, but - he assumed - had been ordered not to do so.

Then Heidi thumped him on the back of his head as Gretel went over to a wooden construction in the corner. Two wooden sides formed a steep-sided triangle. He wondered what it was for.

'Sit like on a horse,' the plump Gretel ordered.

He understood what he was expected to do - sit on the narrow apex. Gingerly, he stood on tiptoe and managed to swing his leg over and lever himself into a sitting position atop the two boards slanted together. Gretel strapped one of his ankles to straps attached to the side as Heidi strapped his other ankle, so that his feet could not quite touch the ground. Then Gretel linked his handcuffs to a chain which came down from a pulley contraption descended from the ceiling. Heidi turned a handle on the wall and the chain pulled his arms above his head. The top edge of the construction seemed to press up into his groin rather than his groin press into the edge. He knew that the longer he sat there the more painful it would be.

The two guards grinned up at him as if pleased with their handiwork. Gretel blew him a kiss, like a lovebird on the quayside blowing a kiss to a departing sailor. Heidi smirked and flicked his buttocks with her whip. And then both women left the room, and him alone to sit and contemplate his belly-button sitting on a wooden 'horse'.

SEVEN

THE DOCTOR

His nether region felt like an ice flow groaning and cracking apart. He was wondering if he could risk screaming for someone to let him down from the agonising ridge, when the doctor entered.

With an almost charming smile, she unstrapped one of his ankles and then went to the other side of the wooden panels and freed the other ankle. Then she loosened the pulley rope which hoisted his arms above his head and he slumped forward and then almost fell off.

The doctor held his upper body to allow him to slowly and painfully manoeuvre one leg over the 'horse' and then slide down the inward-slanted panel, so that his bare feet touched the floor. Unable to stand straight because of the excruciating pain in his groin, he leaned with his buttocks against the panel as the doctor unhooked the pulley rope from his handcuffs and his hands dropped down to cover his genitals.

He needed to urinate but tried to put the thought out of his mind. Urinating in front of the doctor would not be met with applause. He remained slumped against the wooden side of the horse as pain continued to shoot through him, as if his stomach was being hit by rays from a space-gun. He dared to look at her. Since puberty, Rupert had been addicted to women, young and older. But the women in this castle were likely to cure his addiction.

The doctor stood watching him as he rested with his lower back against the panel. Obviously, it was going to take him a bit of time to recover. The doctor felt in her pocket and took out a packet of cigarettes. Rupert watched the smoke rings float to the ceiling. He felt a bit light-headed; almost as if he could float away, like Sinbad on his carpet. He spotted the packet; Dunhill

London Mixture. He would have given his life to taste one. He was about to be burned by one.

The doctor stood close in front of him and placed the tip of the glowing cigarette against his left nipple. He endured the pain with a clenched-teeth grimace. Then she placed the cigarette against his right nipple. He bared his teeth again, like a pain-racked lion caught in a poacher's trap. He dared to glare at the doctor. She had a half-smile.

He continued to rest against the horse; ironically the instrument of torture which, to date, had pained him the most, until he felt that the pain had subsided enough to enable him to stand up straighter. He stood away from the horse's wooden panel, and placed one foot in front of the other as if to walk, with his thighs wide apart, like a naked cowboy who has just ridden a bronco bareback over the Rockies.

The doctor laughed at his further discomfort. Obviously, she enjoyed inflicting pain. The doctor's cigarette was smoked almost to the butt. She puffed to make it glow more brightly, and, with an even brighter smile, stepped towards him again. He shut his eyes in anticipation of the burning pain to come. He felt it on his lower stomach just above where the shaft of his penis protruded, and tried to keep silent, without success. He emitted a shout - almost a scream - as his flesh scorched.

He felt a mixture of relief and trepidation when the doctor took him by the arm and led him from the gymnasium. The doctor let go of his arm and walked ahead. He was walking like a bowlegged drunken sailor in an effort to alleviate the pain in his groin.

The doctor was sitting behind her desk when Rupert reached the open door. She crooked her finger as a sign that he should enter the room. He shut the door and hesitatingly shuffled towards the desk and stood in front of it, standing to attention like a soldier about to be court-martialled. The doctor lowered her glasses and stared up and down his body.

'You dirty.'

He had to agree with the doctor. He was very dirty, smelly and covered in dried blood from being dragged behind the cart.

'Wash.' She pointed to a door and made a 'shaving' mime.

Obediently he went to the door and opened it and found himself in a small room with a shower and wash basin. There was soap and a badger brush and shaving cream. The water was hot.

Clean shaven, he luxuriated in the shower as long as he dared and then

used a towel hanging behind the door. He felt invigorated and refreshed and clean, when he stepped back into the doctor's room.

Still at her desk, she viewed him approvingly. He stared at her. He recognised the signs; she was a female with a need for an orgasm. She stared at his penis. It swelled slightly under her gaze.

She pulled open a desk drawer and took out a tube of cream and a small jar of oil. She pushed back her chair and came around her desk to stand in front of him holding the cream and the oil. She peered through her glasses at his neck and rubbed the cream over the rope burns which the noose had caused. Then she turned her attention to the cuts and bruises he had suffered from being dragged along the ground behind the donkey cart. She applied cream and oil as required.

He was beginning to feel more invigorated. He had not been treated like this since Mrs Mountford had put a poultice on a wound which had turned septic after he had managed to hit his thumb with a hammer when attempting to bang a nail on which to hang his gardening gloves in his potting shed. He had then 'nailed' Mrs Mountford by way of showing his gratitude for her ministrations.

Having creamed and oiled him, the doctor stood back and viewed her patient, and then walked around him as he stood still. She completed the circle and stood in front of him smiling pleasantly. Bearing in mind that only a few minutes before she had burned him with a cigarette, he wondered why she was now treating him with the bedside manner of a doctor in Harley Street.

Her hand wondered down to his penis and she touched it lightly with the tips of her fingers and smiled at him with the coyness of an eighteen-year old virgin about to be deflowered in a darkened conservatory.

'You like fuck me?'

He nodded.

She was six inches shorter than him in her sensible low-heeled shoes. He lowered his eyes to view her, like a drinker in a speakeasy viewing an illicit bourbon. Some men would have thought her an absolute 'stunner' with a slim figure designed to flap around doing a Charleston on a dance floor. But he was more attuned to the curvaceous female figures to be found in one of his beloved Victorian spanking novels. To fuck her effectively he would to imagine that he was fucking Mrs Mountford, who had no need of a dressmaker's bustle, nature having provided her with one.

His penis swelled and twitched as it too remembered Mrs Mountford. The doctor spotted the swelling and smiled even more coyly. He took this as his cue to raise his hand tentatively to the top buttons of her white coat-dress. She did not demur as he unbuttoned her dress all the way down to the hem to reveal flesh-coloured lingerie and tan silk stockings held up by frilly suspenders.

He was naked, so he would not be able to fake sexual interest, and indeed, he did not need to do so. He went behind her and gently relieved her of her dress. He placed it carefully and tidily across her desk. And then turned his attention to her brassiere. He was an expert in undoing brassiere hooks. He dropped the garment on the desk and examined her breasts. She was not quite as flat-chested as he had expected. He pulled her bloomers down to her knees and she stepped out of them. He viewed the open-bottomed girdle and judged that he would be able to penetrate without relieving her of the garment. He found that the feel of satin panels against his stomach added titillation to a fuck, much as sugar relieves the tartness of lemonade.

He wondered where best to 'take her'. Did she expect it over her desk - secretary-style - or on the bed in the corner. It was the bed on which the doctor and Astrid had chained him on his back and then made him think they were about to castrate him.

Sensing his indecision, she took him by the hand and led him to the bed and laid on her back with her thighs well apart. He straddled her. As always, he felt a certain frisson in fucking a female who had him in her power. He warmed to the task. And her undulating hips told him she was also getting warm. She surprised him by coming more quickly than he had anticipated she would. He was not ready to climax and thought he had better do so without delay. He needed to think of something extra-sexy. The ultimate sexual experience. His penis passing a message to his brain decided it was the young guard putting a noose around his neck. His penis erupted in a shower of sparks. He collapsed onto her in ecstasy.

Her facial expression was one of flushed, post-coital contentment and relaxation; hazy fluffy clouds in a sunlit, blue sky. But the clouds darkened rapidly. She glared up at him as though he had just raped her.

Hastily, he got off her and stood by the side of the bed as, like a black-hatted witch about to stir a boiling cauldron full of toads and other spell-binding ingredients, she arose and walked unsteadily to her desk.

He remained motionless by the side of the bed, beads of semen dripping

from his soft-shafted penis, and sweats-beads of worry forming on his forehead. He did not like the malevolent glance she had given him as she stood upright. It was the look of an oversexed debutante who had drunk too much at the coming-out ball and spent the night on the back seat of her daddy's Bentley with his middle-aged-but-fanciable chauffeur.

Rupert watched the doctor go back to her desk, pulling up her bloomers as she walked, and then put on her dress, ran her fingers through her hair and sat behind her desk. He waited for a sign from her as to whether he should stay where he was; standing naked by the bed on which he had just fucked her, or whether he should stand in front of her desk. She gave him a limp wave of her hand without looking at him, and he took this sign as an instruction to stand in front of her desk.

The phone on her desk rang. She answered as he took up his position standing in front of the desk. A flush came to her cheeks as she spoke into the phone and her tone of voice was deferential. Rupert translated to himself the words 'Eure Hoheit' as she put down the phone, and then stared at him and made a gesture with her hand which he translated as 'kneel'. He knelt in front of the desk as she stood up and went to stand by the door, obviously expecting an exalted visitor. It might have been his fine-tuned imagination as a novelist, but he thought she had the demeanour of a cornered criminal. Rupert wondered why she was shivering, bearing in mind that she had been hot and flushed on her back on the bed. He began to shiver himself. Who was the visitor the doctor was now expecting?

EIGHT

THE ARCHDUCHESS

Rupert was kneeling facing the doctor's desk with his back to the door. He heard it open. He dared not glance over his shoulder. He sensed the visitor was female. Females seem to hold all of the positions of power in this beautiful country. High heels clicked towards his back. He smelt expensive perfume. He kept his eyes fixed firmly on the wall behind the desk as out of the corner of his eye he saw a curvaceous figure come around the desk and sit in the doctor's chair.

'Look at me,' a sultry voice commanded in English.

He uplifted his blurry gaze and focused on the face in front of him. He saw Mrs Mountford, his beloved 'kinky' housekeeper. Was he hallucinating from fear. The facial resemblance was striking. Both this woman and Mrs Mountford had long-lashed brown eyes and a soft-fleshed, oval face with a slight double chin. But this woman had the facial expression of a 'hanging judge' about to pass sentence.

He could not help but stare at her. He liked the figure-hugging black silk dress. Mrs Mountford had worn a similar-styled black silk dress when she had applied for the position of housekeeper following the death of her husband. He remembered that Mrs Mountford's dress, whilst nowhere near as expensive, was also stretched at the seams by a too fulsome bust and material-stretching hips which caused interesting creases across and below her rounded stomach which the foundation undergarment failed to flatten. He should have married Mrs Mountford and made her 'respectable'. He needed to think that he would get back to England and his cottage, and that he was anywhere but in this room. In the presence of this woman, he knew he was likely to collapse to his knees in abject fear and dispose of his body waste. He

needed to sit on the bucket in his cell desperately.

He sensed that the doctor was also experiencing abject fear. She remaining standing to one side of the desk, shaking.

'I see that the doctor has not carried out my order to castrate you.'

Her observation made him retch in the back of his throat. He almost vomited but managed to swallow upcoming bile. He stared at her with shocked eyes. She had turned her head sideways and was staring at the doctor who mumbled something in German which sounded like an apologetic excuse.

'Go and inform Tomas he is to give you fifty lashes and may do to you whatever he wishes after your punishment.'

Out of the corner of his eye Rupert saw the doctor pale even more, then she bowed deferentially and left the room closing the door softly behind her.

The woman watched the doctor leave the room, and then smiled, almost pleasantly, at Rupert. 'Failure to disobey one of my orders means a lashing by my manservant, Tomas.' Then she gave a broader smile. 'You may remember meeting Tomas. He is also my chauffeur.'

Rupert realised she meant the thug who had ceremoniously bundled him at gunpoint into the boot of the Rolls Royce. And had viewed Rupert in the back of the donkey cart and then spoken to Astrid, causing her to spur her horse after the Rolls. Rupert had not seen Astrid since.

He risked staring back at the woman. Was she the female he had seen in the lobby of the hotel in Frauberg just before he was kidnapped? He had only a fleeting glimpse of that person, but he was fairly sure that she was younger than the woman in front of him.

'My daughter, Princess Flavia, saw you in the hotel and decided to make your acquaintance. She has a penchant for lowly-born males. However, I do not think you would be suitable for her as a lover. You are too old for her. She is only twenty one. Therefore, I decided to make it impossible for her to have a relationship with you.'

Despite his predicament, Rupert felt slighted. He was not that old. And a twenty-one-year-old who resembled the woman in front of him was rather a nice thought.

'My daughter is headstrong and demands her own way. So I find the best way of keeping her away from a man, she has set her sights on, is to have them castrated or executed. The doctor failed to carry out my order. I wonder why.'

Rupert gulped. 'If you let me go I will say nothing about my incarceration in this castle and the way I have been treated. And, obviously, I would agree to keep well away from your daughter.'

The woman smiled again. 'I do not think I can let you go, Mr Houndsditch. You are too well known. A famous writer.' She gave a broader smile. 'I have read many of your books. I must ask you to sign my copies for me.' Then the smile left her face. 'But I am sorry to have to tell you that you are also a dead man.'

He collapsed to his knees.

'Stand up.'

He was unable to obey her command.

'I would like you to stand. Or do you want my manservant to whip you for disobeying one of my commands?'

He managed to struggle to his feet.

She smiled again. 'When I said you are dead, I was referring to a newspaper report in the London Times. It seems that you have disappeared whilst attempting to climb a particularly dangerous mountain peak.'

'But I am scared of heights. I would never try to climb a mountain.'

The woman laughed. 'I must remember to whip Tomas. That is something he should have thought of before he sent the report of your death to London. But no matter. As far as the outside world is concerned you are a dead man.'

'Mrs Mountford knows I would never climb a mountain.'

'Who is this person?'

'My housekeeper.'

'Regretfully, she will need to search for a new position as you will not be returning home. Except in a coffin.'

He started to cry. Tears dripped down his gaunt cheeks. The woman viewed him with an amused expression. 'I thought Englishmen did not cry, but obviously I was mistaken.' As she spoke she swivelled her chair and came around the desk to stand in front of him. She was so close to him that the peaks of her bosom almost brushed his chest. Unblinkingly, she stared into his eyes. He tried to show a degree of watery defiance by staring back. He had nothing more to lose. He had lost his liberty and was now told that he was to be emasculated, a fate worse than death. He was untied. He could overpower this woman and then escape. The woman read his mind. Rupert had never been good at playing cards. His face always betrayed his hand.

'I would advise you not to do anything silly, Mr Houndsditch. Otherwise

you will be boiled alive in a cauldron of oil.' The woman's voice was calm, almost soft. It made him freeze like the snot on Jack's Frost's nose.

The woman smiled, and took him by the arm, almost gently. She walked him over to the iron bed on which he had recently fucked the doctor; the bed on which on his previous visit to the room the doctor and his guard, Astrid, had chained him before taking a plaster cast of his penis.

'As a matter of interest, Mr Houndsditch, have you rested on this bed before?'

He stood looking down at the mattress with the woman standing next to him. He hesitated before answering. 'Yes.'

'How interesting. When?'

'A short time before you arrived, Your Highness.'

'And where was the doctor?'

'Beside me.'

When a male and a female are on a bed beside each other they usually have sex, especially if the man is naked. I assume that you were as naked then as you are now. Did you have sex with the doctor?'

'Yes.'

'And were you on the bed before?'

'Yes. Some days ago. The guard ...'

'Which guard?'

'The one I think is called Astrid. She and the doctor made a plaster cast of my...' He broke off the sentence in case the archduchess disapproved of his naming his penis and pointed to it instead. The archduchess started laughing. 'Did you see what they did with the plaster cast?'

'I think the doctor put it in a drawer in her desk.'

Still looking amused, the woman went to the desk, opened drawers until she found what she was looking for, and came back to stand in front of him. She held up a rubber penis. 'Is this you?'

He nodded. She laughed again. 'Rather big. Make yourself go big and I will compare.'

He stared at her, not understanding her instruction. Her laughter dissolved and her face became stern. 'Do as you are told this minute.'

Realising what she meant he gripped his shaft and did his best to make his penis erect, without any significant success. Eventually he blurted out, 'It's afraid of you.' Tears formed again.

'All men in this country are afraid of me. I do not know why. I can be

kind to men - sometimes.' She sounded almost pleasant. 'Let me.'

He withdrew his hand and she held his penis lightly in experienced fingers. It responded immediately and was soon the same size as its rubber replica. 'There - now let me measure one against the other.'

She bent to her task like a judge at a garden fete comparing the size of two cucumbers. 'Very impressive, Mr Houndsditch.'

She straightened. His erection had been strengthened as he was able to look down the cleavage of her bust.

'My daughter would also be impressed, no doubt, if she ever got to see it.' Her voice lowered into a confidential tone. 'She is a little promiscuous, which is why admirers who become too close to her have to be eliminated. To preserve her reputation, you understand.'

His anxiety, which had been quieted by his erection, returned with a vengeance. He hoped he would never meet the princess in case he came into the category of an admirer. And he was also worried that her mother had told him about her daughter's promiscuity, which meant he would need to be eliminated in any event. The woman went back to the desk. Rupert assumed that she would put the rubber penis back in the drawer. But she returned to stand next to him with the penis and also with a pair of handcuffs.

'Put your hands behind your back.'

He obeyed, hoping that he would be returned to the comparative safety of his cell. He wondered if the rat had missed him. The handcuffs clicked in place. He was pinioned once again.

'You will follow me.'

He shuffled behind her towards the door. It occurred to him that, as a gentleman, he ought to open the door for her, but he could not do so with his hands behind his back. Her silk dress swished out into the corridor. She walked quickly. Her legs were long. He suspected that she had been a dancer in her younger days. He suspected, also, that she was not 'high born'. Her aristocratic persona was a veneer.

He had realised that she was the 'all-powerful' archduchess. Her remembered seeing her picture in the Tatler and thinking she was a slightly younger-looking version of his housekeeper, Mrs Mountford. He seemed to remember that the magazine article hinted at a scandal but did not provide details, no doubt wary of a libel action. Looking at the shape in front of him he could understand why the archduke had been smitten. And she did remind him of Mrs Mountford. Why had he not thought of Mrs Mountford being a

'stunner'? To date, he had thought only of her as a sex-object and the source of good food and the reason his cottage was always clean and tidy, except for his study which he liked being in a mess.

The archduchess led him into the corridor.

'Walk ahead of me.'

Further along the corridor, he heard the crack of a whip and female screams. The sounds were coming from behind the nearest medieval door. He knew, from the 'conducted tour' he had been given by Gretel and Heidi, that the room contained medieval torture equipment. A woman was being whipped and probably tortured. He paused outside the dreadful door.

The archduchess stepped ahead of him. 'Go in.'

He moved through the door, accidentally banging his shoulder on the door frame as he had his eyes shut. The screaming had stopped. He half opened his eyes.

'Your Highness,' a male voice said respectfully. The voice of the thug who had bundled Rupert into the boot of the car was holding a bullwhip. The thug was naked. His body glistened with sweat in the light from the simulated-flame torches. His muscles bulged as did his horizontally-waving penis. The doctor was also naked, with her arms raised above her heads by manacles dangling from a beam in the ceiling. She had garish whip marks all over her body with most marks concentrated on her back and buttocks. Her head was slumped against an upper arm and she was sobbing.

'Have you fucked her, Tomas?'

'Yes, Your Highness.'

'I would like her fucked again.'

Rupert felt pity for the doctor. He had been humiliated and tortured by her, but he was a kind soul at heart and did not wish to see any human being suffer like this. And, at the same time, he was fearful of what the archduchess intended to do to him.

Standing by Rupert's side, the archduchess turned her head towards him and smiled, almost sweetly. 'Do you not think that Tomas has an enormous penis?'

Rupert stared at Tomas. He had to agree that the penis was very thick, although Rupert thought that his own, while not as thick, was longer. He thought, also, that he might not get a chance to use it again. It would be ironic if the last woman he fucked was the woman he was witnessing being whipped mercilessly before, in all probability, he would suffer the same fate.

'Bugger her over the barrel, Tomas.'

'Yes, Your Highness.'

Rupert and the archduchess watched as the thug released the doctor from the manacles and led her over to a wooden contraption which resembled a beer barrel cut in half lengthways and placed on the stone floor so that the rounded half formed a mound. The doctor placed her stomach on the barrel and the thug strapped her wrists and then went behind her and strapped her ankles so that they were wide apart. The thug pointed his thick 'peg' at the doctor's anus and pushed in.

'I've always thought I would not like that appendage in my bottom. It must be torture.' The archduchess almost whispered this comment in a confidential tone into Rupert's ear.

The archduchess waited patiently until her manservant had climaxed, and then gave an imperious wave of her hand towards the door, by which Rupert assumed she was instructing the brute to unstrap the doctor and depart. This would leave Rupert alone with the archduchess. His heart skipped a beat and then played a cardiac 'drumroll' and his knees sagged as they were prone to do when he experienced extreme terror.

'Come with me,' she said, firmly gripping his upper arm and leading him towards the blood-red curtains at the back of the room. The guards, Gretel and Heidi, had already shown him what was behind these curtains.

He kept his eyes closed as the archduchess guided him towards the curtains. Then she gave a slight tug on his forearm which he took as a signal to stop. He lifted his eyelids a fraction. She was facing him. He could feel her breath.

'We need to understand each other, Mr Houndsditch, you and I.' The tone of voice was friendly.

His eyes were lowered but open enough to see that he was looking down at her plumped cleavage. Under normal circumstances such a sight would have caused an erection. But he knew, without daring to look, that beyond her back and behind the curtains stood a hoisted blade.

His eyes were closed again as he heard her silk dress rustle as she went to the curtain-cord and the curtains opened. He smelt her perfume as she came and stood in front of him again.

'Open your eyes and look at me.' He did so. 'As you will see, behind me is a replica of the first guillotine to be erected in Paris at the dawn of the French Republic. Because the ceiling is a bit low the wooden pillars are not quite as

tall as the original. But it is still very effective as you are about to witness.'

'Why are you doing this to me?'

'You are a spy.'

'I'm not.'

'Papers found in your hotel room after you were abducted prove that you are a spy.'

'I was making notes for my next novel. I write fiction. I am not a spy.'

'Regretfully, I do not wish to take a chance on you, Mr Houndsditch. Your country and mine were at war until four years ago. Now I do not wish to prolong this conversation. Please go up.'

She stepped to one side, and he viewed the five steps up to the platform. With an inward shrug, resigned to his fate, he mounted the steps. She hitched up her long skirt to follow him.

'Stand in front of the upright board ahead of you.'

He stood frozen with fear on the edge of the platform.

'Unless you do as I tell you to do I will summon Tomas who will then subject you to extreme pain.'

He moved slowly toward the six-foot long rectangular wooden board which slanted, more or less, upright.

'Stand still with your chest against the board.'

He did so with his eyes closed. He felt a leather strap firmly buckled around his upper arms and back. And then her silk dress rustled again as she bent to strap his legs. The board then swivelled down and forward.

'Raise your chin and neck.'

He had seen the film of *The Scarlet Pimpernel* and knew how the guillotine operated. He heard the thud of wood on wood and felt the upper half of the neck restraint lock into place. He half opened his eyes. He looked down at a wicker basket filled with sawdust.

'Do you have any last words.'

NINE

THE PRINCESS

His last thoughts would be of Mrs Mountford. He viewed her in his mind's eye pottering in his kitchen. He had lived a full life and latterly enjoyed himself with this woman who had provided him with good sex and good food. But all good things must come to an end.

'Let the blade fall,' he heard himself say in a firm voice.

'Mother, what are you doing?' A third person was on the platform.

'Darling, please stand away otherwise you will get splattered.'

'Who is this man?'

Rupert heard dress-material swishing as a figure bent to stare into his face. He looked back at the face. It was stunningly beautiful. The face of the girl in the hotel lobby. The girl who had ordered his kidnapping because she liked the look of him. Princess Flavia.

'Oh yes. It's the man in the hotel lobby. I had quite forgotten all about him. I kidnapped him.'

'Yes, darling. I know you did.'

'Why are you killing him?'

'He is a spy.'

'Have you interrogated him?'

'No. I believe Astrid did.'

'Mummy, we can't trust her. We need to interrogate him ourselves.'

There was a long pause before the archduchess answered. 'Yes, you are right, darling. We should interrogate him ourselves.'

One minute later, Rupert was standing in front of the two women, still naked with his wrists handcuffed behind his back. The archduchess has unstrapped him from the guillotine board as the princess watched. She gave

Rupert a sweet smile. 'I am Princess Flavia.'

'How do you do,' Rupert said, with a courteous bow, attempting to affect languid sangfroid. 'Rupert Houndsditch, at your service.' He would have clicked his heels had he been wearing boots or shoes.

The archduchess was scowling, like a petulant tot who has been told to stop pulling the dog's tail.

'I will interrogate him myself, Mummy.'

'I will help you, darling.'

'I would prefer to do it on my own.'

'Very well, darling. I will go back to the palace.'

The princess and Rupert watched her mother leave closing the door behind her. He was alone with the prettiest girl he had ever seen, and he had seen quite a few over the years.

'So, Mr Houndsditch, I am to interrogate you. If I think you are a spy I will execute you myself. Let us go over here.'

As her mother had done, she took him by the arm. He was grateful to be moving away from the guillotine platform.

'You have very muscular biceps, Mr Houndsditch. Most of the prisoners here become muscular. I think it is the work they are made to do. Hard labour.' Her tone was light and conversational. 'It is good that we have this room to ourselves. Not that many people come into this room unless under duress.'

She gave him a mock sinister look as she said this. 'This room is for naughty people who must be taught not to misbehave.' Then she laughed, 'Although I misbehave all the time. But then, I am a princess. I can misbehave whenever I like.' She was smiling pleasantly. 'I think I would like you to sit here.' She pointed with an elegant finger to a low iron-framed construction like a low divan bed. He knew what it was; a rack for stretching the limbs of its victims until they were torn apart.

'Please,' he pleaded, but words failed him so he was unable to finish the plea.

Her smile became less pleasant. 'Do as I say.'

He was thinking that she would have to undo his handcuffs in order to stretch his arms above his head and he would then have a fleeting chance to overpower her. It would be risky. If he failed he would have to try and kill himself otherwise he knew that he would die painfully. He almost strode to the rack and halted.

'Sit on it and swing your legs up.'

He obeyed.

'Now stretch out your legs.'

He hesitated. He realised that she intended to fasten his ankles first which would mean that he would be pinioned to the rack by his feet and still handcuffed with his wrists behind his back. He could try grabbing her but he knew he would have to strangle her. This is not something he could ever do. He had killed flies and other annoying insects but was otherwise too squeamish to kill anything. Even though he knew she and most of the other females in this castle would not hesitate to kill him. So, meekly, he let her manacle his ankles, and then he turned onto his side so that she could unlock the cuffs and then he laid on his back and raised his arms to allow her to manacle his wrists. He was now stretched out on the rack and more than ever at the girl's mercy.

She smiled down at him. 'Are you comfortable. I hope the bare boards are not too cold on your bare back. Don't be alarmed but I am just going to stretch you a little. I think your posture could be improved.' Alarmed, he watched her go to the head of the rack and grasp a turning handle. She cranked it slowly. The chains clanked taut. His legs were pulled towards the foot of the rack and his hands pulled towards its head.

'Please, don't.'

She stopped turning the handle and sat on the edge of the rack next to his midriff. 'Are you finding it warm in here. You seem to be perspiring. There is sweat on your forehead.' His penis had shrivelled. She viewed it. 'Most men who are naked in my present are a little firmer than you are, Mr Houndsditch. Even when I am subjecting them to torture.'

'I'm sorry,' he stuttered.

She lifted the limp shaft which resembled a leech hungry for blood. 'It does work, does it?'

'Yes,' he croaked. The feel of her fingers invoking a swelling which grew as she massaged gently. Clearly, it was not the first time she had massaged a penis into a full-blooded erection.

'Now, that is rather more like it, Mr Houndsditch. If you don't mind, I will take off my dress. My mother would not approve if I get this dress damp. It was purchased on my last visit to Paris.'

He and his penis watched, approvingly, as she stood and unzipped the back of her dress, pushed down the top and stepped out of it and then stepped

out of her flouncy petticoat. She stood looking down at him in her knickers, brassiere and garter belt with suspenders holding up sheer silk stockings. Her figure was curvy but poised and elegant. Rupert was entranced, as he supposed, were most of her male captives.

Having laid her clothes neatly on the iron maiden, avoiding the sharp bits, she sat down again beside his midriff. His penis resembled a cooked sausage about to break out of its pignskin when her fingers re-touched it.

'Are you married, Mr Houndsditch?'

'No.'

'Have you ever been married?'

'No. I am a confirmed bachelor.'

'How old are you?'

'Thirty nine.'

'I do like older men who are handsome like you.'

He wondered how many men she had slept with but dared not ask. He remembered that her mother had told him that men who got too close to her daughter were eliminated.

'Would you like to fuck me? I believe that is the naughty word.'

He thought very carefully before answering. He risked death if he fucked her. But he risked upsetting her if he said he did not wish to do so. And also, in all probability, she would have to release him from the rack before having sex.

'Yes.'

'So you find me sexually attractive?'

'Very.'

'What a nice thing to say. I think your penis is the second biggest I have ever seen. The biggest is on the bald prisoner we have in the cells. It is quite enormous.'

Rupert tried to cast his mind back to the last time he had seen the bald prisoner. It was in the chain gang when they came back from the quarry. The Rolls Royce had stopped. He now realised that the person on the back seat was the princess.

'The blond prisoner was the other one you were chained to I think. He is very good looking. But I think his penis is too small for my taste.' She smiled. 'Would you like me to suck your penis?'

'Yes, that would be very nice.'

'I'm a nice girl even though I am a princess.' She smiled.

He raised his head as much as he could, stretched as he was on the rack, and saw her lower her lips to his penis. The feeling was exquisite as her mouth closed over the top three inches of the stalk. It was some time since he had fucked the doctor and his testicles were replenished. With an explosion of joy, akin to tasting strawberries sprinkled with heroin, his penis spurted a stream down her throat. He closed his eyes until the experience waned, like a joy-rider coming to a halt on the mat at the bottom of a water-shoot.

Then he felt panic. His heart thumped. What if the princess did not like swallowing spunk? He stared at her mouth. It was dribbling down her chin. But she was grinning like a Cheshire cat with a dollop of cream and a couple of dead canaries in her bowl on the kitchen floor.

'I like sucking penises. But my mother does not approve.'

'What does she do if she finds out?' he ventured to ask, the question coming from a dry throat.

'It might worry you if I told you. I like kissing a man when I've just sucked them. I would like to kiss you.'

Without waiting for him to respond, she knelt on the rack, straddling his midriff and lowered her upper body onto his taut stretched torso, and her mouth glued to his, her semen-covered tongue against his. He tasted his own sperm. Under normal circumstances he would have been in ecstasy with a nubile young girl on top of his naked body. However, his naked body had been stretched up the points where his limbs would grumble if they were stretched further. She sat up straight with her thighs still astride his midriff.

'It's tragic but three former male friends of mine have died on a firing range, so my mother says. I must be the proverbial 'kiss of death'. What do you think, Mr Houndsditch?'

'I am sure you are not, Princess,' he just about managed to stutter.

She was looking at him with a serious expression. 'We need to get down to serious business now, Mr Houndsditch. I must interrogate you.' If his heart had been a young girl with a skipping rope it would have tripped over. 'But, first I need to have an orgasm.'

He wondered if she expected him to fuck her. His penis needed a few more minutes to recover from its recent bout of fellatio. But she was self-sufficient. As he watched, not able to take his eyes away, she shoved her hand down inside the front of her panties and the undulating material showed that her fingers were working overtime. Her cheeks flushed, her eyelids hooded and her lips plumped as she came with a scream which mutated into

groans as she slumped forward with her forehead against his hairy chest.

After taking a few moments to recover, she straightened her upper body, still with her thighs sandwiching him. She blew upwards as if to cool her cheeks. 'Mother does not like me fucking for real so I have to be inventive. I am still a virgin.' She smiled at him. 'Would you like to take my virginity, Mr Houndsditch?'

The question caused him a dilemma. Yes, he would very much like to take her virginity but he suspect that this pleasure, intense as it would be, would come at a heavy price. All he could do was give a non-committal nod.

She confirmed his expectation. 'Of course, Mother would have you shot, or worse. Am I worth dying for?'

'Undoubtedly, Princess,' he replied, thinking that to give any other answer would not be polite, and might cause her to have a tantrum and, in turn, cause her to stretch his body to breaking point, if not beyond.

'I would like you to perform cunnilingus on me. I believe that is the medical term using your tongue.'

Without waiting for his response she knelt up, pulled off her knickers, shuffled her knees so that her vagina was hovering an inch above his mouth. He flicked his tongue in the general direction of her clitoris and made contact.

'Oooh, yes. More.'

He proceeded to lick and slurp straining his neck in the process. He wondered if he dared ask her to slacken the chains pulling him taut by the ankles and wrists, but he could not lick and speak at the same time. Thus, he was grateful when, after enough licking to reduce an ice lolly by half, she came with another ear-splitting shriek. Her upper body slumped against his face almost smothering him. Then she lifted off him, and swung one leg over his torso and stood up. He was concerned to note that she was not looking pleased. She stared down at him for moment and then went to the crank which tightened his chains. It made a terrifying metal-scraping noise as if it need oiling.

'Please no,' he yelled, as his spine seemed to increase by an inch. 'Please,' he screamed louder.

She let go of the handle, and still with the petulant look of a spoilt child deprived of a favourite toy at bedtime, she put her clothes back on. Normally, it would have been a pleasure to see her dress, but he kept his eyes closed. She was a 'loose cannon' and he was about to be her 'fodder'.

Now dressed, she sat on the edge of the rack adjacent to his midriff and

viewed him. 'We will now discuss whether you are a spy.'

'I'm not a spy.'

'Please address me as your highness.'

'I'm not a spy, Your Highness. I am a novelist. I write books. I came to your country on holiday.'

'Tell me the name of a book you have written.'

His mind went blank. He had written fifteen novels in the 'crime' and 'spy' genres over the last twenty years, but he could not think of a single title. He desperately tried to remember what he had named his last book, without success, and then his first book. Most authors could remember their first book. His first book had been a literary failure. He had written it whilst still at Camford university. It had been published and then 'slated' by the critics. She was staring down at him waiting for an answer. 'The Sign Of The Five.' This was the name of his last but one novel. It was the one he was most fond of.

'And what is the plot of this book?'

'It is about a police detective in the slums of London who searches for an anarchist spy.'

'I will read it. If we do not have a copy in Femdom I will order a copy from London. Are you an anarchist, Mr Houndsditch?'

'No of course not.'

'Are you a Bolshevik?'

'I am not Russian.'

'It is also a political ideology. There are Bolsheviks and anarchists in Germany. There are riots in the streets in Berlin and Munich. There are also persons in Femdom who wish to bring about a revolution and overthrow the archduke as they overthrew the czar and murdered his family.' She stared at him waiting for his reaction.

'I am sure none of your citizens would wish to do that, Your Highness.'

'Our chief of police, who is my mother, thinks that there are revolutionaries in our country. Why did you have papers in your hotel room about revolutionaries?'

'It was for the plot of my next novel.'

'Do you act out the plots of your novels before writing them?'

'No, of course not.'

'Are you feeling tense, Mr Houndsditch?'

'Yes, Your Highness. I think anyone stretched out taut on a medieval torture-rack would feel a little tense.'

She smiled. "I wish you to be relaxed. I will release you from the rack."

He smiled his gratitude as she stood up and unwound the roller to slacken his chains. She released his wrists, and then picked up the handcuffs he had worn previously. With his ankles still chained, he rolled onto his side and put his hands behind his back expecting to be handcuffed in that manner.

'Put your hands in front of you.' He did so, and she handcuffed him with his arms in front. Then she unchained his ankles and he was able to stand.

'Let me show you our selections of whips.' She led him by the arm to a wall with a row of whips hanging from hooks. 'They are graded from left to right. On the right we have a knout which is a Russian whip which is used to whip a prisoner to death. And on the left we have some birch twigs which give a mild spanking, with various types of beating instruments in between. Which one do you think you deserve?'

'I have done nothing wrong, Your Highness.'

'That is for me to judge. Have you been whipped before?'

'No.' He discounted in his mind the times he had been flagellated by Mrs Mountford as the most vicious instrument she had ever used on him was a school cane; an experience he had enjoyed sexually. His eyes wandered along the line of whips. There was no cane.

She took a black, leather-braid, single-tailed whip from a hook. 'I will choose for you. This is the one I use most often on prisoners and servants. I will use it on your back and buttocks.'

Under normal circumstances, being whipped by a beautiful girl would not have displeased Rupert as he had submissive tendencies. But this was not a role-play amusement before bedtime; this was for real.

'Will it leave marks?' he asked.

'It will,' she said in a matter of fact tone of voice. 'I like to leave my mark on a man. Which reminds me that you must be branded.'

'Branded?'

'Marked with a hot iron to indicate that you are a prisoner of the state.'

'You cannot do this to me.'

'Do not tell me what I can do and what I cannot do. And you did not say 'your highness'. I will double the lashes you will receive from fifty to one hundred for being insolent.'

'I apologise profusely, Your Highness.'

'As I am merciful I will accept your apology and reduce the lashes to seventy five. If you are insolent again I will double the sentence to one

hundred and fifty lashes. Do we understand each other?' He nodded meekly.

'Go and stand in front of the pillar.' She pointed to one of the pillars which supported the vaulted ceilings of the torture chamber. A single iron ring was fixed into the stone about six feet from the ground. She came behind him. 'Raise your hands to the ring.' He did so, and she reached up and linked his handcuffs to the ring using a length of chain. He was now pinioned in a whipping position, his back and buttocks unprotected. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw her stand to his left side and raise the whip. It slashed diagonally across his buttocks. He screamed.

She did not like the noise he made and came close to him and almost whispered into his ear. 'The only sound I wish to hear is my whip lashing your flesh. If you make a noise the lash will not count. Understand?'

'Yes, Your Highness.'

She stepped back, whip poised again, and he clenched his teeth, and took the second lash in silence. As the lashing continued he tried to think pleasant thoughts. An evening stroll along the beach near his cottage whilst Mrs Mountford cooked dinner. If he got the chance to stroll again he would ask Mrs Mountford to accompany him. Yes, he would do that, and hire a cook to do the cooking, although he doubted she would cook as well as Mrs Mountford.

'Fifteen, I think.' His tormentor's voice seemed distant. And then he came back to the present and his senses. His back was burning but at least he was not crying and he had taken the punishment in silence. 'Another sixty to go. Your back is nicely striped already. I will give the back of your legs fifteen lashes. Do not move your legs otherwise I will repeat the slash.'

He endured fifteen slashes across the backs of his legs and thighs, almost but not quite in silence. But she ignored the slight breach of her command that he should remain silent throughout his ordeal. She was patting his buttocks, as yet unmarked. 'I do like whipping a man's bottom. I find that doing so is quite stimulating. Do you ever whip a woman's bottom?'

'No, Your Highness,' he lied in a croaky voice.

'I have also whipped women. In fact, I have whipped most of the women in this castle.' Then she laughed. 'Except of course, my mother, the archduchess.'

He wondered if the archduchess had ever whipped her daughter. If no, she ought to have done. It might have made the daughter less domineering. Rupert would like to whip the daughter. And the mother, for that matter. To

whip both at the same time would be rather stimulating, to use the word the princess had used.

Further thoughts were interrupted as a streak of fire burnt across the centre of his buttocks. 'Thirty one,' the girl said. 'I am fed up counting. You must count the rest. If you miss a count I will be repeat the slash.'

Another slash. 'Thirty two, Your Highness.'

He had counted to fifty before becoming unconscious.

As he regained consciousness he became aware, dimly, that there were two persons with him, one of either side of him. He heard the voice of Gretel, the plump guard. 'The princess whip him severely,' she said in German.

Another person giggled. He had no doubt it was the young guard, Heidi. 'I will whip him some more. She will not remember how many marks he has.'

'We are not allowed to whip. He might tell.'

'We say we did not whip him.'

He heard the dreadful whip-whistle and felt the stings of a million wasps and his scream dissolved into oblivion.

TEN

PAINFUL TREATMENT

He awoke slowly. He had not had a nightmare. His nightmare had been before he fell asleep. He was naked on his bed in his cell. He opened his eyes. The rat was crouching in the corner, whiskers twitching, staring at him. Rupert wondered if the rat had a soul mate; a rodent Mrs Mountford. But it seemed that, like Rupert, the rat was alone and friendless. He wondered why he had been sleeping on his front, and moved slightly. Immediately, his back seemed to be on fire. He slumped again on his front to alleviate the pain. He needed to be doused in water. He wondered how long it had been since the princess had whipped him. He would kill her, and her mother, if he ever got the chance. He would also kill the two guards, Gretel and Heidi. It was difficult to gauge which of these four women was the most vicious. He decided it was the princess. He would like to stand her on a gallows and put a nose around her pretty neck and then do the same to her mother and then do the same to Gretel and Heidi, and then hang all four together. His penis twitched and swelled slightly. These were naughty thoughts that he had best keep out of his brain. In any event, he would never get the chance to do this. One of these women would kill him first. He wondered which one would do it. The probability was that it would be Princess Flavia. She was a killer. You could see it in her eyes. She was even worse than Heidi, the young guard.

He felt hungry. He raised his head. His bowl and tin cup was on the floor by his bed, empty. He had given his last morsel to the rat. The chances were that he would die of hunger. Then he wondered what day it was and what time of day. The only light coming into his cell was from the naked lights in the corridor, filtering through the open observation grill in the door.

He heard the dreaded click of steel-tipped boots in the passage. Two pairs

of boots. He knew to whom they belonged. Gretel and Heidi had descended to the depth of the dungeon intent on business - and pleasure. He heard giggling which was usually a precursor to a painful punishment. He closed his eyes and tried to relax his body, but it was as relaxed as an athlete before the starting pistol.

Heidi's blue eyes and cherub-mouth were framed in the observation grill. Then a key scraped in the lock and the door banged open. 'Up slave.'

Despite the humiliations these women had heaped upon him, this was the first time one of them had called him a slave. Possibly, Heidi had learned a new word in English.

'I need to us the bucket,' he said weakly.

'No.' Gretel's plump body pushed past her colleague into the cell as she said this. She gripped him by the hair and yanked his head upwards.

'Please, I really do need to use the bucket.'

Both women giggled at his evident desperation. Then Gretel's grin disappeared. She withdrew her revolver from the holster on her hip and pressed the tip of the barrel against his forehead. 'Go bang if you not stand,' she said in English.

Slowly, he got to his feet. He was unshackled, but his ability to move was severely curtailed by the pain emanating from his whipped back and buttocks. Gretel stepped back to allow him space to stand. He was not moving quick enough for Gretel's liking. She jammed the point of the gun at the back of his head, but it had no effect as he was already moving as quick as his pain-racked back would allow. He stepped gingerly into the cell corridor. The other cell doors were open; the cells unoccupied. He wondered what had happened to his two fellow prisoners. He suspected the worse; probably their fates were worse than death.

He trudged along the corridor with Heidi leading. Despite his low spirits his penis admired her rear; jodhpur flaps swinging arrogantly. He would dearly love the tables to be turned. He day-dreamed as to what he would do to these two guards if they were ever in his power, not that he was a sadist, normally.

He waited as Gretel unlocked the security door at the end of the passage. It seemed to him an unnecessary precaution to lock the door. As far as he knew he was now the only occupant of the dungeon; in no fit state to attempt to escape.

He admired Heidi's rear again, as he mounted the winding stone steps,

wondering which of the dreaded rooms on this floor he would be taken into. He would not be displeased to be taken into the room with the guillotine. It would be a quick end; hopefully painless. He had read somewhere that a decapitated brain remained alive for a few seconds, and then oblivion. He was not religious. He expected nothing but nothing. Until reincarnation; possibly as a non-human. A dog perhaps. He liked dogs. He pictured himself as a St Bernard with a barrel of brandy around his neck lolloping about the Alps. He might not be afraid of heights the next time around. His mind was rambling, possibly due to a lack of decent food and a decent drop of cognac.

They were at the door to the doctor's room. This worried him. He had witnessed the doctor being whipped and buggered by Tomas. She would not be a 'happy bunny'.

Heidi knocked and then opened the door. Gretel thumped him in the small of his back and he stepped over the threshold. The doctor was behind her desk, head down. Heidi stood to one side to allow Gretel to prod him with her gun and make him stand in front of the desk. As usual, the doctor ignored his presence until she had finished reading a sheet of paper, and then stared up at him. Her mouth formed as though she was about to spit in his direction.

Heidi and Gretel were now standing on either side of him like two warders with a convicted prisoner in the dock about to receive a death sentence from a black-hatted judge. He knew the punishment the doctor was about to subject on him would be far worse than anything she had suffered at the hands of Tomas.

The doctor pushed back her chair and stood stiffly, holding her back, as if she was suffering from severe back pain. Ironically, she and Rupert were 'in the same boat'. Slowly she came around the desk to stand in front of him. She spat in his face, the spittle dribbling off the end of his nose. The two guards gave their trademark giggles.

The doctor hissed something to the guards in their language. Heidi, the young guard, grinned and then took him by his arm and tugged him towards the back wall. As he drew near he noticed, for the first time, that the wall had a ring, with manacles dangling, just above his head.

Meekly, he let Heidi raise his hands to the manacles and chain his wrists above his head. He was facing the wall and his back and buttocks were defenceless. The guards were giggling again. He dared to half-turn his head to look out of the corner of his eye. The doctor was at her desk putting items on a tray. The plump Gretel was next to the doctor and observing with

interest. They said something to each other and then laughed.

Heidi, standing next to the manacled Rupert, also laughed. Then she whispered in his ear, 'We hurt you.'

He swallowed hard and stared, with blurred vision, at the wall an inch from his nose. He sensed that the doctor and Gretel were now behind him. He half turned his head again. Gretel was holding the tray as the doctor busied herself. He stared back at the wall and then closed his eyes. He opened them wide when pain seared across his back.

'Salt,' the doctor said in English. 'Rub salt in wound.'

He blacked out.

He regained semi-consciousness as the contents of a bucket of iced water flowed over his head. Slowly, he became awake fully. His wrists hurt. They had taken the weight of his slumped body. He looked over his shoulder. Heidi was the one who had tipped the bucket over him. Some of the water had trickled down his 'salted' back. It relieved some of the throbbing pain.

'Up.' It was Gretel's voice.

He struggled to stand upright, partly to obey the order but mostly to relieve the pain in his wrists. He heard what sounded a whip crack and a gust of air whistled past his buttocks. He knew he was about to be whipped again. The doctor was practising her slash like a batsman practising his stroke at the crease. He looked over his shoulder. The doctor was unbuttoning her blouse. He watched her take it off and then Gretel assisted in unhooking the doctor's brassiere. Bare-chested, she flexed her arm muscles like a shot putter about to twirl and then flicked the air with the single-tailed, leather-braided whip with its snake tongue. This whip was made for real punishment, not for bedroom role play, like the one he kept in his wardrobe to play games with Mrs Mountford.

The whip swished the air again. He heard the doctor say something to the two guards. There was a joint murmur of discontent from the guards. It was clear to Rupert that the doctor had told the guards to leave. He now felt more frightened at the prospect of being left alone with the doctor. The two guards were sadists but he suspected that the doctor was a degree worse than a sadist. Reluctantly, with more mutterings the guards left the room, slamming the door behind them as a final protest at being ordered to leave. He remembered that he needed to 'use a bucket'. He would not be able to contain himself much longer, especially when the doctor resumed torturing him.

The whip whistled its un-merry tune and pain seared across his buttocks.

When the princess had whipped him in the dungeon she had concentrated on his back with only a few slashes across his bum. The doctor was about to make up the shortfall; a second slash seared across his posterior. No doubt, when she finished the flogging - if she ever did - his buttocks would receive the salt-treatment.

His knees were about to buckle again after several more slashes when, surprisingly, she stopped and placed her hands around his waist. 'Turn'. He realised that she meant him to turn to face her.

The single chain linking his wrist-manacles to the ring above his head would turn as he did. He swivelled with his eyes closed. Although he now had his back to the wall, he was terrified as to what she intended to do to his front. Her fingers were feeling the limp shaft of his penis. It did not respond despite the fact that under normal circumstances it fancied her.

She stepped back from him. The corners of her mouth, almost flickered into a smile. Then with the slow, provocative movement of a striptease artiste, she turned her back to him. It was criss-crossed with whip marks; Tomas's handiwork. He had seen these marks already when he was in the torture-room with the archduchess.

The doctor was unbuttoning her skirt. She let it fall to the floor and stepped out of it. Then stepped out of her petticoat, still with her back to him. She was wearing only a high-waisted suspended belt and knickers.

Jutting her backside towards his penis, she rolled her knickers down over the suspender belt and her apple-shaped buttocks. Red, criss-cross lines appeared. 'You cause,' she said in English. With her red-lined buttocks still wavering close to his limp penis, she turned her head and stared at him over her shoulder. Her expression was that of a vengeful Furie created, according to ancient Greek mythology, when Uranus was castrated and his genitals thrown into the sea. Rupert had studied Greek mythology at Camford University. His knees were unable to buckle because his wrists were locked above his head.

Slowly she stepped out of her knickers, and gave him an extended view of her flagellated-posterior before turning to face him. She came close and used two fingers to open his mouth wide and spat into it. He gulped down her spittle. She was still wearing low-heeled shoes and was some six inches shorter than him. Her forehead brushed his upper chest and her breasts squashed against him as she looked down at his penis and fingered it again. It showed no sign of life, possibly it was thinking of Uranus.

Slowly, she lowered herself to her knees so that her mouth was an inch from his penis. He felt teeth bite the glans. The head of his penis was about to be bitten off. Urine flooded into her mouth causing her to jerk away as more waste fluid splashed over her face and breasts. She sat back on her heels in an effort to avoid the deluge. Her sense of smell then detected that, simultaneously, he had emptied his bowels. She shuffled backwards on her knees and stood, holding her nose. Then she picked up her discarded knickers and wiped her wet face.

Her face was incandescent with glistening rage. He knew he was in even bigger trouble than he had been before. She staggered to her feet and went to her desk, opened a drawer, and took out a cut-throat razor, and came back towards him. Had he not already pissed and shit himself, he would have done so.

She gripped his shaft and stretched it painfully with the razor blade hovering and ready to cut, in the same way as the blade of the guillotine had hovered over his neck when in the clutches of the archduchess.

At this moment, the door opened and the archduchess entered, followed by her daughter, the princess.

'What is happening?' the archduchess enquired of the doctor, in a regal tone.

Behind her, the princess laughed and said, 'I think the doctor is about to perform an operation, Mummy.'

The doctor had stepped away from Rupert as mother and daughter advanced into the room. They stopped in their tracks when the aroma of Rupert's recent disemboweling reached their nostrils.

'Release him,' the archduchess ordered.

Obediently, and now shaking with fear, the doctor reached up to the iron ring and unlinked the manacles. Gratefully, Rupert's arms, still manacled, came down and he held his hands over his genitals like a fig leaf.

'Turn around,' the princess ordered. He turned his back to her. 'He has been whipped since I whipped him, Mummy.'

The archduchess viewed the marks. 'Who whipped you?'

Rupert, not normally a snitch, did not feel the need to keep the doctor out of trouble. 'The doctor whipped my buttocks, Your Highness. Just before you came in. And then she was going to castrate me with a razor blade.'

The princess laughed. The archduchess smiled and then her smile disappeared as she turned to the trembling doctor. 'Release his hands.' The

doctor fumbled for the relevant key and unlocked the manacles on Rupert's wrists. 'Now report to Tomas and inform him you have been sentenced to one hundred lashes.'

The doctor bowed her head. 'Please have mercy, Your Highness. I have been whipped only recently.'

'Turn around,' the archduchess ordered. The doctor turned and the archduchess viewed the whip marks. 'Tomas needs to be more severe when I order him to whip.'

The princess was also viewing the marks. 'Tomas does seem to have been soft, Mummy.'

'Probably he fucked her before he whipped her,' she said to her daughter, and then glared at the doctor, 'Request Tomas to give you one hundred lashes before he fucks you or whatever he likes doing to you. Understand?'

The doctor nodded submissively and muttered, 'Yes, Your Highness.'

The doctor collected her clothes in her arms, bowed her head, gave a curtsy, and left the room.

Rupert was not displeased to see her leave, and was not displeased at hearing the punishment she would receive. He had come with a pubic-hair's breadth of being separated from his beloved penis. Then he realised the two women were staring at him.

The princess was pinching her nose. 'I think he needs to clean himself, Mummy.'

The archduchess smiled serenely at him. 'Go to your cell-passage and wash.'

He assumed that she meant the hosepipe in the passage leading to the cells. Astrid, his guard, had doused him there every morning until her disappearance. He bowed respectfully to the two highnesses as they left the room leaving him alone.

It was the first time, apart from when incarcerated in his cell, that he had not been 'chaperoned' by one of the female guards or the doctor or the princess or her mother. He felt almost happy to be alone.

As he wended his way down to the dungeon he wondered whether there was any avenue of escape. But he was naked so an escape attempt would not be wise just yet. His back was feeling a bit better. Ironically, the salt was probably helping.

He turned on the tap, picked up the end of the hose and splashed his front from head to toe, and then down his back. He soaked his back and sprayed

his anus. Because of the sound of the water gushing he did not hear boots approaching.

ELEVEN

A MARKED MAN

Gretel, the plump guard, strutted towards him. She was alone. Could he overpower her and steal her gun and uniform and escape from the dungeon and the castle? He turned to face her, water dripping. She came very close to him, her heavy, cone-shaped bosom almost touching his chest. She was smiling, but it was not a nice smile.

'On knee.'

He knelt in front of her. As usual, her uniform consisted of a shirt, jodhpurs and boots. As Astrid had done with her back against a tree, prior to hanging him from a branch, Gretel unbuckled her gun belt and let it fall onto the floor, and unbuttoned her waistband and pushed the jodhpurs down her thighs. She was not hearing panties. She had sat on his midriff in the gymnasium and inserted his penis into her, but he had not had the opportunity to view her curly mons venus. Despite his loathing of her as a person he was entranced by the plump thighs.

'Open mouth.' She opened her mouth wide to emphasise that she wanted him to open his mouth as wide as he could. With his eyes closed he did so. He had a horrible feeling he knew what she intended to do.

He sensed her bend her knees to adjust her body and a stream of warm urine flowed into his mouth. He kept his mouth open until the flood waned. His several days' growth of beard was soaked. Liquid dribbled down his chin and his neck and chest.

She pulled up her jodhpurs and re-buckled her gun belt.

'Stand.'

He stood.

'Come.'

He followed her up the stairs and hoped they were heading for the gymnasium. This was the room in which Gretel had sat on his chest and inserted his penis into her and jiggled up and down very pleasantly. He would not mind repeating the exercise. But she stopped outside the torture room and opened the creaking door.

The room was dark. She switched on the lights using a switch just inside the door. The lights were not bright. Rupert assumed the low lighting was staged to give a more sinister atmosphere. The shadows flickering on the granite walls would have made the room terrifying even without the various instruments of torture. He froze in the doorway. Coals were burning in a brazier.

'Move.' He received a fisted-thump in the middle of his back to emphasise the instruction. He tripped over his own feet and fell onto one knee.

'Up. Move or whip,' she said in English.

'Can we go into the gym instead.' He mumbled the request knowing it was futile.

'You want fuck me, yes?'

She had stepped in front of him, her cheeks dimpled in a smile. He nodded. She lowered her eyelashes like a coy damsel. He was unsure whether she was playing with him or was being genuinely coy. She answered his unspoken question. Her knee came up and connected with his testicles and he collapsed, his hands clutching his groin. 'You no fuck again.'

He was unsure whether she meant he would not fuck again with her or with anyone in general. He was by nature an optimist having, up to the time he was kidnapped, spent his life in privileged, cosseted luxury. But his spell in this castle had turned him into a pessimist. So he decided that she meant that he would not be able to fuck anybody ever again once she had finished with him.

He managed to get to his feet, somewhat groggily. Another thump on the back of his head pointed out to him that he was required, without further hesitation, to take steps towards the glowing coals, like a moth to a flame. As he approached the heat he saw that a stout chair with restraining straps was placed next to the brazier.

'Sit.'

'Please no.'

His pleading resulted in another brain-jarring thump on the back of the head. With his eyes closed he lowered his whipped buttocks onto the wooden

seat. He kept his eyes closed as he felt a leather strap tighten across his chest. Then she gripped his left hand and strapped his wrist to the arm of the chair and then did the same to his other wrist. Then she strapped his ankles to the chair.

'See me.'

He assumed she was ordering him to open his eyes. He did so. She smiled provocatively. It occurred to him that her smile would have enticed bus loads of male tourists to venture upstairs to a dingy first floor room in the Rue Saint-Denis in Paris, or possibly the Reeperbahn in Hamburg's St Pauli. Certainly, she was no saint. Despite his abject fear of this plump female in a military uniform who was about to singe his naked body with a branding iron, or worse, his penis showed that there was still life in the 'old dog' even if a bitch was about to put it down.

She lowered her eye lashes and her hands went to the buckle of her gun-belt. She undid it again and laid her gun on the floor. Then straightened, and undid her blouse. He had seen her naked before, when she had sat on his chest and impaled herself on his penis, and he had seen her vagina when she had streamed piss into his mouth not long before. His penis remembered as well as he did. It was now sitting as stiffly as he was.

She smiled at it. 'It like, no.'

It twitched as if to give the answer 'yes, it did like.'

As usual, the possibility of an orgasm was getting the better of his senses. He knew he was about to be tortured by her, but the question was 'would she fuck him first?' She divested herself of her blouse, and unhooked her brassiere. Her breasts really were quite impressive. Mrs Mountford had very impressive breasts, but these were nearly as big, although firmer, as Gretel was somewhat younger than his housekeeper.

Now naked from the waist up, her hands went to the side-buttons at the waistband of her jodhpurs which then slid down her thighs. She rested one hand on the crossed arm of a nearby whipping post and pulled off her boots and then stepped out of the jodhpurs. In the nude, she looked less intimidating. Her hips looked too broad and her bottom too big for her frame, but he did not mind and neither did his penis.

They both knew, he and his penis, what would happen next. She came close to him, turned her back to him, widened her thighs, gripped his shaft, and inserted it into her, and then slid down so that she was impaled to the hilt, sitting in his lap. She was breathing in short sharp bursts. She wiggled her

hips ever so slightly. 'You like,' she enquired, turning her head to view him over her shoulder.

He nodded as he viewed the back of her head.

'Am better fuck than Astrid?'

'Yes,' he said, thinking that it might be impolite to suggest otherwise.

'You nice to me and I no burn you very much.'

'Why are you going to burn me?' he dared to ask.

'All prisoners burn mark. So belong to Princess.'

'And her mother, the archduchess?'

'Archduchess fuck Tomas.'

This news surprised Rupert. Tomas was a musclebound, shaven headed thug who resembled a fairytale ogre on top of a beanstalk, or possibly a doorman in a seedy Soho nightclub. But Rupert knew from experience that some women associated with the most unlikely of males. And then he wondered about the archduke as Gretel wriggled her hips causing pleasant tremors all the way down his shaft. He had seen the archduke's face on bank notes, but nowhere else. More wriggling caused more pleasure. He would come soon. As a gentleman should, he tried to restrain himself until the lady achieved an orgasm.

'What does the archduke say if his wife...'

Rupert did not finish the sentence as his orgasm began. Her hips began to gyrate to signal that they were experiencing orgasms in tandem. He waited until his pleasure subsided and she slumped backwards against his chest, the back of her head against his face. After a moment his penis softened and she lifted her alabaster buttocks off him and stood. Then she surprised him by turning to face him, leaning forward, and kissing him hard on the mouth. And then she disengaged and whispered, 'You good fuck. You take me England, yes.'

Rupert's ears pricked up. The fact that Gretel wanted to go home with him meant two things; one that there was a chance he might be allowed to escape from captivity, and two, that he would be entwined with a sadistic torturer. He did not take more than a split second to consider his reply.

'Of course, when can we leave for England?'

'When Archduchess and Princess dead.'

This sounded to Rupert ever so slightly as if his guard had whispered treason and murder to him.

'Who is going to kill them?'

But she stepped away, staring at him as if she had said too much in the heat of the moment.

She went over to a bench and picked up a leather blacksmith-style apron and leather gauntlets. She looped the halter of the apron over her head and tied a bow at her back. The bow emphasised the size of her buttocks but he felt in no mood to savour the sight. He watched her come back to the brazier and withdraw an iron rod with a molten tip in the shape of a venus sign; a circle on a perpendicular stick with a short horizontal bar across the stick. It was the same insignia as on the arms bands worn by the guards. A small bucket was beside the brazier. She dipped the molten end into the bucket causing steam to rise. She withdrew the rod from the bucket, the end still hissing and steaming.

'Please no,' he whimpered.

She came close to the chair. He could feel the heat from the iron as she eyed his torso as if deciding where to make her mark. She wavered the tip over his upper chest and then down towards his stomach. And then lower still to below his belly button. And then lower. He closed his eyes; she was going to brand his penis. He blacked out.

He awoke when water splashed onto his face, and opened his watery eyes and stared at two guards, Gretel had been joined by her colleague, Heidi. It was Heidi who had doused him. Gretel, nude except for the leather apron, was behind Heidi. She was holding the branding iron as if unsure what to do with it. Rupert glanced at the tip of the iron. It was glowing less brightly. He assumed he had been unconscious for several minutes.

He was surprised when, without saying anything, but looking stern, Heidi unbuckled the strap around his chest and then freed his wrists. He admired her blond pigtails as she knelt to free his ankles. She lifted up her hand as a direction that he should stand. He did so, feeling relieved. Perhaps he was not going to be branded with a hot iron after all.

His hope was short lived. Heidi held his arm and guided him to a space between a whipping post and a whipping bench. She made as if to touch her toes as a signal that he should do this. He splayed his feet apart and touched his toes as if he was to receive six of the best from Mrs Mountford.

But the pain, when it came, was not the familiar pain of a cane or a birch. The flame of a thousand candles seared the taut flesh of his bent left buttock. His scream intensified in decibels as another flame burnt his other buttock in its centre. He collapsed to his knees rubbing at the burning flesh and then

fainted for the second time, since being taken into this dreadful room.

He regained consciousness when water splashed over him yet again, but this time the water hit his buttocks instead of his face and gave some relief to the burning pain. He looked up from his prone position on the stone floor. Gretel was back in uniform with Heidi standing next to her holding the empty bucket. He wondered if she would be kind enough to douse his bottom with another bucket of freezing water, or even better, allow him to sit in a full bucket.

'Up.' Heidi nudged him in the ribs with the toe of her boot, and he rolled onto his side and got to his feet and faced the two women.

Gretel looked slightly worried. He guessed that she had 'overstepped the mark' by having sex with him. Certainly, Heidi would not have approved. He stood, with his hands by his side, and his buttocks still on fire, wondering what they were going to do to him next. Gretel went to the door and opened it as Heidi went behind him and pushed him as a hint that he should follow her colleague. He hoped that they would take him back to his cell and leave him to recover from his ordeal by fire. But they were taking him along a corridor he had not seen before.

Gretel opened a door and Heidi shoved him in the back to encourage him to enter. But he did not need any encouragement. This room was furnished like a hotel room. If this was to be his new abode he would not complain. The clothes he had been wearing when he was kidnapped were neatly piled on a chair by the bed. He was still viewing his surroundings with approval when he heard the door behind him close. Gretel and Heidi had departed. He was alone again.

He opened another door and found himself in an ensuite bathroom complete with shaving things. He stared at his face in the shaving mirror, surprised that he did not look more drawn and haggard after all he had been through. His face looked leaner which made him look younger. It appeared that captivity suited him. He angled the shaving mirror to reflect his taut stomach muscles and then his muscular arms. He was feeling fitter than he had felt since his early twenties. He tested the shower; the water was hot. Stripping off, he took a tepid shower as he thought this would be best for his still-painful back. Then he shaved, and used the lavatory. He was able to sit on the wooden lavatory seat despite the burns on his bum. Clean, with his hair washed, and smelling of eau de cologne, Rupert felt a new man.

The knock on the door startled him. He was unused to anyone knocking

before entering his cell. He went and tried the door handle; it was unlocked. He opened the door and came face to face with a smiling Archduchess.

'I do hope I am not disturbing you.'

'No, of course not, Your Highness' he stuttered, conscious that he was still naked, not having put on the clothes piled on the chair.

The archduchess came over the threshold and looked about her. 'So much nicer than the rather horrid cells in the dungeon, don't you think.'

'Yes, of course, Your Highness.'

His tone of voice was that of a footman. She went over and sat on the bed, and patted the eiderdown to indicate that he should sit next to her. She viewed him as he came over to her.

'You do look rather better than you did on the guillotine.' This comment stopped him in mid-stride. 'Don't worry, I'm not going to do that to you again.' She smiled reassuringly, as she stared at his penis. 'You do have very impressive genitalia, Mr Houndsditch. I am rather glad that my daughter stopped me when she did. Sit next to me, if you please.'

He positioned his body as if to sit giving the archduchess an opportunity to see his buttocks. 'Who branded you?'

'Two of the guards, Your Highness.'

'Show me.'

He turned his back to her.

'Come closer.'

He took a step backwards so that his buttocks were close to her.

'I see you have been marked twice. What an amusing place to be branded. Can you sit?'

'Yes, Your Highness,' he said, as he sat gingerly.

She waited until he had settled himself and then her smile, which had been constant since her entrance, disappeared and she looked serious. 'I am here to ask a favour of you.' She waited for his reaction, but he stared at her blankly until she continued. 'Everything I say to you is not to be repeated.' He nodded to indicate that he would remain entirely confidential. 'You may have noticed that my daughter can be outwardly assertive.' It was on the tip of his tongue to say that he had noticed that the princess was overly assertive, as was her mother. 'But that is - how shall I say - not her true character. She is by nature submissive.' His open mouth conveyed his disbelief. 'When it involves matters of a sexual nature, she prefers a much older man to be authoritative. Indeed, a father figure. As a husband.'

Rupert's mouth opened, much like a fish out of water gasps when deprived of the wet stuff. He could have done with a reviving drink. As far as he was concerned the archduchess and her princess-daughter were sadistic tyrants who need being locked up, much as they were prone to lock up men. But he returned her smile as she asked, 'What do you say?'

'Say?'

'Do you agree to marry my daughter?'

He gulped, swallowed hard, and felt a rush of blood to the penis. He and it were being asked to marry one of the most beautiful women in the world by his prospective mother in law.

'Perhaps the princess does not find me attractive.'

'She does. That is why she had you abducted. Are you going to marry her?' The question was asked in the manner of a Chicago gangster enquiring whether a shopkeeper was going to donate to his rattling collection box.

'Yes, of course. I shall be delighted if she will have me.'

'Excellent.' She smiled happily.

'There is one catch though,' he said.

'Yes. What is it?'

'I am dead according to the newspapers.'

She laughed. 'One should never believe what one reads in a newspaper; isn't that what they say? You will be found alive and well, although possibly having suffered a bout of amnesia and losing your bearings.'

'And there is another small matter.'

'Yes. What is it?' There was just the hint of impatience in her question.

'The archduke.'

'What about him?'

'He might not be happy if a commoner marries his daughter.'

She laughed again, and then patted him on his naked kneecap. 'You leave the archduke to me.'

The bodily contact by the rather beautiful archduchess had not gone unnoticed by his penis. It swelled. She noticed, and stared at it like a woman staring at an engagement ring in a jeweller's window.

'My daughter is a virgin, so far as I am aware, despite her exotic behaviour suggesting otherwise.'

'She told me.'

'When?'

When she had me stretched out on my back on the torture-rack.'

The archduchess laughed. 'I'm sure she won't do that to you again.'

'And you stretched me out on my front on the board of your guillotine.' He was beginning to feel emboldened. After all, this woman needed a favour from him. And it was quite a big favour.

'Yes, but there were extenuating circumstances. We thought you were a spy. And I do feel that we should let bygones be bygones, Rupert. Water under the bridge.'

'Yes, but I've got whips marks and brand marks on my back and buttocks which will never disappear.'

She winced. 'Yes, I really am very sorry that we did that to you. It was very naughty of us.'

'And apart from nearly being guillotined I was hung by my neck from a branch.'

The archduchess was beginning to look not a little displeased with his attitude. 'That was not my doing or my daughter's. The guard, Astrid, needs taking down a peg or two. As do her colleagues, Gretel and Heidi.' She spotted that his face brightened. 'Of course, as the husband of the princess you will have absolute power over the guards.'

'Absolute?'

'As in you may do to them whatever you wish'

He remembered the saying, 'absolute power corrupts absolutely'. 'Will I have absolute power over the princess?' It was on the tip of his tongue to add 'and you', but he thought better of it.

'That is something you will have to earn, Rupert.'

'How?'

'By imposing your authority over her. Show her who is the boss.'

'How do I do that?'

She took a long time before she answered his question. And then she surprised him by leaning towards him so that her mouth was close to his cheek, and her polished fingernail raked his penis. It had been dormant, not knowing what to expect, but now it stirred.

'Why don't you practice imposing your authority on me?' Her voice was low and throaty. His firming penis was now receiving attention from her hand. 'You may call me, Zsa Zsa.' He gulped. 'Do you like me, Rupert?'

'Yes, your High... Zsa Zsa. Very much.'

He wondered how he could say this when the last time he had been alone with her she had placed his neck under a guillotine-blade.

She continued to finger his penis. It had stiffened but not to its full extent. She smiled like a masked Venetian virgin encountering Casanova. 'And what do you think a man should do to a naughty woman?'

He hesitated before answering. And then took the cow by the horns. 'Whip them.'

She blushed and her voice lowered to a whisper. 'You have whip marks on your back. Who whipped you?'

'Your daughter, the princess.'

'She was naughty to you?'

'Yes.'

'And do you think she should be whipped by you?'

He knew he was on dangerous territory. Should he suggest to a mother that he would like to whip her daughter; a mother who still had the literal power of life or death over him, as did the daughter? As far as knew, he was still in captivity. 'She did whip me very severely.'

'Stand up and turn your back to me and let me see the marks.'

He stood and turned his back to her. She remained seated. 'Dear, dear. Those are very nasty marks. I am sorry to say I think you might be scarred for life. And, of course, you will have Femdom's insignia on both your buttocks. How can I make it up to you? Would like you to fuck me?' The tone of the last few words was more a command than a question. He and his penis stared at her. Both stiffened. They were being told to fuck an archduchess, the de facto ruler of Femdom. He wondered what the archduke, the perceived ruler, would think. And if he found out that Rupert had fucked his wife would he be thrown into the deepest dungeon, or possibly a hole in the ground, never to emerge.

'And if you fuck me nicely I will make my husband watch you do it again.'

Rupert started to shake. But the cheeks of the archduchess were flushed and her eyes hooded as if she were in the throes of an orgasm, although Rupert had not yet touched her. 'And you will fuck the princess whilst I watch you do it.'

If his penis has been a rocket on Guy Fawkes night it would have left it's bottle, its fuse having been lit, and attempted to reach the moon. It was a stiff as concrete reinforced with iron rods. He stood up, as did his penis. Coming to the conclusion, from the now subservient demeanour of the archduchess, that she wanted him to take charge, much as he did on Mondays, Wednesdays

and Fridays when he took charge of Mrs Mountford. She took charge of him on the other four days of the week.

'He stood and towered over the still-sitting Archduchess. 'On your feet,' he said in as authoritative a tone as he could muster in the circumstances. Her silk dress rustled as she got to her feet. The top-half was low cut revealing heavy cleavage. 'Unzip your dress.'

With her eyes still lowered, her arms went behind her and the front of the dress loosened to show that her overly large bosom was structured by tightly-fitting corsetry, no doubt from Paris or Vienna. She rolled down her dress and stepped out of it. He stood back to give her more room to undress and also to better admire the fulsome figure that was about to be revealed in the flesh. She divested herself of her petticoat and then unhooked her silk stocking-tops from their suspenders, kicked off her shoes and carefully rolled down her stockings. Then she put her arms behind her back and unlaced her ruffle-edge corset.

His penis was becoming impatient. It strained towards her as he stood naked before him, some six inches shorter than him in bare feet. He stepped further back to admire the vision. The archduke was a lucky man, apart from being lucky enough to be an archduke. But then he doubted very much that Zsa Zsa would have married a pauper. Rupert was wealthy but probably not wealthy enough to have enticed her into matrimony.

He patted his naked thighs. 'Over.'

She opened her eyes wide in shock. He wondered if he had taken a step too far. Spanking an archduchess on the arse, especially when you were in her power, was not for the faint hearted. But he had started so he would finish, come what may. 'Get your arse over or I'll double your punishment.'

'No man has ever...' she began to say.

'Always a first time. Get your fat arse over. I won't tell you again.' He surprised himself at his temerity and boldness. She still hesitated. Was she going to call for the dreaded thug, Tomas, or the sadistic guards, Gretel and Heidi, or even the missing Astrid.

He had a momentary vision of sitting in a large cauldron full of oil about to be boiled, or possible strapped to the plank of the guillotine with his head fixed into position and the blade about to drop.

But she came docilely and lowered herself across his thighs. Her wide hips squashed his erect stalk against his stomach. He was likely to ejaculate due to the pressure on its trigger point. He pushed her hip away to give his

penis some breathing space, then placed the palm of his hand on the mid-point of her fleshy, wobbling buttocks, and patted gently. The patting increased in tempo and hardness to the point where his hand began to sting. He wished a proper spanking instrument was available. He knew there a rack of the things in the torture-room but there was nothing in this room.

Having brought a bright red blush to the left cheek of her posterior he paused before turning his attention to the right cheek. She was breathing in short sharp bursts. Her hip began to gyrate slightly and her lower stomach pressed down hard against his thigh. He recognised the signs, having had Mrs Mountford in this position more times than he had had one of her hot dinners. The archduchess was close to an orgasm. Now was the time to place her on her back and ram in his cock up to the hilt with no further preamble.

'On your back slut.' The instant he called the archduchess a slut he felt his heart skip a beat. A slut is what he called Mrs Mountford between spanking her rosy bottom and fucking her senseless. Calling this autocratic and absolute ruler a slut meant he was in mortal danger of losing his head. But to his relief the archduchess moved quickly off his lap. In an instant she was on her back with her plump thighs wide apart.

His belly button said 'hello' to hers and she was penetrated with the force of bolt from a crossbow. She moaned softly. 'Wriggle your fat arse'

Again, he was slightly perturbed at his boldness in suggesting that her derriere was anything other than pert, but she blushed a deeper shade of crimson and said, 'Yes, sir,' and wriggled obediently, which had the effect of an archer's shaft leaving its taut yew with a twang. Semen splurged into her. He had intended to wait until she started an orgasm, as he always opened a door for a lady to pass through first, but he had pushed through without waiting. Fortunately, she was but a toe's length behind him. They came together, her arms almost crushed his spine and causing painful folds in his whipped flesh.

As their mutual pleasure subsided he wondered what next. It had been fun while it lasted, but now might come the moment of reckoning. Sometimes, in his experience, women became angry after the event; angry that they had allowed themselves to be seduced.

'You will do that to me again,' she said, looking up at his concerned face, as she still lay on her back with him on top of her. This made him worried. He was thirty nine. His testicles needed time to replenish their store of sperm.

When at home, he had sexual relations with Mrs Mountford at least once

a day. Therefore, his genitals were well honed, like the legs of a marathon runner. But incarcerated as he had been in a cell with only an intermittent opportunity for sexual release, his cock was now a bit like a rusty tap needing time to fill a bucket. But he needn't have worried.

'But not now. When we are alone in my bedchamber in the palace.'

He brightened. He was to be allowed to visit her bedchamber in her palace. But then he wondered what the archduke would think. But now was not the time to raise a query. He had lifted off her and she was now sitting up, looking very flushed, like a milkmaid in a haystack who has just had her udders felt and received a churn of milk from a farmhand.

'I need to use your shower room if you do not mind.' She was looking towards the ablutions-cubicle in the corner.

'Of course, Zsa Zsa.'

She stood and gave him a pecked-kiss on his cheek. 'That was fun. And then I think we both need to wash. You will soap me and then I will soap you if you permit, kind sir.'

'Yes, of course, Zsa Zsa.'

Calling him 'sir' made him think he was with Mrs Mountford in his cottage on even days of the week. Much as he fancied the archduchess sexually he really did have a deep yearning for Mrs Mountford. As they say, absence makes the cock grow fonder. But he knew he needed to forget Mrs Mountford and concentrate on the 'lookalike' female in front of him. His life might depend upon it.

He watched her spanked buttocks wobble towards the shower and followed. He soaped her all over under the shower. And then she did the same to him giving particular attention to his genitalia. Five minutes later they emerged from having been almost squashed together in the narrow cubicle which had been designed for only one occupant at a time.

'Get dressed. They are your clothes. We will go to the palace.'

Ten minutes later, they were walking up the corridor arm in arm. To his horror he saw the two guards, Heidi and Gretel, coming towards them. They stopped, and bowed respectfully, as the archduchess and her gentleman walked past. If either of the two guards had recognised Rupert as their former prisoner, they gave no sign of recognition.

The archduchess guided them down some stone steps into the courtyard where the cream and black Rolls Royce was parked. Rupert wondered if he would be expected to travel in the boot as he had done when he had been

abducted. But Tomas emerged from the driver's seat and opened the back door for the archduchess, and when she was seated, went around and opened the other rear door for Rupert. The dreaded Tomas; he who had bundled Rupert into the boot at gunpoint. But he showed no sign of recognition, bowed respectfully, and sat back in the driver's seat.

The archduchess snuggled up to Rupert as the car purred out of the courtyard on its way to the palace.

TWELVE

THE PALACE

'These are my apartments,' the archduchess said, as she stood to one side to allow Rupert to open an ornate door to a reception room. It was furnished in a decadent style. She turned to face him as he closed the door, lowering her eyelids in the docile and subservient manner of one of the female servants they had passed in the palace corridors.

'We will go into my bedroom.'

The bedroom reminded him of a 'games' room in a Parisian establishment off the Saint Germain-des-Prés in the sixth arrondissement. The discreetly placed manacles and chains were not especially noticeable at first; neither were the flagellation instruments hanging up on a rack to one side of the wall, amidst the priceless furniture, ornaments, tapestries and portraits of Rubenesque females with expansive buttocks rucking up the bed linen.

'Do you like my bedroom,' she said, smiling at his shocked expression.

'Yes,' was all he could say. This was certainly different from the dank cell in which he had found himself on his first night in captivity. One glance at her amused expression confirmed that he was still in captivity, albeit modified. His wish to escape had reduced somewhat. He was going to have 'fun and games' for free. His visits to the bordello in Paris in his youth had nearly bankrupted him, and he was saved financially only after the success of his first novel. Perhaps he could write a novel about his experiences in this country called Femdom, but then, he thought not, because readers would think the plot too far fetched.

'I think it is my turn to spank you,' the archduchess said. 'Please bend over that chair.' She pointed to a gilded chair with a tapestry seat. His classical education told him that the tapestry depicted the rape of Europa by Zeus.

Obediently, he stood behind the back of the chair as she took a school cane from a rack on a wall. He possessed a similar spanking implement in the bedroom in his cottage for use on Mrs Mountford's buttocks, and in turn, her use on his.

The archduchess swished the cane as she came towards him. 'In my experience, Englishmen like their bottoms spanked by a woman with a school cane.' Then she laughed. 'And some of them like their bottoms caned by another man. Lift up the back of your jacket and bend.'

He bent and lifted up his jacket. 'I do this to my husband. He was schooled in England so I have carried on the tradition.' She smacked down the cane on his trousered-rear. 'I think I have used this cane on most of the servants in the palace, both male and female. Take down your trousers.' She waited until his trousers were down to his knees and gave him a second stroke of the cane. 'I do rather like dressing as a school mistress with a severe hair bun and small round glasses perched on my nose. Would you like me to cane you dressed as a school mistress?'

His penis twitched to say that 'yes' it would like. 'Whatever gives you pleasure, Zsa Zsa, I will submit to.'

'Push your underpants down.' He bared his buttocks which received a third mark of the cane to add to the whips marks. She paused after the fourth stroke and massaged her arm. 'My upper arm becomes flabby unless I exercise it regularly by flogging someone. Sometimes I use my left arm so that one arm does not become more muscular than the other.' As if to emphasis the point she went to his other side and used her left hand to smack a fifth stroke. 'I think it is traditional with the English to give six strokes at any one time.' She swished the sixth stroke as she said this.

He gritted his teeth, not with the pain, but to try and keep his penis from spewing up. He needed to conserve his ammunition, like a rifleman at the battle of Waterloo needed to conserve his musket balls.

'You may straighten up and stand back,' she said as she placed the cane on the seat. 'Lift up the front of your jacket and let me see your groin.' He obeyed. 'I have never quite understood why some men like being beaten by a woman. Please stand straight.'

His penis stood proud and erect like a palace guard with a fixed bayonet. She viewed it. 'Most impressive, Rupert. You really are very well endowed. My daughter should be well pleased. As should I as your mother in law.' He blushed at the compliment as Mrs Mountford did when he complimented her

on her Yorkshire puddings.

'Now I would like you to take off all your clothes and also undress me.'

'If I touch you I am unlikely to be able to prevent a spontaneous ejaculation.'

'Darling, what an absolutely delightful thing to say to any woman. You really are so debonair. You must have most of London society - female, that is - falling at your feet. Or perhaps you fall at theirs.' Her amused expression suddenly hardened. 'Kneel.'

Confused and worried by her sudden change of demeanour, his penis softened and his knees hit the Savonnerie carpet. She bent down and reached, with both hands, for the hem of her skirt. She lifted the skirt, shuffled forward so that her lower stomach, encased in silk bloomers and corsetry, almost touched his nose. His nostrils detected the scent of a woman 'on heat'. She lowered her dress so that his head and shoulders were shrouded. Her hands, on top of her skirt, felt for the back of his head, and almost jammed his nose into her pubic region, and rubbed and gyrated. The scent of female arousal became more pronounced to the point of being overpowering. He was also having difficulty breathing. He was about to be suffocated in the confines of a flouncy petticoat and a heavy silk skirt. He was red faced and gasping for air when she lifted her dress and released him. He sank back on his haunches.

'Are you alright?' She looked mildly concerned as he coughed and spluttered.

'Yes, thank you, Zsa Zsa.'

'Stand up. I need you to rape me.' She let her hands drop to her side and lowered her chin submissively.'

'Rape you?'

'Yes, please. As roughly as you like.'

'I have never...'

She glanced up with an angry expression, like a schoolgirl told that she could not go to the end-of-term dance. 'You're a man who likes women. You must have.'

'No.' He started to weep. 'I have never forced a woman.' He was still kneeling. 'Usually they force me.'

'Get to your feet and fucking rape me this minute. Or do you want to be taken back to the castle? If I have to take you back you will spend the rest of your days there. That is the good news. The bad news is that you will not have very many days to spend.'

Hastily he got to his feet, slightly hampered by his underpants still clinging around his thighs. She smile coyly, her chin down again. 'You are a military commander who has captured the wife of his enemy. You must treat me as one of the spoils of war. I am particularly fond of this scenario.'

'I would prefer it the other way around, to be totally honest.'

She looked up at him, her facial expression fuming like an overturned oil tanker about to explode. 'You are fucking going to marry my daughter. We agreed. I fucking expect you to fuck her every day, whether she wants it or not. Do we understand each other.'

'Not really. I've never heard of a mother who wants her daughter to be forced to have sex.'

She stared at him for a long moment, and then gave a rueful smile. 'You really are a fucking gentleman.' She leaned forward and gave him a kiss on his perspiring forehead. 'Alright, we will change the scenario. I am your mother in law and I terrorise you into marrying my daughter. And then when you are married your wife and your mother in law make you have sex with both of them, mother and daughter, every night. How do you like that scenario?'

He smiled. 'Very much.'

'Good. At least we seem to be getting somewhere. But you are a worse wimp than my husband if that were possible.'

She undressed herself, without further conversation, and stood in the nude in front of him. As before he admired her voluptuous curves as she went to an ornate wardrobe, rummaged in its interior, and produced a black shirt. 'I do think black suits me. I will make a very glamorous widow. I was given this shirt on my last visit to Rome by Benito. I do so love a powerful man.' She laughed and added, 'So I am not sure why I like you so much.'

As she said this she went over to the rack from where she had unhooked the school cane and came back to him with a vicious looking black leather whip. 'I also love a black whip with a snake-tongue tip. I would use it on your back and buttocks but you had better recover from your last whipping. I will use it on your front instead. On the bed now. And remember I am now your mother in law.'

She flicked the whip gently at him to encourage him to go to the side of the bed and roll onto his back in the middle, hoping in vain to be out of the range of the short whip.

'Nearer this side.'

Reluctantly, he edged closer to the left side of the bed, nearer to where she was standing with her whip aloft. The black shirt was unbuttoned and open at the front and had the effect of emphasising her curvaceous nudity and milk-white skin.

Through fear of the poised whip, his penis looked like a pinkish slug which had just feasted on a wet lettuce. 'Get stiff.'

He gripped the 'slug' and squeezed like an adolescent school boy trying for his third wank in succession. He let go and it managed to raise its head as the black whip flicked it. Then the whip flashed across his upper chest. He yelled as it stung.

'Quiet,' she commanded. 'That was not hard. As your mother in law you have my permission to scream only when the pain is too much.' A second slash hit across his nipples. He felt like screaming but managed not to utter a sound. The slashes went progressively across his torso ending just above his pubic hairs. Red whip marks were like a fan over his upper body and stomach spread towards his left side.

'Enough for the moment,' she said, as she climbed onto the bed and knelt with one knee aside his midriff. She put her hand behind her back and gripped his limp shaft. It firmed to her expert touch. He felt her warm, moist vagina swallow his shaft. She rested, impaled, for a moment, and then slid up and down, slowly at first and then progressively faster. She really was an expert in how to 'pleasure' a man.

As always, he gritted his teeth and tried not to come before she did. Squeals of delight began to emanate from her throat. They came in unison. She slumped onto his chest, and her hot lips crushed against his, her tongue stiffly penetrating his mouth. Eventually, her body relaxed and she released his vaginal-juiced penis and rolled off him, and curled up to him with her arm over his whip marked chest.

They laid together in this position, he not daring to move, she seemingly exhausted by her sexual exertions, until she raised her head off the shared pillow. He watched her get off the bed somewhat unsteadily. She looked almost punch-drunk but some women felt unsteady after an orgasm. Other women burst into tears or started weeping. However, Zsa Zsa did not look the weepy sort.

'I am going to the lavatory,'

Her rump wobbled though a *trompe-l'œil* panel in the wall, which he assumed was the door to the ensuite bathroom. He lay back on the bed and

thought about his predicament. In effect, he was still a prisoner, except the archduchess was now his captor instead of Astrid, his guard. He wondered what had happened to Astrid. He had not seen her since she galloped off halfway through his journey back to the castle after she had nearly hung him from a tree. Well, it was the other two guards, Gretel and Heidi, who had actually 'strung him up' but they did so on Astrid's order.

He had rolled off the bed and was now staring at his naked, whipped body in one of the full length mirror in the room. He was quite pleased with the vision he saw. His physique, if you ignored the whip marks, was impressive for a man of his age. He was lean and tanned and muscular. Being on a near-starvation diet and being forced to do physical exercises by the guards had not done his body any harm; quite the contrary. He stayed in from of the mirror, admiring his reflection, like Narcissus, until the panel door opened and Zsa Zsa reappeared.

'You have a nice bum,' she said with a smile as she stood framed in the doorway. She climbed into the bed again, shuffled over a little and patted the space beside her with the flat of her hand. 'Please join me.' He hesitated, causing her smile to vanish and a curled finger to beckon him as if she were a schoolmistress requiring a pupil to come forward to be chastised. 'What is the matter? Why do you hesitate?'

'The archduke might not like me sharing a bed with you.'

She laughed as though this comment was very silly. 'The archduke is in no position to object.' He stared at her wondering if she would elaborate on the reason the archduke could not object, but her attention was focused on his penis. 'Why is it limp? It ought to be firm at the thought of fucking me again. I will cane you after you have fucked me.'

The prospect of being caned by a beautiful woman had the desired effect, as always. It stiffened and pointed the way towards the bed. She snuggled up to him. 'I would like you to hug me first.' Tentatively he put an arm around her. His penis stretched towards her. Her fingertips caressed it causing the danger of stains on the pristine cotton sheets. 'Pretend I am your wife instead of your mother in law.'

'I've never had a wife.'

'What about someone else's?' she laughed at her question.

The truth was that he had quite a number of other men's wives. He did a quick mental calculation. Possibly as many as twenty, not counting the bride-to-be he had enjoyed shortly before her nuptial.

'I have never had another man's wife.'

'I don't believe you. If you ever lie to me, I will have you executed even if you are my son in law. How many?'

'Two.'

'You're still lying. Get out of bed. I am going to whip you.'

'Please don't. My back is red-raw.'

'Get out of bed. If I have to tell you a third time I will execute you. I am not joking.'

He pushed back the bedclothes and stood awaiting her pleasure. He watched warily as she got out of bed, went to the rack of flagellation instruments and unhooked a leather tawse. She came back to him. 'Hold out your left hand, palm up.' He did so and the tawse swished down with loud crack as the leather thongs bit into flesh almost to the bone. His palm felt as though it had been pricked by a thousand red hot needles.

'Other hand.'

'Please no.'

'This is what teachers do to schoolboys. Take your punishment like a man.' He kept his eyes closed as red hot needles pricked his other palm. 'Now, get back into bed, and when I ask you a question you answer me truthfully.'

He got back into bed and she did the same and snuggled up to him as though she had not just tawsed his palms. 'So, how many other men's wives have you fucked?'

'Twenty one.'

She laughed. 'We are a pair. But I've had a much bigger number of other women's husbands. I'll let you into one of my naughty secrets,' she whispered, 'My daughter's father was one of those husbands, although I am not entirely sure which one.'

He wished she had not told him. No doubt she would regret telling him. He now knew far too much about her for his safety.

'Do you like my daughter?'

'Yes.' This was only half true. He liked her body but did not like her as a person. She was a sadistic little bitch who was even more dangerously unpredictable than her mother. However, his penis would like to fuck her. And also, if he said 'no' it might cause her mother to be upset on the basis that he was rejecting her lovely daughter.

'What about the two of us together at the same time?' The suggestion

caused his penis to vibrate like an out of control road digger. 'Do you think I am being really naughty by suggesting that?'

'Yes.' He sensed she was giving him a clue to what she now wanted. 'And I think I should spank you for being so naughty.'

She feigned fright and adopted the voice of a servant girl about to be 'rogered' by the master of the house. 'Please, sir, be merciful.'

'Out of bed this minute.' He waited for her reaction. He knew that if he over played his hand it could have serious ramifications for his health and safety. But she got out of the bed and stood with her wrists crossed over her stomach and her chin on her chest. His penis was so close to a discharge that he had to peel the bedclothes away very carefully. When he stood his penis resembled a concrete-banana. 'I will use the tawse on your bum. Touch your toes.'

She gave a sharp intake of breath and spread her feet apart and bent with her fingers pointing at the top of her feet. He picked up the tawse which she had dropped on the floor after tawsing his palms. He swished the tawse and stood behind her, admiring the exposed vagina and rectum. He rather fancied the latter for starters but it would be prudent to use some lubricant. And first he had better 'test the water'. He tapped the tawse lightly across her taut buttocks, and then swished it down making sure that the stroke was not too hard. Her head came up slightly causing folds in the back of her neck and she 'ooed'.

'Keep your head down.' He swished the tawse a second time. The folds up the back of the neck were more pronounced, but she made no sound. 'I think six as a starting number.'

Neck folds appeared four more times. He examined the blushed-streaks across her posterior, a sight he had seen many times on the ample buttocks of Mrs Mountford. 'Stand straight. The archduchess did so. 'Face me.' She turned with her head down, and tear-stained, inflamed cheeks.

Mrs Mountford was also in the habit of weeping after being tawsed. He was tempted to tawse Zsa Zsa on her palms but decided that this would be too painful for her and put an end to their role play and possibly put an end to him. 'Do have petroleum jelly, whore?'

'I think there might be some in the bathroom, kind sir.'

'Fetch me some.' He watched the red streaks on her buttocks, like dim automobile tail-lamps, disappear into the bathroom. She returned clutching a bottle. 'Kneel in front of me and lubricate my penis. Be careful that you do

not cause spillage.'

Blushing, she knelt and upturned the bottle and dollops of the lotion dropped onto the palm and then, very careful she oiled his penis so that it glistened from its head to its stem. 'I think that will do, whore. You may stand.' She stood in front of him and carefully replaced the cap on the bottle. 'Put the bottle down and fetch a pillow.' She did so, holding a feather-and-down pillow in front of her. 'Place the pillow near the edge of the bed and stretch your fat stomach over it so that your bum juts in the air and keep your thighs apart.'

She stretched lengthways across the bed with the pillow under her, and looked over her shoulder at the glistening stalk. 'What are you going to do to me, sir?'

'Firstly I'm going to give you six more strokes of the tawse across your big bum and then I'm going to fuck you in the bum.'

'Shit! That's things took big to go up my...' she began to plead but his voice silenced her.

'I will now give you twelve strokes of the tawse for swearing and being argumentative.'

'I haven't argued.'

'Silence.'

'My cock will go up your arse to the hilt.'

He took up a tawsing position as she lay on the bed with her buttocks lifted up slightly by the pillow to present a very appealing target. He measured the tawse across her spread posterior and then struck six medium hard stokes which left marks considerably redder than the previous set. As before, the back of her neck flinched at each stroke but she took her punishment in silence, although tears could be seen streaming down her cheeks despite her face being buried in the quilted-silk eiderdown.

His penis was now as firm and twitchy as a bamboo rod. Using his left hand as a prop, he hovered his body over her and used his right hand to insert the head of his penis into the ring of her anus. Then he took a deep breath and pushed gently as her hips squirmed under him and her head began to thrash from side to side and she gave moans and murmurs which signified that she was enjoying the experience to put it mildly. He shoved in as far as possible and then took several more deep breaths as he kept her impaled and she squealed like a suckling pig. Her murmurs and groans built into a crescendo of screams and he felt it was time to let go and he flowed semen.

Their mutual pleasure gradually subsided and the muscles of her back and buttocks relaxed, soaked in moisture. Carefully he withdrew and stood looking down at her. He wondered if really he had gone too far with her and taken too many liberties. His heart began to thump as he considered the various means by which she could carry out her frequent threats to execute him. For a wild moment he thought of killing her and then trying to make his escape. But he did not know the layout of the palace. He was in no doubt that it would not take long for a 'hue and cry' to be raised, and that he would be caught; a stranger in a strange land.

He decided that his best plan of action was to continue to play 'the master' unless she indicated that the game had changed and that a role reversal was in order. He watched as she stirred and slowly lifted herself off the bed. She stood, somewhat shakily, and then sat down on the edge with a bump. Her cheeks were as red and wet as if she had smeared tomato ketchup over her face.

'I need a bath, please run it for me with plenty of bubbles.' She was now back in charge.

Quickly, he went into the marble and gold-tapped bathroom and turned on the mixer-tap and then examined the variety of Lalique glass bottles. He translated the label on one of the bottles as containing a potion to form bubbles in a bath and tipped some into the hot water. He was kneeling by the side of the bath, with his hand dipped testing the temperature of the water, when she entered.

'You make a good maid, Rupert darling. I must dress you as one.' She laughed as she said this, but he did not think she was joking. She placed her hands on his back and shoulders and gently massaged his neck. 'You really do have a lovely body for a middle aged male.'

He wondered if he should return the compliment but decided that she might not like being referred to as middle aged. 'Thank you. I try to keep in trim. And you do have a stunning body.'

'As stunning as my daughter's?'

Again, the wrong answer to this question could cause him some pain. 'You could be sisters.'

'How charming you are. You will make a good husband. Let us have a quick bath together.' And then we will have champagne and fish and chips. I know Englishmen love fish and chips.'

He wondered how many Englishmen she had known. He was even

beginning to suspect that she might be English herself.

THIRTEEN

THE MAID

They soaked in the marble bath as if they a pair of newly weds. He soft soaped her and she soft soaped him. Both were exhausted sexually, if only temporarily. They emerged from the bath smelling of lavender and violets after towelling each other dry. He followed her back into bed. They were both naked.

'I think a bottle before we have food and then a magnum with the food.'

'That sounds very nice,' he said, thinking of the water he had been given to drink in his first cell in her captivity.

She reached for a silken bell pull above the bed head. Within a half a minute there was a light tap on the door and a maid entered. Heidi, the young guard, was now garbed in a black dress with a maid's white pinafore and frilly cap. She curtseyed, keeping her eyes lowered. The archduchess gave the order for the champagne and the maid curtseyed again and left the room closing the door softly behind her.

The archduchess had been keeping her eye on Rupert. 'You stared at my maid as if you would like to know her better.'

'I already know her. She is Heidi. She was a guard when I was in the castle. She tried to hang me from a tree.'

The archduchess burst into laughter. 'Obviously she did not succeed in hanging you. Who ordered her to do that? Only I or my daughter may give an order to execute a prisoner.'

He hesitated to answer. He did not want to get Astrid into trouble even though it was she who had given the order. She had also given him an extra blanket and extra food. The duchess was staring at his profile as they sat in the bed, side by side, propped up against the headboard. 'Was it Astrid?'

He nodded to confirm that it was. The archduchess laughed. 'I will get her to hang my husband.' He looked sideways at her to see if she was joking. She would have made a good poker player. It was impossible to read her mind. She cuddled up to him. 'Do you want to fuck Astrid?'

He dared not say he had done so already and shook his head to say 'no'.

'You have my permission to do so if you want. I am very broad minded. Do you want to fuck Heidi as well?'

'She was very cruel to me.'

'Would you like to whip her?'

He nodded to confirm that 'yes, he would like to whip her.'

'You may do so when she comes back with the champagne.'

His penis swelled. 'Is Heidi no longer a guard?'

'Not at the moment. The castle is closed. We have no prisoners in residence. You were the last. The three guards now have other jobs. He wondered what job Astrid was now doing, and also Gretel, but he dared not ask. She nestled her head on his chest. 'Do you like Gretel?'

'Not that much,' he lied.

'I think you like plump women.'

'No.'

'I am plump. Don't you like me?'

'Yes, of course. But Gretel treated me very badly. The three of them treated me very badly.'

'My daughter's told the guards to make you muscular as she thought you were too flabby around the waist.'

'Does the princess always gets what she wants?'

'Yes, I am afraid she does. I am too indulgent.'

'What does the archduke say?'

'Nothing. He says nothing unless I permit him to speak.'

Rupert swallowed hard. And then found his voice and managed to croak, 'And what has happened to the doctor?'

'She is pleasing Tomas. He is a hypochondriac so having a doctor as a sex slave makes him happier.'

'He is very brutal,' Rupert ventured to say.

'I met him in Paris when I was a young girl. He can be a bit rough, I agree.'

Rupert decided that perhaps he ought not to ask any more questions. And just then there was a gentle knock on the door and the archduchess called

'enter'.

Heidi, in her maid's uniform, returned with a tray containing a bottle of Krug and two crystal glasses. She padded over to the bedside table next to the archduchess.

'Other side, girl,' the archduchess said in a displeased tone.

Heidi changed course and went to the bedside table next to Rupert. Carefully, she placed the bottle on the table and untwisted the wire and popped the cork. All the while she avoided eye-contact with Rupert. She poured two glasses very carefully to avoid spillage. The archduchess watched her with a stony stare. Heidi then walked around the foot of the bed and handed the archduchess a glass and then walked around again and handed Rupert a glass. Rupert watched her every stride thinking he would like to fuck her after all, as well as whip her; perhaps just the once, to add to his tally. Much like a gunslinger in the Wild West cut notches on the handle of his sixgun, Rupert mentally cut notches on his penis each time he fucked a woman for the first time. He watched as Heidi curtsied and turned to leave the room.

'Maid, fetch a whip.'

Heidi turned her head to look at the archduchess who had given the instruction. Then gave an eye-rolling sideways glance to the rack of whips and spanking implements.

'Bring His Excellency a flogger.'

For a moment, Rupert was unsure whether the archduchess was referring to him as 'his excellency'. His uncertainty vanished when Heidi went over to the rack, took down a multi-tailed whip and padded over to his side of the bed, keeping her eyes lowered. Solemnly, she handed Rupert the whip, and without being told to, began to undress. He reached for his champagne and took a big gulp. Bubbles fizzed up his nose and he spluttered.

Zsa Zsa, sipping her champagne, giggled at his distress. 'Finish your glass, and then get out of bed and whip her. I think fifty lashes.'

Draining his champagne glass and feeling in need of another but deciding he had better do what he was told otherwise Zsa Zsa could easily decide that the maid should whip him instead. His bare feet touched the carpet. Heidi was standing as if attention at the foot of the bed.

'There are chains on the posts,' Zsa Zsa said, her mouth hovering over the rim of her champagne glass.

As Zsa Zsa spoke, Heidi raised her arms up as Rupert reached for a wrist-

manacle dangling on a long chain attached to one of the posts at the end of the four-poster bed. He manacled her left wrist and then her left ankle using an ankle-manacle and then did the same to the girl's right limbs. He then took up a whipping-position and looked at Zsa Zsa for a sign that he should begin. She arched an eyebrow and Rupert took this as the sign. He balanced himself, raised the whip and slashed Heidi across her shoulder blades with moderate force; this was as hard as he ever whipped Mrs Mountford. The maid whimpered.

'Harder,' Zsa Zsa commanded in a displeased tone.

Rupert stood further back and lashed again, this time with more force. Heidi half-screamed.

'Harder still,' the archduchess said, sounding even less pleased.

Rupert slashed Heidi as hard as he could just above her buttocks. She screamed.

'I will take over,' the archduchess said, putting down her empty champagne glass and swinging her legs out of bed. 'Obviously you are too used to being whipped and not used enough to doing the whipping. I will show you how to whip,' she said, snatching the whip from his hand.

She was as naked as her maid. After stretching the thongs of the flogger by widening her arms, she raised it above her head and slashed it diagonally across Heidi's buttocks with all the force her plump arm could muster, grunting with the effort, resulting in an ear-splitting scream from the girl, who sobbed, tears streaming down.

Rupert was not enamoured of Heidi. She had been the most vicious of the three guards and had humiliated him the most. But his soft heart felt a degree of pity for her as her buttocks were thrashed a second time, and then a third. The girls knees buckled and her whole body would have slumped to the ground had she not been held up by her chained-wrists.

'We will take her into the bathroom,' the Zsa Zsa said, without a trace of pity. 'Unchain her and drag her.'

Rupert unchained the senseless maid's wrists and she collapsed to the floor. Then he dragged her by her armpits along the deep pile carpet to the open bathroom door.

'Heap her into the bath and douse her with cold water.'

Rupert obeyed the instruction by lifting the prone body into the bath so that her head was under the cold tap which he turned on. Ice cold water flowed over the girl's face until she coughed and spluttered and her eyes

opened. She started to shiver, either with the cold or with fear; probably both.

'Up girl,' the Zsa Zsa ordered.

Heidi climbed out of the bath dripping wet, as Zsa Zsa surprised Rupert by closing the gold plated lid of the lavatory seat, and by curling an index finger, beckoning the girl to come to her. Zsa Zsa slid her bottom further forward, so that her back was propped against the gold plated pipe to the cistern above, and widened her thighs. Heidi squatted on her haunches and leaned forward so that her mouth was an inch away from the pubic hairs.

'This better be good if you want to avoid another whipping.'

Rupert was standing behind Heidi and all he could see was the back of her head moving rhythmically between Zsa Zsa's thighs. Her ministrations appeared to be having the desired effect as the woman's cheeks flushed, her eyelids hooded and her lips became blood red. 'Keep going, slut, or you'll feel the lash again.' Her voice was becoming high-pitched and she gripped the back of Heidi's head with both hands.

Watching Heidi perform cunnilingus on Zsa Zsa made Rupert felt a bit surplus to requirements. The orgasm in question sounded as if it was receiving a rating of eleven on a scale of one to ten. Eventually Zsa Zsa let go of Heidi's head. Heidi took this as permission to stop her 'mouth to vagina resuscitation' and she sat back on her heels.

Zsa Zsa was breathing heavily, her faced turned sideways, her cheeks burning. 'Rupert, you may take my maid into the bedroom and fuck her,' she said in a hoarse voice. 'I will have another bath. If she resists give her one hundred lashes.'

He glanced down at his penis. Having watched entranced as Heidi give her mistress a tongue-induced orgasm, his penis was as firm as it could be. Heidi turned her head to look up at him. There was a touch of defiance in her look. She got to her feet, as Rupert took her by the arm and led her towards the bathroom door. She took a quick step ahead of him and opened it, like a hotel doorman hastening to open a car door for a guest. But she gave him another defiant look as he sidled past her and into the bedroom.

She closed the door after him and glared at him and then hissed, 'I kill you.'

Intimidated, he took a step backwards and put his hands up, like a boxer ready to spar without gloves. She grinned at his evident discomfort. 'The archduchess told me to...'

Her threatening hiss, like a snake with a flickering tongue, caused him not

to finish sentence.

'You no fuck me. You lick foot.' She sat on the edge of the bed and crossed her legs so that the toes of one foot dangled in the air. 'Suck.'

He stared at her, remembering that she had incapacitated him painfully when she and Gretel had sparred with him on the gym mat. So, he sank to his knees in front of her toes and brushed her toe with his closed lips.

'Suck or I pain you.'

He opened his mouth and sucked at her big toe. She giggled, then slanted her foot upwards so that he could like the sole. Then she recrossed her legs and presented her other foot to be licked and sucked.

Rupert had never sucked a woman's foot before and did not find it particularly stimulating. He did, however, find her next requirement stimulating. She kicked him under his chin and uncrossed her legs and then widened her thighs, as Zsa Zsa had done sitting on the lavatory. This was more to Rupert's liking. He viewed the curly hairs surrounding the vagina and bent his head forward to push the button with his tongue.

'What are you doing?' Rupert had not heard the bedroom door open, and neither had Heidi. She tried to close her legs and her knees banged Rupert's ears.

Princess Flavia was in the bedroom. Rupert got off his knees and stood, his penis not standing. The maid also stood and attempted a naked curtesy.

'Where is the archduchess?'

'The archduchess is having a bath,' Rupert said.

The princess smiled at him. 'Go and stand in the corner and face the wall with your hands on top of your head and do not turn around to look,' she said, pointing to the far corner of the room.

Rupert went to stand in the corner as instructed, his nose an inch from the art deco wallpaper. He heard the princess say, 'You may undress me' and then the sound of undressing. And then heard a slight squeak of the mattress. He formed the view, staring at the wallpaper, that the two girls were not strangers so far as intimacy was concerned. 'You have been whipped', he heard the princess say, 'who whipped you?' And he heard the maid reply 'he did'. And then heard the princess say, in a louder voice, no doubt so that he heard, 'we will whip him later'. Then came the unmistakable sounds of two persons kissing and cuddling and groping each other and the sounds of mounting sexual tension. He wondered whether they would achieve orgasms before Zsa Zsa exited the bathroom. And would she approve of her daughter

romping on the ducal bed with her maid.

He heard the bathroom door open just as the princess started to moan as if in a state of increasing bliss. 'Darling, I have told you before, I do not approve of you fondling the maids.'

The princess's response was to start to scream as if an orgasm was beginning to steam. Mid-scream, she managed to stutter, 'Mummy please go away and take him back into the bathroom.'

Hearing the exchange of words between the princess and her mother, Rupert waited for Zsa Zsa to explode with anger at her daughter's attitude, but she merely said, 'Rupert come with me again.'

Without looking towards the bed, Rupert, still with his hands on his head, followed Zsa Zsa back into the bathroom. She closed the door after him. She was wearing a bathrobe which she let fall open at the front. 'I really do disapprove of my daughter fornicating with the maids,' she said, in a conversational tone. 'Do you have children, Rupert?'

He was on the point of replying 'not that I am aware', but said 'No.'

'Very sensible. If one likes a quiet life do not have children or dogs. They are both likely to bite the hand that feeds them.'

Rupert smiled in silent agreement, although he did like dogs and much preferred them to children.

Zsa Zsa closed the lavatory lid and sat on it as she had done when the maid had performed cunnilingus. 'So, we had better amuse ourselves.' She slanted backwards propping herself against the cistern down pipe and opened her thighs. 'That maid is particularly proficient with her tongue as my daughter knows. Shall we see if you can do as well.'

Hoping that he would be as good as Heidi, once again he knelt and placed his mouth so that his tongue could penetrate, and began the performance. He started with flicking licks to titillate with his gums and tongue at the optimum angle and using his index finger to give intermittent strokes as he sensed her arousal. As matters progressed he pressed his fingers upwards into her clitoris while applying persistent licks. This began to have the desired effect. Her thighs held his ears in a vice-like grip, like pliers clutching the head of a nail. He had some difficulty breathing. Fortunately, the short bursts of his hot breath on the spot probably lit the smouldering fuse and her body jerked and writhed causing his trapped head to bob up and down. Finally, her thigh muscles relaxed and he was able to withdraw gracefully.

'Mummy, sitting on a lavatory with a man's head between your legs is not

the most ladylike of positions.' Princess Flavia was in the bathroom doorway, in the nude.

'Do fuck off, darling.'

'Mummy, please don't be vulgar.'

Rupert stepped well back so that the two women could converse without his body impeding the sound waves between them.

'Have you finished with the maid?'

'Yes. She has gone back to her duties in the pantry.'

'Good. Take Rupert with you into the bedroom while I have a pee.'

The princess glowered at Rupert and then stood to one side to let him go past her into the bedroom. She closed the bathroom door as her mother stood and raised the lid of the lavatory.

Uncertain as to what he was expected to do Rupert went over to the bed as the princess followed him. 'I see you have been whipped again.'

'Yes, Your Highness.'

He stood by the side of the bed, his penis horizontal. It really would like to fuck the young woman standing in the nude in front of it. She was a slimmer version of her mother. It would be particularly titillating to have both of them in bed together; a threesome. Then he thought that this was unlikely to happen because, clearly, the princess preferred other females, such as the maid.

The maid's frilly cap and white pinafore were still on the carpet by the bed. 'Put it on your head.' She pointed an index finger at the frilly cap on the carpet. He bent and picked it up. She laughed when he put it on head. 'Now the pinafore.' He picked up the pinafore, looped the halter over his head and tied the ties in a bow at the back. The princess laughed again. 'Look at your self.' She pointed to a full length mirror fronting the rococo wardrobe.

He stepped over to the mirror and squinted at himself. He looked ridiculous, especially as his penis was pushing out the material like an upward-curved banana covered by a white handkerchief.

'Come back over here.' The princess was sitting on the edge of the bed, leaning back propped up by her elbows. She widened her thighs as she approached. 'Let's see, shall we, whether you make a good maid.' Knowing what was expected of him, he knelt in front of her widely spread legs. 'And maids who are not good are severely whipped. I did not have to whip Heidi. Do we understand each other?'

He nodded. Then worried that her mother might not appreciate him

performing cunnilingus on her daughter. He looked up at the princess. 'Your mother might come in.'

'Of course she might come in. This is her bedroom. But she won't coming in just yet. She is having a crap; I believe that is the vulgar word, and she always takes a long time. It is because she eats too much rich food.' She pointed imperiously at her vagina with her index finger. 'Now lick and make me come. Failure to make me come at least once means a severe whipping.'

He shuffled forward as if his feet were reluctant to let him humiliate himself, and once again sank to his knees and began to perform like a stage-comedian bored with his own jokes. What he really wanted to do was fuck her. Her mother had told him that her daughter had never been fucked and he would very much like to be the first to do it. He was thinking these thoughts as his tongue and finger, mechanically, pleased.

'Why have you stopped?'

He had stopped because he had realised, suddenly, that he had given no further thought to the archduke, the titular ruler of this infernal country. What would the archduke think of Rupert tongue-fucking his princess-daughter? And what would be the punishment if he was caught doing this? And where was the archduke?

'I apologise, Your Highness, but I have a frog in my throat.'

'Are you French?'

'No, Your Highness.'

'That was my little joke. I expect you to laugh.'

He gave a guttural sound which vaguely resembled a laugh.

'Are you two having fun?' Zsa Zsa said, coming out of the bathroom.

'No, Mummy, I am not. I am going to whip him.'

'Why don't you let him fuck you, darling.'

'No. I don't want babies.'

'In the bottom, then?'

'No.'

Rupert's head was still between her thighs. She pushed him away and stood. Mother and daughter were now standing next to each other, viewing Rupert on his knees in a maid's cap and pinafore.

Zsa Zsa smiled broadly. 'I do rather like a man in a woman's costume.'

'I know, Mummy. You make your husband dress in women's clothes.'

'Because he adores being whipped wearing corsetry and knickers.'

Rupert listened intently. This was the first time he had heard that the

archduke was submissive to his wife and liked wearing lingerie. Perhaps he and the archduke would be bosom pals if Rupert ever got to meet him.

'Rupert, get into bed,' Zsa Zsa ordered. 'In the middle.'

'In the middle?' the princess queried, as Rupert got into the wide bed and edged over so that he was more or less in the middle, and put his head on the pillow.

He watched the two women warily. The archduchess let her robe drop to the floor and sat in bed with her back propped against the headboard.

'You get in too, darling,' she ordered her daughter.

'No.'

'Do you want me to summon Tomas?'

'You wouldn't'

'Yes I would. And I would ask him to take your virginity while I watch.'

'You're perverted.'

'I know, darling. And you take after me. I've had enough of seeing you fumbling with other women.'

'I don't.'

'Yes, you do. Especially that Heidi.'

'She's now a maid.'

'And you did the same with Astrid. I think she's the one you fancy the most.'

Rupert was listening with rapt attention, wondering whether Astrid was still a guard or perhaps a maid like Heidi.

'I have nothing to do with that bitch,' the princess said. 'She is trying to take your place.'

'Of course she isn't, darling. She wouldn't dare. I would have her guillotined if she tried. Now get into bed or I will call Tomas. It's either Rupert or Tomas.'

The princess stared at her mother in disbelief. 'I don't want a baby.'

'So you said before. But it usually takes more than one go, although not always. As I found to my cost.'

'What do you mean by that comment?'

'Nothing. Get into bed or I will call Tomas.' She leaned sideways and hovered her hand over the telephone of the bedside table. 'You have ten seconds to tell me whether you are going to get into bed. Rupert will wear a condom.'

'The doctor took a plaster cast of his cock. Why can't I use that?'

'No, darling. You will have the real thing. Or, to put it another way, the real thing will have you. Your ten seconds are nearly up.'

Seemingly resigned to her fate, the princess walked around the bed to the side opposite her mother, pulled back the bedclothes and put one knee on the bed. She stared down at Rupert who was stretched out on his back with the eiderdown pulled up to his chin like a virgin on her wedding night. 'Will it be alright if I kill him afterwards like some female spiders do after mating?'

Rupert trembled.

'No. Rupert is now my consort. I will be consorting with him from now on.'

'And what will your husband say?' the princess asked.

'He only speaks when he has my permission, as you know.' As she spoke she leaned over again and opened a drawer in the bedside cabinet and took out a condom. The princess stared at the rubber item as if mesmerised. The archduchess was still sitting up in bed with her back propped against the headboard, dangling the little rubber sleeve. 'Now, how shall we do this?'

'You're asking me?' the princess said, sarcastically.

'I think we will push the bedclothes back. Rupert will stay on his back. I will put the condom in place, rub some lubricant over it, and then you can kneel astride his tummy and insert it yourself taking as much time as you want.'

'I don't want him fucking me. I told you.'

'If you do it the way I suggest you will be fucking him, give or take. Now pull the bedclothes off Rupert.'

'Perhaps Rupert doesn't want to fuck me.'

'Of course he does, darling. Any man would.' Zsa Zsa looked Rupert in the eye. 'You want to fuck my daughter, don't you?'

He nodded, as he did, and, in any event, to say otherwise might cause him pain.

'Are you going to watch, Mother?'

'Yes, darling. Of course. I wish to make sure you do it properly.'

'There'll be lots of blood. I hate blood.'

'You've never minded blood when you've whipped somebody.'

'That's different. And I believe it hurts.'

'Only a bit. I remember having a few twinges of discomfort my first time. But they soon diminished in the heat of the moment.'

The princess drew back the bedclothes to reveal Rupert's penis pointing at

the canopy above the four-poster.

'I'm not having that in me. It's too big.'

Zsa Zsa laughed. 'It is rather big, I agree. But you will stretch sufficiently to accommodate it.' As she spoke the archduchess stared at the erect penis. 'Perhaps, darling, I should show you how it's done.'

'Alright, you go first,' the princess said brightly, hoping that she might win a reprieve. 'I'll just stand and watch.'

She watched her mother roll one knee over Rupert's midriff and kneel back on her haunches with the penis still proudly erect in front of her. Carefully Zsa Zsa rolled the condom down the shaft without causing any liquidity. 'Darling, there is some Vaseline in the cabinet on your side of the bed - top drawer.'

The princess opened the drawer and took out the required jar and proffered it to her mother.

'Why don't you smear some on it for me, darling?'

The princess stared at the stalk and then at the jar and then back at the stalk as if making up her mind to comply with her mother's instruction.

'Why can't he smear himself?'

'I would like you to do it,' her mother said.

His penis twitched in silent agreement that the princess should do it. Looking like someone asked to open a can of worms the princess bent to her task, opening the lid and stabbing one finger into the grease and then smearing it gently up the shaft with her mother, and Rupert, watching intently.

'A bit more, darling. It needs to be nice and slippery, especially when it goes up your bottom.'

The princess almost gagged in her throat. 'You are not serious.'

But her mother was now entirely focused on the job in hand, which was to kneel up, hold his shaft, slide down slowly and then up and down progressively faster.

The princess watched at close quarters despite her reluctance to get involved. Rupert closed his eyes in ecstasy, as did Zsa Zsa. 'I hope you are watching me, darling.'

'The princess is not the only person watching,' a voice said. Another person was in the bedroom.

FOURTEEN

THE FOREST

Astrid was standing in the bedroom. No one had noticed that she was there until she spoke. Rupert raised his head, distracted from the sexual enjoyment of having Zsa Zsa impaled on his penis, and was astonished. Firstly, because Astrid was in the bedroom, and secondly, because she was not in her guard's uniform or in a maid's uniform. Astrid was dressed in clothes befitting an aristocrat.

Zsa Zsa and her daughter also looked astonished. Zsa Zsa was the first to speak.

'Get out of my bedroom. I will call Tomas to whip you,' Zsa Zsa said in a calm voice.

Astrid was unmoved. 'Tomas is dead. We hung him.'

Zsa Zsa's hand went to her mouth in shock. 'Who is we?' she managed to stutter.

'I and Gretel and Heidi and doctor. She put sedative in his drink and we tied him up and then hanged him.' As she said this, Astrid moved gracefully to the side of the bed and stared down at Rupert. His penis had slipped out of Zsa Zsa, although she remained kneeling across his middle as if unable to move.

'Mummy, get the palace guards.' The princess had recovered her voice.

Astrid looked across the bed at the princess. 'The guards now take orders from me. We are revolting.'

Despite his fear for his own safety in what was clearly a changed picture, Rupert gave a slight smile which Astrid noticed. She returned his smile. 'You like fuck, yes?'

Rupert wondered if this was an invitation to fuck Astrid, something he

would very much like to do. Her arrival had thwarted what would have been a very intense orgasm with Zsa Zsa on top of him, hopefully, to be followed by an even better orgasm with the princess on top. But now it seemed that Astrid was politically on top.

Becoming able to move, Zsa Zsa rolled off Rupert, donned her dressing gown and tied it at the front for once, and stared malevolently at Astrid.

'You appear to be wearing one of my most expensive dresses, and my shoes.'

Astrid laughed. 'They fit good.'

'Who allowed you to wear my clothes?'

'Me. I allowed me. Me is in charge. I am the archduchess. Archduke say so.'

'When did he say that.' Zsa Zsa was incredulous.

'When I whip him. He divorce you and your daughter.'

'I don't think a father can divorce his daughter,' Zsa Zsa said, but her voice had become faint.

Astrid gave a smile, which some might have seen as a leer, at the princess, who was still standing naked on the other side of the bed. 'Archduke say she not his daughter. She is not princess.'

Zsa Zsa almost choked on her splutter. 'Of course she is.'

'Archduke say you have baby inside you before he meet you in brothel in Vienna.'

Flavia, seemingly no longer able to use the title of princess, looked more aghast than her mother. 'Mummy, do something. Get Rupert to kill her.'

'I want to see my husband.'

'Archduke, come,' Astrid called.

A man appeared in the doorway with Gretel behind him in her guard's uniform. Rupert recognised the archduke whose face appeared on the currency and in the local newspapers and in various official portraits in the hotel in Frauberg. In those miscellaneous pictures he appeared the epitome of an autocratic middle-European ruler. In the bedroom, he appeared the epitome of a downtrodden husband expecting his wife to belittle him with a rolling pin. He was dressed in crumpled slacks, a white shirt which needed ironing and carpet slippers. He was also handcuffed with his hands in front of him.

Zsa Zsa was speechless at his appearance as was her daughter. Astrid was wearing a slight smile. No one spoke for at least half a minute.

Then Gretel broke the ice. 'We kill them, yes?'

Astrid shook her head to say 'no'. 'We send her and her to Germany. They no come back.'

Rupert, still on his back on the bed with a semen-dripping penis, brightened. He wondered if he was about to accompany Zsa Zsa and Flavia to Germany never to return.

'What about him,' Gretel said, looking at Rupert. 'He good fuck. I like keep.'

Astrid was staring at Rupert as if making up her mind. 'He go with women. He English. I now ruler. I no want trouble with English. They very violent people.'

Rupert thought this was an unfair analysis of the general character of a nation of shopkeepers, to quote Napoleon. But wisely, he said nothing and gave a barely perceptive nod as if to say that he agreed with Astrid.

Astrid looked around the bedroom. 'This is my room now. You will have half hour to leave palace and you drive to border in Rolls Royce. You have car as my present. I prefer Hispano Suiza.'

Rupert, still naked on his back, watched Astrid leave the bedroom with the archduke trailing behind her with Gretel behind him. Throughout the women's exchange of words, he had stared at the carpet as though transfixed by its pattern.

A sobbing Flavia came around the bed and hugged her mother.

'We need to pack quickly, darling. The cow, Astrid, means what she says.'

'You should never have let her get so close to the archduke.'

'We can discuss that in the car. Get dressed and collect anything of value you can carry.'

Having instructed her daughter, she stared down at Rupert who had not moved. 'Move.'

Just under half an hour later, a hastily dressed Rupert was bumping two heavy suitcases down the stairs to the palace courtyard watched by bemused staff. Zsa Zsa was in the lead with two smaller suitcases; Flavia bringing up the rear with two light cases.

The three of them hurried through the corridors like passengers trying to

catch a train with just seconds to go before its departure. The cream and black Rolls stood gleaming in the courtyard. Rupert threw all of the cases in the boot, as Zsa Zsa and Flavia almost tumbled onto the back seat. He then jumped into the driving seat and fired the engine.

'Which way?' Rupert said, unsure of the geography of the country. Just then Astrid strode to the driver's side and wrenched open the door. He froze. Had she changed her mind about letting the two women or him leave?

'You follow Mercedes,' she said, and slammed the door.

A black Mercedes was parked in the corner of the courtyard. He saw Gretel getting into the driver's seat with Heidi as a front passenger. Heidi had discarded her maid's uniform and was dressed in her guard's uniform. They both had guns on their hips.

The Mercedes drove out of the courtyard and across the bridge over the moat. Rupert crashed the gears in his haste, and drove after the Mercedes. In his rearview mirror, he saw Astrid watching them leave. He would have liked to have given her a goodbye kiss for letting him go.

'I've always hated this horrible country,' Flavia said, sobbing on her mother's shoulder. This was a sentiment with which Rupert could agree, having been kidnapped and held a prisoner for weeks, for which the two women on the back seat were responsible. He would remonstrate with them once they were over the border. At this time of day he should be enjoying a leisurely supper with Mrs Mountford. Thoughts of Mrs Mountford made him brighten. He was now on his way to freedom. Once over the border he would get the fastest train back to England. Then anxiety returned. Why were they having to follow Gretel and Heidi?

'This is not the quickest road to the border,' Flavia said, an observation which heightened Rupert's anxiety. 'We seem to be taking a route through the forest.'

'They're both peasants born and brought up here. Maybe they know a quicker route than the main road. They know this country better than we do,' Zsa Zsa said.

Just then the Mercedes came to sudden halt in front of them causing Rupert to slam on the brakes to avoid crashing into the back. The women in his car screamed. Gretel and Heidi had exited the Mercedes with guns drawn. Gretel pointed her gun at Rupert and Heidi pointed hers at Zsa Zsa and Flavia through the car windows.

'They're going to kill us,' Flavia screamed, as Gretel opened Rupert's door

and jammed her gun against his temple.

'Out of car,' Gretel ordered him.

Heidi opened the back door. The two terrified women did not need to be told to get out.

The two guards lined up their captives; Rupert in front, Zsa Zsa behind and her daughter behind her. Heidi had three sets of handcuffs dangling from her wide leather belt, and, roughly, she handcuffed her captives with their hands behind their backs.

'Walk,' Gretel ordered, taking the lead position in front of Rupert.

Leaving the cars by the side of the road, Gretel led the procession along a path deeper into the forest. Flavia was sobbing and tripping over herself. Her mother looked stony faced but walked imperiously like a brave aristocrat in a tumbril on its way to the Place de la Concorde. Rupert walked like a man resigned to his fate and walking to a post in front of a firing squad. He now knew that it was unlikely he would ever leave this dreadful country. No doubt they would bury him and his two female companions in a hole somewhere in the forest. He would be with the Zsa Zsa and Flavia for eternity.

The path led to a wooden shack. Gretel stopped the party at the door and both she and Heidi went inside leaving their three captives standing outside.

'Do you think we could make a run for it,' Rupert whispered to Zsa Zsa.

'They have hunting rifles. They will shoot us,' Zsa Zsa said.

'What if we ran in different directions. There are only two of them. One of us might get away,' Rupert said. And then added, in as heroic a whisper as he could manage, 'I don't mind staying and struggling with them if you two make a run for it.'

'You cannot struggle with handcuffs,' Zsa Zsa said.

'I would like us to run, Mummy.'

Zsa Zsa looked at her daughter. 'Yes. Alright, darling. You and I will run. Kick off your shoes. On the count of three. One , two..."

'Three', Gretel said, coming out of the door. She was laughing. 'I listen. You run and I shoot like I shoot rabbits.'

Rupert's spirit deflated. He had tried his heroic best. And now he just wanted to get it all over with. He knew that Gretel and Heidi were not going to be nice. Heidi came to the door smiling; the smile which was usually a precursor to a painful experience for somebody.

'You go in,' Gretel said to Rupert.

With a resigned shrug of his rounded shoulders he stepped into the

interior lit by two oil lamps. A whipping post was placed against one wall but he did not see it. What caught his eye were the three nooses dangling from a beam with stools placed underneath each noose. His reaction was to flinch and take a step backwards. Gretel was behind him and pushed him between the shoulders blades so that he stumbled further into the room. Zsa Zsa and Flavia were still outside.

With one of her smiles, Heidi went outside. Moments later she ushered Zsa Zsa and her daughter, at gunpoint, inside the shack. Their shocked-faces stared up at the nooses, until Flavia swooned. Rupert, standing closest to the prone Flavia made a move as if to help her, despite being handcuffed with his arms behind his back, but was thumped on the head by Heidi with the butt of her pistol.

'Against wall,' Heidi commanded, waving her pistol in his direction in case he had misunderstood her instruction.

Zsa Zsa and Rupert both stepped backwards until their backs were against the wall. Zsa Zsa edged closer to Rupert as if he was her only hope. 'Move separate,' Gretel ordered, waving her pistol to emphasise that she wanted Zsa Zsa and Rupert to move away from each other. Then she pointed her gun at Rupert. 'Kneel.'

He knelt and watched as Gretel grabbed Zsa Zsa by the hair and dragged her towards the whipping post. The post was in this shape of a cross with wrist and ankle irons dangling on chains from the four limbs of the post. It looked very solid and heavy, and Rupert wondered how it had come to be positioned at the end of a woodland path in what was probably a woodman's hut. And then he realised that the nooses were dangling from a beam which looked purpose-built for hangings as it seemed to have no structural purpose otherwise.

'I just want to get this over with,' he thought. 'I have been seconds away from being hanged and seconds away from being castrated. I think my luck has run out.'

As Rupert was kneeling with his own thoughts, Zsa Zsa was undressing in front of the whipping post having been ordered to do so by Gretel whose gun was pointed at Zsa Zsa's head. Every few seconds Gretel prodded Zsa Zsa with the gun to encourage her to speed up.

Heidi was crouching next to the still unconscious Flavia, slapping her around the face to make her regain consciousness. After several hard slaps, Flavia opened her eyes to see her mother manacled naked to the whipping

post with her stomach against the intersection of the cross. Gretel was standing in front of a rack of flagellation instruments attached to the wall at the far end of the room. She unhooked a vicious-looking whip and came to stand to one side of Zsa Zsa ready to whip her. She delayed her hand until Flavia was fully revived and able to watch her mother being whipped. Heidi pulled Flavia upright by her hair. The girl stood open-mouthed and clearly terrified, as Gretel flexed the whip and slashed.

'Bitch,' Zsa Zsa screamed which Rupert thought was not the wisest thing to scream in the circumstances. Ten more slashes ensued, as Rupert kept his eyes closed and Flavia fainted again. At some point, Zsa Zsa had also fainted, because her screaming had stopped and her head lolled onto her shoulder.

'I think she has had enough,' Rupert said quietly in German.

Gretel rubbed her whipping-arm and grinned. And then dropped the whip on the floor and un-manacled Zsa Zsa who collapsed to the floor. Both mother and daughter were unconscious, Zsa Zsa having been whipped and Flavia yet to be whipped. It was clear that both would need time to recover consciousness. So Gretel and Heidi turned their attention to the kneeling Rupert.

They stood on either side of him and Heidi made a upward movement with her palm as a signal that he should stand. He did so and Gretel went behind him and surprised him by unlocking his handcuffs. He rubbed his freed wrists as he looked from one to the other of his captors. Gretel was smiling at him, almost benevolently. Heidi was smiling malevolently. He already knew that Gretel liked him, and that Heidi did not. They had both holstered their pistols, unconcerned that he might attempt to attack them. Both confident that if he did try to attack them they were capable of beating him as they had done so in the gymnasium. So he stood meekly awaiting his fate.

'Take clothes off,' Gretel said.

He undressed expecting to take Zsa Zsa's place at the whipping post. But once he was naked, Gretel went behind him and pulled his wrists behind his back and handcuffed him again, so it seemed he was not going to be whipped across his back. Instead, Gretel made him sit on one of the three stools underneath the nooses, facing the whipping post.

Groans indicated that Zsa Zsa was regaining consciousness. Heidi went over to her and pulled Zsa Zsa's hair until, groggily, she got to her feet. 'Please, no more,' she pleaded, with her eyes closed, as Heidi guided her to

the middle stool and made her sit on it facing the whipping post, and then handcuffed her with her hands behind her back. 'Please let my daughter go.' Heidi's response was to pick up Zsa Zsa's discarded knickers and stretch and twist the material into a makeshift gag, and then use it to gag Zsa Zsa.

Flavia stirred on the floor, recovering from her faint. Gretel went over to her and kicked her in the ribs. The girl opened her eyes and looked up at the nooses and then at her mother and Rupert sitting on stools. She screamed and kept screaming as Gretel and Heidi, on either side of her, pulled her up by her armpits and dragged her to the whipping post. They manacled her to the post and then Heidi selected a whip from the rack. It was lighter and not as vicious as the whip that Gretel had used on Zsa Zsa. And Heidi gave only ten or so lashes. It seemed to Rupert that Gretel and Heidi were pressed for time, otherwise he suspected the whippings would have been more protracted and severe.

When Heidi stopped whipping she went close to Flavia, pulled her face to hers and kissed her hard on the lips. Then she stood away, as Gretel released the girl from the whipping post, handcuffed her with her hands behind her back and dragged her to the third stool. But instead of making her sit, Gretel held her by the arms and positioned her so that one of the nooses was in front of her face. Then Heidi looped the noose over Flavia's head and tightened the knot behind her left ear. Then, she took the other end of the rope to a ring on the wall and pulled the rope taut. So Flavia was pulled by the neck upwards with Gretel's hands helping her stand on the stool. Gretel then stood behind the girl with her hands around her waist stabilising her, as she was shaking and trembling so much that she could have fallen off the stool prematurely.

Zsa Zsa kept her eyes closed as she sensed Heidi stand in front of her. Without being made to, she stood and held her chin up as Heidi placed the noose over her head. And then Zsa Zsa stood on the stool without being prompted to as Heidi pulled the rope taut.

Rupert stood up as Heidi came towards him, and following Zsa Zsa's example. He did not struggle, and was soon standing on the stool with a noose around his neck.

With triumphant smiles Gretel and Heidi stood in front of their condemned prisoners. Heidi looked at Gretel as if expecting her to take the lead as to what happened next.

'She first,' Gretel said, pointing to Zsa Zsa. Rupert saw Zsa Zsa's knees wobble and thought he might as well jump first. He did not want to see the

two women hanged despite how beastly they had been to him. He would topple off the stool on the count of ten. He had counted to nine, thinking of his love for Mrs Mountford as his last thought, when behind him he heard the door crash open.

FIFTEEN

MRS MOUNTFORD

A bald man with a rifle stepped into the room closely followed by a blond youth, also with a rifle. Unwisely, Gretel and Heidi had left their rifles leaning against some logs outside the shack. The man pointed his rifle at Gretel whilst the youth pointed his rifle at Heidi. Both men looked nervous and hesitant, and also trigger-twitchy, as if the slightest wrong move by anyone else in the shack would mean a fusillade in that person's direction.

Heidi raised her hands high above her head and stood still, her normal rosy complexion having turned white. Gretel, still holding Flavia around the waist to stop her falling off the stool, let go of the girl and raised her hands to shoulder height.

Rupert, standing on the stool with a noose around his neck, recognised the newcomers as his erstwhile fellow prisoners. They were still wearing the rough jackets and trousers that they had worn when in the quarry. Would they treat Rupert as friend or foe? He had been the third man in the castle dungeon, and had also been subjected to brutal treatment by each of the women in the shack.

'Stand next to each other,' the bald man said to Gretel in a guttural voice. She edged sideways to be closer to Heidi. The bald man then covered both women with his gun as the blond youth whispered something to him. The bald man nodded, and the youth went over to the ring on the wall, to which Rupert's noose was tied, and undid the rope. Rupert was not going to hang in the foreseeable future. It seemed that his fellow prisoners were going to treat him as a friend.

The blond youth helped Rupert off the stool, and un-looped the noose from around Rupert's neck. 'Where is the handcuff key?' the youth asked

Rupert.

'The plump one has it on her belt.'

'Undo your gun belts,' the bald man ordered the women, 'and then undress.' Despite having a gun, his voice was hoarse and shaky.

Heidi immediately started to unbuckle. Gretel looked defiant and glared at the bald man. His eyes flickered downwards. Rupert sensed that the bald man, despite his muscles, and his gun, was still terrified of her. Slowly, Gretel began to unbuckle, with the look of a lioness unhappy at being in a cage and thinking of making a meal of her keeper.

Within a few more moments both women stood naked. Heidi was clutching Gretel and shivering with fear. Gretel was not shivering.

Warily, keeping a gun barrel's length away from Gretel, the youth picked up the keyring on Gretel's belt and found the small key to the handcuffs. Rupert smiled his gratitude as the handcuffs fell to the floor. The youth then gave Heidi's dropped pistol to Rupert.

Taking the gun, Rupert went to the pile of his clothes and dressed quickly. As he did so, he glanced up at Zsa Zsa and Flavia. They were still standing on their stools, naked, with nooses around their necks.

'We hang them,' the bald man growled, looking at the two women on the stools.

Heidi trembled uncontrollably as the bald man said 'hang them', possibly thinking that she and Gretel were included in the threat. Gretel did not tremble but gave a slight smile to the bald man.

Rupert sensed he would have to bide his time before intervening to try and save mother and daughter.

Whilst Rupert was dressing the bald man had pointed his gun at Gretel, and then at the whipping post, as a signal that she should go and stand at the whipping post. She half smiled, and took a step towards the post. The end of the rifle barrel was near her. Almost, casually, she gripped the end of the barrel, near its sight, and turned the gun away from her, and then moved close in to the bald man, put her arms around his neck, and kissed him hard. He responded by letting go of his rifle, which fell to the floor, and hugged her in a passionate embrace.

Heidi, seeing what her colleague had done, pushed the youth's gun away and put her arms around his neck. He responded like a lovesick juvenile suddenly kissed by the girl of his dreams.

The 'tables were turning' but Rupert was not for turning.

Whilst the two were engaged in close love-combat, Rupert picked up one of the rifles. He waited until Gretel had pulled the bald man down to the floor and spread her legs and he fumbled hungrily at her waistband, then he extracted the bullets from the magazine and replaced the gun where it had been.

Following Gretel's lead, Heidi had enticed the youth down to the floor and her jodhpurs were around her ankles and he was penetrating her.

Gretel's screaming orgasm masked the noise of Rupert quickly disarming the second rifle.

The blond youth had given him Heidi's pistol. He took the precaution of checking that it was loaded, and slid it into the waistband of his trousers, and underneath his jacket. Then, still un-noticed by the two fornicating couples, he picked up Gretel's pistol and slid it into his waistband. He was now the only one in the shack who was armed.

Both Zsa Zsa and Flavia, standing on their stools, had seen what Rupert was doing. Zsa Zsa managed a slight smile, and glanced at her daughter as if warning her not to say anything.

Rupert stood back and watched as the bald man slumped on Gretel, post-orgasm. Heidi and her blond youth had also slumped sexually exhausted. The 'rutting' couples had been oblivious to the spectators. Rupert waiting patiently, like a poker player ready to slide out the aces up his sleeve.

The bald man rolled off Gretel but she immediately rolled on top of him, and clutched his still semi stiff penis, as she had done to Rupert when he had been on his back on the canvas in the gymnasium, and they started fucking again, this time with Gretel on top.

Heidi rolled off the youth. The orgasm has completely exhausted his penis and he would have to wait a few moment to replenish. Heidi re-glued her mouth to his in a long sucking kiss. And then, as their mouths came up for air, said 'We are friends now, yes?' The youth nodded.

Gretel said to the bald man, 'You my man friend, yes?' He nodded. She then got to her feet quickly, and grabbed one of the rifles and pointed it at Rupert. He raised his hands.

Heidi was on the same wavelength. She too stood up and grabbed the other rifle and also pointed it at Rupert. 'We hang him, yes?' The two former prisoners were now standing, shoulder to shoulder, with their former guards.

'We shoot him and hang her and her,' Gretel said.

Heidi was nodding her agreement, and put an arm around the youth's

waist and pulled him more against her and pecked him a kiss on his cheek.

'You shoot him,' Gretel said to Heidi, as though she was reluctant to shoot Rupert herself. Heidi, however, had no qualms about shooting him. He was standing six feet away from her. She raised the rifle, pointed it at his chest, and pulled the trigger. There was a click but no bang.

Immediately, Rupert pulled out his two concealed pistols and pointed one at Heidi and one at Gretel. 'My dears, tell your two gentlemen friends that if either of them makes a move towards me, or the two ladies behind me, I will shoot you both.'

Gretel stood like a pillar of salt in case she was peppered. Heidi too stood very still. Neither the bald man or the blond youth made a move.

'May I ask the four of you to huddle in the corner all together. Why don't you have sex again, as these two ladies step down from their stools. They have been up there so long they must be feeling like statues in a Roman fountain.' As he spoke, he used the key to unlock Zsa Zsa's handcuffs, still keeping one of his pistols trained on the four persons huddled together in the far corner.

With her hands free, Zsa Zsa then un-looped the noose from her neck, stepped off the stool and unlocked her daughter's cuffs, and she was as free as her mother.'

'Can we kill them, Mummy?'

'Just get your clothes, darling. We're getting out of here as fast as we can. With Rupert.'

Mother and daughter, in the nude, pausing only to put on shoes, collected their clothes in their arms, ran from the shack. Rupert covered their hasty departure by pointing both pistols at the four in the corner. Then he stooped and picked up the handcuffs which Zsa Zsa and Flavia had been made to wear. He slid the two pairs of handcuffs across the floor towards Gretel. 'Handcuff your two new friends.'

Silently mouthing curses at Rupert, Gretel said something to the bald man who turned his back to her and put his wrists behind him, and she handcuffed him. Then she handcuffed the blond youth. Then, when both men were pinioned, he smiled at the two women. 'Do not attempt to leave for at least fifteen minutes. If you come out of the door I will shoot you like two bunnies. I am a good shot. I won a prize at Bisley, a club for marksmanship in defence of the realm.' The four would not have been aware that he was referring to a shooting contest held annually in England, but to emphasise what he meant,

he fired at one of the oil lamps shattering the glass, and sending one half of the room into gloom.

Heidi screamed. Gretel glared at him, the whites of her eyes highlighted by the light from the remaining oil lamp.

'I will hide the key to the handcuffs somewhere by your car. You can amuse yourselves searching for it, assuming you want to release your gentlemen friends. Goodbye. I can't say it was nice knowing any of you, although you are a great fuck, Gretel. I will say that.'

With that he left the shack and hastened down the path to the Rolls. It was dusk, but it might be best to travel in the dark. The Rolls was a distinctive car. Once the general population became aware that the hated archduchess and the feared princess had been sent into exile, and no longer held power, some of the citizens might decide to exact retribution. And Rupert, as a foreigner, had never felt safe in the country.

Zsa Zsa and Flavia, both dressed, were on the back seat in each others arms.

'Can we go quickly, please,' Zsa Zsa said, as Rupert took the chauffeur's seat.

'Is there another way across the border without going through Frauberg?' he asked.

'Yes, I will direct you, but we need to get out of the forest and back to the main road.'

As soon as they were driving away, Flavia said, 'I still think we should have killed them Especially that bitch who whipped me. We could have hanged all four of them.'

'It was best that we just got away, darling. Thanks to Rupert, our gallant hero. You and I will have to reward him when we get to a hotel.'

'We haven't got much money between us. I've only managed to pack a few of my jewels.'

'I was thinking of a reward for Rupert other than money.'

'Such as what?'

'We will discuss it over dinner at a hotel, I know a very nice place just over the border. It is very discreet. And we do have lots of money. I have a bank account in Germany.'

Rupert thought he had better mention there was rampant inflation in Germany and did so.

'I have an account in sterling in an English bank,' Zsa Zsa said. 'It was

always my intention to live in England. I hear Anglia is a very nice county overlooking the North Sea.'

Rupert gulped. Whilst he had warmed to Zsa Zsa and her daughter, they were still sadists who had incarcerated him in a filthy dungeon for days on end, and had him tortured and threatened with execution. He did not think the English county, which he called home, was a suitable place for them. 'It is very cold.'

'What is?' Zsa Zsa asked.

'Where I live. And I live in a small cottage.'

'I'm not living in a cottage, Mummy.'

This caused Zsa Zsa to think for a moment. 'Well, Rupert will have to take a town house in London. Belgravia, perhaps. And then he can introduce us to fashionable London society. We are, of course, the deposed rulers of a country. The British have always been very good at giving sanctuary to deposed rulers. And perhaps you might find a nice earl or perhaps even a duke.'

'We were never the proper rulers, Mummy. You were never properly married to the archduke and I was not his daughter. Tomas abducted him from your brothel in Vienna and took him at gunpoint to a drunk priest who performed a sham marriage ceremony.'

'How did you know that?'

'You told me when you said we should abduct that Indian prince.'

'My tongue does get rather loose when I've had champagne, as does the rest of my body. Let us change the subject. And we are coming up to the border-post.'

Rupert always felt a slight worry at border-posts, especially as Germany was in some turmoil with riots in some cities between competing political factions. But the guards at the border waved the Rolls through with no check, and they were out of Femdom. Immediately, Rupert felt better. He felt more in control of his own destiny. The only problem which faced him was how to lose the two females on the back seat of their car. Probably, the best opportunity would come when they reached the hotel which Zsa Zsa had mentioned.

The hotel, named in English, Eagle Crag, was in the Berchtesgaden national park. There was another car parked near the entrance to the hotel; a Crossley touring car with coachwork to the owner's specification. His specification. He knew the number plate without looking. It was his car.

'Looks a nice place,' he said to his passengers. 'Is the food good?'

'Tolerable,' Zsa Zsa said. 'I think that is another car from England.'

'Is it?' he said, leaning closer to the dashboard, 'so it is. Jolly good cars, those. Light steering, easy gear-changing. Easily driven by a woman.' And added quietly to himself, 'especially a woman who is not registered to drive.'

'Mummy, I'm starving. Can we have dinner?'

'That's what I intended, darling, after a quick bath.' Zsa Zsa said, as mother and daughter walked towards the entrance.

Rupert lingered a little behind, and walked slowly around the Crossley, as though he was admiring the vehicle. 'Don't seem to be any dents in the bodywork. Must have learned to drive quickly, but she is resourceful and a quick learner.'

Rupert checked that there were no other visitors in the lobby as he walked to the reception desk where Zsa Zsa was booking in. 'Mr and Mrs Houndsditch and daughter,' he heard her say to the receptionist. 'We would like your best two rooms adjacent to each other. We are traveling light. We do not have much luggage.'

Five minutes later, Zsa Zsa and Rupert were installed in a swish room with a large bed. Flavia had been allocated the room next door. 'Big enough for three, I think,' Zsa Zsa said, viewing the bed.

'Are we all going to sleep in it?'

'The three of us will not sleep. Flavia will go to her room to sleep once you have deflowered her under my supervision. You will also pluck me; I hesitate to say deflower in my case.' She laughed at her own joke. 'I will have my bath. I can still feel that dirty, scratchy rope around my neck. You may join me in the bath if you wish.'

'If you don't mind, Zsa Zsa, I think I will go down to the car. I think I have left my cigarette lighter in the glove compartment.'

'I did not see you smoke in the car. But no matter. Please do not be too long. I need you in bed. I am feeling bubbly.'

'He went down to reception, two steps at a time.'

'In which room is the driver of the English car. Not the Rolls Royce, the other car. Oh, and do you have a pencil and a piece of notepaper?'

Armed with the room number, and pencil and paper, he bounded back up the stairs to the room in question. He hastily wrote a message on the piece of paper and pushed it under the door. A few moments later a very attractive woman opened the door half way, viewed her visitor, and then opened the

door wide open. 'Do come in,' she said with a beaming smile.

The moment he entered her arms went around his neck and they kissed passionately. Then she broke away and looked him up and down approvingly and lovingly. 'I knew you weren't dead. I knew you didn't fall off a mountain as it was reported in the newspaper. You don't like heights.' They kissed passionately again. Then she stepped away from him again. 'You look more handsome than ever.'

'You look more beautiful than ever.'

'Where have you been all these weeks? I've driven all this way to look for you.'

'I got into a spot of bother. It's a long story.'

'Were you working on a plot for your next book?'

'Not exactly.'

'I think you need a spanking for not keeping in touch with me.'

'I would be pleased to submit, but we have to get away from this hotel.'

'We?'

'You and I. Here's what I want you to do. At three...'

'In the middle of the night?'

'Yes. I want you to be in the Crossley with the engine running.'

'How exciting!'

'And then we head for the English Channel stopping as little as possible.'

'Are we on the run?'

'We will be.'

Half an hour later, Mrs Houndsditch and daughter, each on an arm of Mr Houndsditch progressed down the sweeping staircase and into the intimate dining room. A few diners were already eating. Mr Houndsditch steered his little party to a table laid for three in the middle of the room.

'That woman rather likes the look of you, Rupert,' Zsa Zsa said.

'Which woman?' he asked, as he assisted Zsa Zsa to be seated.

'The rather frumpy woman on her own by the window.'

'She looks a bit like you, Mummy. There is a bit of a facial resemblance,' Flavia said, seating herself without waiting for Rupert or a waiter to give her a gentlemanly-assist.

'I think I am much more attractive, don't you agree, Rupert darling?'

'Yes, of course, Zsa Zsa. She is more plump than you are.'

'So you noticed her,' Zsa Zsa said.

'Only because you pointed her out. Shall we order.'

After dinner they returned upstairs.

'I'm tired, Mummy. I've had a very stressful day. I'm retiring to my room.'

'Not just yet, darling. You must have some more champagne.'

'I've had lots at dinner. And I have a headache.'

'Darling, please do as I say.'

'But, if Flavia is tired...' he started to say.

'Shut up, Rupert. I want you to fuck my daughter. Both of you get undressed.'

They both stared at her without moving. And then they stared at each other. Rupert's penis thought it might like to fuck Flavia.

She did not want to be fucked. 'I'm going to my room.'

'Do, and I will disown you.'

Flavia paused with her hand on the doorknob. 'You wouldn't. You're my mother. You have to look after me.'

'No I don't. You're twenty one. You can go out into the world and fend for yourself, like I did at sixteen. In fact, I think it's about time you did. You can't stay tied to my purse-strings forever.'

'But I don't want to leave you.'

'In that case. Take off your clothes. Or better still, Rupert please be the gentleman that you are and strip my daughter naked. Slap her if she resists. I will sit on the bed and watch.'

Flavia stood sullenly with her chin down, but every so often lifting her chin to glare at him aggressively, as Rupert undid the back of her dress and it slid to the floor. Then he unhooked her brassiere, pulled down her knickers, undid her suspender belt and knelt on one knee to roll down her silk stockings for her. Her mother sat on the bed smiling approvingly in between sips of champagne.

'I should have stretched you to death when I had you on that rack,' she whispered in his ear.'

He blanched.

'Darling, please do not threaten poor Rupert. He is only doing this to you because I ordered him to.'

'Meaning he doesn't really like me.'

'Of course he does. He sees you as a younger version of me, don't you, Rupert.'

'I think he would prefer to fuck that fat woman in the dining room than either of us. And he liked that fat Gretel.'

'Did you like Gretel, Rupert?' Zsa Zsa asked.

'No, of course not. She was going to hang me, remember.'

'She was going to hang the three of us. We owe you our lives. I bet it was Astrid who let those two men loose.'

'Will the whip marks disappear, Mummy?'

'Ask Rupert. He's been whipped lots.'

He stared at the whip marks. 'Yes, I think they will disappear.'

'I've got whip marks as well,' Zsa Zsa, said. 'I've never been whipped before by a woman. It was an interesting experience; a certain frisson ensued.'

'You must be the most sexually-perverted mother on the planet.'

'Please don't be rude to me, darling, or I will ask Rupert to whip you notwithstanding that you have been whipped already by that Heidi. Did you like it?'

'Of course not. I was terrified. They were going to hang us, remember.'

'How could I forget. But you did like that Heidi.'

'No I didn't.'

'You did things to her and she did things to you often enough. Anyway, let us not speak about those two sadists. Would you like another glass of champagne before Rupert begins.'

'Why do you have to do everything my mother tells you to do?'

'I will answer for him. It is because he is terrified of me. Aren't you, Rupert, darling. You will make me a very good husband.'

'Are you going to marry my mother?'

'Yes, he is. He will go down on both knees and propose to me after he has fucked you. Obviously, he will not be able to fuck you after he has married me. That would be adultery and probably illegal as you would then be his step-daughter. And I would kill him if he fucked anyone else without my permission. Please get your pert arse on the bed with your legs apart.'

'What if he gets me pregnant. Then you would be a grandmother.'

Zsa Zsa had a think for a long moment. 'Rupert, perhaps you had better fuck her in her bottom.'

Minutes later, Flavia was on the bed with two feather-and-down pillows under her stomach, so that her buttocks were juttied up and Rupert was angling his penis towards the anus, when there was a knock on the bedroom door.'

'Did we order room service?' Zsa Zsa asked. 'I only remember asking for

a magnum of champagne which they have brought already. I will see who is at the door. Rupert, please carry on, I will tell whoever it is to go away.'

Rupert's penis did not want to delay matters further, it was blood-curdled and rampant. There would be no stopping it. Flavia gave an 'oooh' as the shaft penetrated her rectum.'

Rupert heard the door opened halfway and vaguely heard Zsa Zsa say, 'I don't know who you are, please go away', and sensed out of the corner of his eye that another person had pushed past Zsa Zsa and bustled into the bedroom. It was his housekeeper, Mrs Mountford.

'Goodness, Mr Houndsditch, those are very nasty whip marks on your back. Who on earth whipped you so severely? You can tell me after you have finished bugging this young lady.'

'Please go away, whoever you are, before I call the hotel management to have you thrown out,' Zsa Zsa said, as Rupert climaxed and the full weight of his body slumped onto Flavia's back, winding her.

Zsa Zsa gripped Mrs Mountford by the arm and attempted to pull her to the door. 'Please don't tug at me like that, Daisy. The last time we had a tug of war, I won remember.'

Zsa Zsa took a step back and stared open-mouthed. 'Poppy?'

'One and the same, Daisy my love.' She stared at Flavia, who was now sitting on the edge of the bed with Rupert sitting next to her, both open-mouthed spectators. 'And this young lady, I assume is your daughter. Might I give my niece a kiss on the cheek.' She came close to the astonished Flavia and kissed her on both cheeks. And then glared at Rupert. 'I will spank my employer when I get him home. He should not be bugging young ladies young enough to be his daughter.' She turned and smiled at her sister. 'Of course, I assume you made him do it, Daisy.'

Zsa Zsa, now referred to as Daisy, looking as deflated as a pricked balloon. 'I didn't recognise you in the dining room.'

'I recognised you, Daisy my love. I've been reading about you in the newspapers from time to time. Although the person I was reading about seemed to have changed her name and become a duchess.

'Archduchess,' Zsa Zsa corrected.

'And I believe that my niece is a princess.'

'I was,' Flavia said, 'but we got deposed, Mummy and I.'

Mrs Mountford smiled sweetly at her niece, and then at her sister. 'And, did you by chance, have anything to do with the disappearance of my

employer?'

'It a long story, Mrs Mountford. I will tell you on the way back to England,' Rupert said.

Mrs Mountford looked from one to the other, and her eyes rested on her sister. 'And will you be coming back to England, Daisy?'

'I think not in the near future, Poppy. I feel very continental these days. Having been an archduchess. I think Flavia and I will go to Baden Baden or perhaps Munich. I do rather like Munich.'

'Yes, well, if you ever come back to England you must look me up. Although I will then be Mrs Houndsditch.' She stared at her sister as if waiting for her to object. No objection came. Either from Zsa Zsa or from Rupert. The intended husband had not as yet proposed, but a proposal seemed a mere formality.

'I don't suppose you have a whip handy?' Mrs Mountford asked her sister.

'There is a tawse in one of the cases.'

'May I borrow it for half an hour, as I wish to give my fiancé a beating on his buttocks. Shall I do it here or in my room.'

Flavia giggled, 'Do it here, Auntie.' She smiled at Mrs Mountford. 'May I call you auntie?'

'Yes, of course, my darling.' She glared at Rupert, 'Stand up and touch your toes.'

He stood as Zsa Zsa opened a suitcase, rummaged, and handed her sister a tawse. Mrs Mountford viewed Rupert's buttocks as he bent. 'What are there two burn marks on your bum? And don't say I will tell you later.'

'They had me branded with a hot iron.'

'Who is they?'

'Your sister and your niece.'

Mrs Mountford glared at her two relatives. 'You two, bend like Rupert, one on each side of him.'

Zsa Zsa looked defiant, but only for a moment. Slowly she stood, in her clothes, and touched her toes. Mrs Mountford went behind her sister and raised her sister's dress and pulled down her knickers. 'I see you need a girdle these days. Just like I do.'

Flavia, without demur, touched her toes.

Mrs Mountford raised the tawse above her head. 'I've never tawsed three arses in a row before. I do hope this room has adequate sound-proofing otherwise the other guests will be disturbed.'

THE END

FEMDOM MISTRESS

ONE

MISS DEXTER

'You're too young to get married,' Adam said to his best friend, Gus.

'I'm thirty.'

'Ninety is too young to get married. I'll have the same again.' He clinked his beer glass on the pub table to emphasise that it was empty.

Gus stared into his own glass as though he was a fortune teller looking into a crystal ball. 'Is my glass half empty or is it half full? That is the question a philosopher asked.'

'Pissed was he?'

'No, it's a good question. The answer says how we look at life. Are we pessimists or optimists?'

'You'd better be an optimist; you're getting married in the morning. As your best man, I have to say your glass is half empty. And mine's fucking empty.'

'Yvette is everything I could wish for; beautiful face, beautiful figure, beautiful mind. What more could a man wish for?'

'One; is she a good fuck? Two; can she cook? Philosophical questions about women I always ask. Followed by the non-philosophical question; how big is her arse.'

'Yvette has a very pert bottom.'

'Take it from me, girl's with big arses fuck better.'

'You're a sexual philistine, do you know that?' Gus stared hard into Adam's glazed eyes. 'Yvette doesn't like me drinking.'

'That's a good reason to have another pint. You need to lay down a marker, mate. Show her who's boss; that you're not under her thumb.'

'Have you ever been under a woman's thumb?'

Adam laughed as though the question was preposterous. 'Not me, mate.' He picked up and bounced his empty beer glass on the table. 'You're round. Round number eight.'

'I'm not having any more. I'm going back to your place and have an early night. But I need the loo first.'

'I'm going to make a phone call.'

Adam watched his friend push and wobble his way through the pub crowd towards the gents toilet. And then got up from the table and went to a pay-phone in the corridor leading to the toilets. He extracted a card from his wallet. On the card were two black silhouettes; a woman brandishing a whip over a cowering man, and the name 'Miss Dexter' and a telephone number.

A woman answered. 'Miss Dexter's maid speaking.'

He pictured her sitting in a small room with an appointment book. She called herself Maud, and was middle-aged and motherly.

'It's Mr Jolly. Would Miss Dexter be available in, say, half an hour.'

'Normally, Miss Dexter requires more notice, sir. I had better check if she will be available. Would you hold on for a minute or two.'

Adam waited with his back to the toilet door. He had waited a couple of minutes when he felt a tap on his shoulder. Gus was behind him, grinning.

'Didn't take you long,' Adam said, thinking that it might be prudent to put down the phone.

'Knowing you, you're phoning a bird.'

'None of your business,' Adam said, with the phone to his ear. He heard the maid's voice.

'Miss Dexter can see you as long as you are here in the next half an hour.'

'Thank you,' Adam said, quickly putting the phone down.

'Who's Miss Dexter?'

'It's not polite to listen to a private conversation.'

Adam started to sweat. The secret he had kept to himself, and a string of professional ladies, for the last ten years or so, was in danger of becoming public knowledge, that is to say, known to his best mate in a pub. And his best mate was never discreet. Sooner or later he would tell his fiancée. And she didn't like Adam. Murder might be 'on the cards'. A blunt instrument in some dark alleyway near his houseboat on the river; pockets full of heavy stones and a tarpaulin wrapped around the corpse, and a splash. And, also, he wouldn't have to be best man at a bloody wedding.

'What's this?' Gus asked, bending down to the floor and picking up the

card. 'Looks like some bloke being whipped.' The meaning of the card dawned on him. 'You've just made an appointment to be whipped by this Miss Dexter.'

'Could you keep your voice down', Adam hissed, snatching back the card.

'I heard you do it.'

'I was making the appointment for a friend.'

'Who?'

'You.'

Gus burst out laughing. 'If I hadn't just been to a urinal I would be pissing myself. You've made the appointment for yourself; to be whipped by a woman.'

'I haven't made an appointment to be whipped by a woman.'

The excessive consumption of alcohol, over the course of the evening, had made Adam's voice louder than usual and it now acquired the volume of a megaphone. The babble of conversation in the pub stilled; until a comment from the buxom barmaid that she could 'tan his backside any day' was followed by raucous laughter.

'Let's go shall we,' Adam said, catching Gus by his upper arm and pulling him into the street.

'Don't be so rough. Or I'll get my fiancée to whip you.' He slumped with his back against the side of a parked car, grinning. 'Why don't we go and see your Miss Dexter. I really would like to meet her. Perhaps you could invite her to my wedding.'

'We're going back to the boat,' Adam hissed.

Gus planted his feet firmly and braced himself like a participant in a tug-of-war as Adam tried to pull him away. 'I want to go and see your Miss Dexter. What's her first name?'

Adam stopping his tugging and stood back. As he viewed his friend a plan of action occurred to him. If he had a secret that he did not want broadcast by his friend, then his friend would need to have a secret known only to Adam who could then threaten to broadcast it.

'Alright, we'll go and see her. It's only five minutes walk away.'

They started walking.

'What's this Miss Dexter like?'

'She's beautiful.'

'But not as beautiful as Yvette.'

'And domineering. But not as domineering as Yvette,' Adam said.

'Yvette isn't domineering.'

'She certainly keeps you tied to her apron strings.'

'Does Miss Dexter have apron strings to tie men with?'

'She's got handcuffs.'

They had reached a secluded house in a quiet tree-lined street.

'Nice around here,' Gus said, as he turned to face Adam. 'Look, I'm doing this as a one-off, understand. Just for a bit of fun. On my last night as a bachelor. A bit like having a stag night with a stripper. I don't want you talking about it.'

'I won't,' Adam said. 'If you don't talk about it. Whatever happens in there will be forgotten by both of us as soon as we come out. And not mentioned ever again. Is that a deal?'

'Deal.'

They spat on their right hands and shook hands with wet palms to seal the deal. Saliva brothers.

Adam knocked the lion head on the Regency door, and it was opened within a few seconds by the maid. She smiled and opened the door wide. Adam walked through, but Gus hesitated.

'Is your friend going to join us, Mr Jolly?'

Gus stifled a nervous snigger. 'Mr Jolly - is that you?'

Adam smiled at the maid. 'This is my cousin. Another Mr Jolly.'

The maid closed the door behind them. Adam grinned reassuringly at Gus who looked nervous again.

'Does the new Mr Jolly have any particular requirements?' the maid asked, as they followed her, sheepishly, along a corridor to a small reception room.

The house had the feel and aura of a small, expensive hotel with no other guests and only one visible member of staff.

'I assume the first Mr Jolly will be requiring the usual.'

Adam didn't answer and the maid took his silence as being a 'yes'.

She looked enquiringly at Gus. 'I'll have the same,' he stuttered.

'Miss Dexter won't keep you long. Oh, how silly of me, I nearly forgot...'

Adam took this as a cue to take out his wallet and extract a handful of notes which he fanned to make a cursory count. Her eagle-eyes focused on the notes as she counted at the same time.

'Will this be enough for both of us?' Adam asked.

'Shall be say it's enough for twenty each.'

'Twenty each should do it,' Adam said, smiling at her.

'Miss Dexter will be with you in a short while. Please do help yourselves to a drink.' She pointed to a well-stocked drinks cabinet and left the room closing the door behind her.

Gus was sitting opposite Adam, both in plush armchairs. 'Twenty each of what?' he enquired, leaning forward and speaking in a whisper.

'Twenty strokes of a school cane and a hand-job if you don't come whilst she's caning. I always try to hold on for a hand-job.'

Gus's grin widened, and he imitated the exclamation of Dame Edith Evans as Lady Bracknell in *The Importance of Being Earnest*. A hand-job!

'Shut it, will you.'

'Don't you get a fuck?'

'No.'

'Well, I would like a fuck, as I'm here.'

'You can have one tomorrow.'

'But that would be adultery if I fuck tomorrow.'

'I was assuming you would be fucking your bride.'

Gus stared at the Turkish carpet. 'To be honest - totally honest - I don't fancy Yvette when it comes to sex. It's more a meeting of minds. So I would like a fuck here and now.'

'They don't do fucks.'

'It's a brothel.'

'She never fucks. I've tried.'

Gus slumped back into his chair, then shot out of his seat towards the drinks cabinet. 'I need a drink.'

'I'll have a whisky to keep you company. One of the aged malts.'

Gus poured two large drinks, handed one to Adam and resumed his seat. 'Yvette will kill me if she ever finds out. And she'll kill you for getting me into this. Plus, I don't want my arse caned. I'm not into that sort of thing.' He swigged his whisky as he spoke. 'Mind you, I wouldn't mind fucking the maid.'

'Like older women, do you?' Adam asked.

'She's about forty. Not that old. Curvy figure. Nice face.'

Gus's glass was to his lips as the door opened and the maid reappeared.

'Miss Dexter enquires whether she should interview you both at the same time or one after the other.'

'I don't want him in with me,' Gus said very quickly.

'In that case, which one of you would like to go first?'

'I will,' Adam said, standing up, 'as I know the ropes, no pun intended as they say.'

Leaving Gus looking a bit wild-eyed and staring into his half-empty or half-full glass, Adam followed the maid to another room. They both entered and she closed the door behind them.

'Will you be a boy or a girl, sir?'

'Boy.'

The maid opened a wardrobe door. The wardrobe was glass-fronted and ran all the way along one wall and contained assorted costumes.

'I think this will do you nicely, sir.'

Two minutes later, Adam was in a schoolboy uniform comprising a cap, blazer, shirt and tie, short trousers, socks to just below the knee, and shiny black shoes.

'The headmistress will see you now in her study.'

The maid knocked on another door.

'Enter,' a voice permitted.

The maid ushered Adam into the room. He stood respectfully just inside the door.

'This boy has been sent to you for a caning, Headmistress. Twenty strokes of the cane on his bare bottom.'

'The headmistress' was sitting behind a green-baize-topped desk in regalia befitting a headmistress; pince-nez, mortarboard, black gown and a high-necked cream blouse with a floppy bow at the throat. She stood up and came around to the front of her desk in a very tight, pin-striped, pencil-skirt, as he remained stationed just inside the door. She was tall and elegant, but curvy, and with the haughty, high-cheeked bones of a Russian countess, although she came from Essex. She sat on the edge of her desk and crossed her long legs in their ultra-high heels.

'Come here, boy.'

Adam shuffled towards her, head down. And watched her slowly raise her well-rounded posterior off the desk and walk over to a straight-backed chair in the corner of the room, and carry it to the centre of the room.

'Stand behind the chair.'

He walked to the chair and stood behind its back, as she went to a rack on the wall with a range of spanking instruments dangling from hooks. She selected a medium-weight rattan cane, swished it a couple of times, and came

back to stand at his left side to be able to administer the caning with her right hand.

'Drop your trousers.'

He took off his blazer and draped it over the back of the chair, then slid his braces off his shoulders and unbuttoned his fly, and pushed down the short trousers. He was wearing pink satin knickers, part of the uniform presented to him by the maid.

'Why are you wearing pink bloomers, boy?'

'My mother makes me wear them, Headmistress. They belong to my older sister.'

His erect penis was poking the front of the bloomers into an upwards-slanted pyramid. The apex to the pyramid peaked further as he spoke. He was in danger of ejaculating even before the first stroke of the cane. And he knew that a penis-spew had to be avoided at all costs. There was nothing more painful than having to endure strokes of the cane without the antidote of a tingling-stiff penis on the point of a 'come'.

'In honour of your mother I will cane you over your bloomers. Bend.'

He bent over the back of the chairs with his palms on the seat. She tapped the cane lightly against the most rounded part of his jutted buttocks, as if the cane were a measuring stick. Then she raised her caning-arm above her shoulder and brought it down swiftly in the desired arc across his satin-covered bum. His neck arched backwards at the blow. Thereafter, with rhythmic precision, she dealt him eleven more strokes in rapid succession. He penis was on the point of having had enough. He clenched his teeth in grim determination not to yell in pain.

'Headmistress, I don't suppose you would be merciful and give me four more strokes and convert the remaining four strokes into a hundred lines?'

'A hundred lines across your bottom do you mean?'

'No, Headmistress. A hundred lines on paper.'

'As it has been at least a week since your last visit to my study I will be kind, and reduce your punishment to sixteen strokes and four hundred lines - I must not be rude to my form teacher. Now, bend lower and jut your backside out even more.'

'Yes, Headmistress. Thank you, Headmistress.'

He jutted his bum out and gripped the chair-seat and received the first of the four strokes. He started his ejaculation at the second stroke. Seeing the spreading stain at the front of his bloomers, and the redness of his cheeks, she

gave him the remaining two strokes quickly. His knees would have buckled had he not clung onto the chair with both hands.

'What do you say, boy?'

'Thank you, Headmistress.'

'You may go.'

A very loud bang, like a gun shot, startled both of them.

TWO

GUS ESCAPES

An excess of alcohol had a tendency to make Gus aggressive. On more than a few occasions, over the years, Adam had been forced to remove his normally-placid friend from the looming threat of a pub brawl caused by Gus's inappropriate behaviour - especially towards women - when becoming drunk.

Gus watched Adam follow the maid out of the room and then, muttering to himself that he needed a fuck, not his arse caned, he went to the drinks cabinet and refilled his tumbler with whisky to the brim, and slumped clumsily into his chair causing an overspill of whisky into his lap. He cursed and put the glass down on a side table to examine his soaked groin.

'Fucking looks like I've pissed myself.'

Unbuckling his belt and unzipping his fly, he pushed his trousers down his thighs. His boxer shorts were soaked in whisky.

'Fuck it.'

He stood and took off his shoes and then divested himself of his trousers and boxer shorts, leaving himself naked from the waist down, apart from his socks.

'Good job this is a fucking brothel and not a restaurant. The whores here will be used to seeing a wet cock.'

The door opened and his penis stood up when the maid entered. She glanced at it without batting an eyelid. 'Would you like to choose your outfit, sir?'

'What fucking outfit?'

Again the maid was un-phased. 'For your role play, sir.'

He stroked his penis, as if to keep it stiff, and stared menacingly at the

maid. 'Do you fuck?'

'I have been known to, sir. I have a daughter.'

'I would like to fuck you?'

'I do not engage in sexual intercourse for money, sir.'

'In that case I'll fuck you for free. I expect it's a few years since a bloke as young as me fucked you.' He stared at the woman in her dowdy, black dress and low-heeled shoes. 'You remind me of my mum.'

'Do I, sir.'

'Take off your dress.'

The maid stared at him for a long moment.

'Do as I say.' Her hands went to the zip on her left hip and she unzipped, then hesitated before going any further.

'I said off,' he snapped. 'Do you want me to rip your dress off you?'

Slowly, she slid her dress off her shoulder and down to her waist revealing a heavy bosom straining a large brassiere, and the top of a high-waisted girdle. Then she pushed her dress down and stepped out of it.

'Big knickers and a girdle with suspenders and stockings. You really do dress like my mum. Take off your knickers.'

Obediently, she rolled down her knickers and stepped out of them. A curly hair or two peeped from the edge of her open-bottom girdle.

'You're actually very attractive. You should wear sexier clothes and makeup.'

'Thank you, sir. I'll bear that in mind.'

He put his hands on her hips and pushed her back against the wall. She turned her head away from his alcoholic breath.

'I'm getting married tomorrow afternoon,' he said, his speech slurred.

'Congratulations, sir.'

'Actually, I think I fancy you more than I do my fucking fiancée. Not that I've ever fancied her that much. But her old man has lots of money. I bet you're a much better fuck than she is. What's your name?'

'Maud, sir.'

He laughed. 'I didn't think anyone was called Maud these days. Maybe I should ask you to come into the garden and fuck you in a flower bed.'

'It might be a bit muddy, sir, as it's been raining. If you insist on having your way with me it might be more accommodating in my little room.'

'My cock's soaked in whisky.'

'So I can smell, sir.'

'Do you like whisky?'

'I prefer gin, sir.'

'On your knees and suck my cock.'

Slowly she got to her knees and opened her mouth wide. He inserted his penis into her mouth. She sucked and licked.

'Oh yes, this is nice. I wish my fiancée would do this. You're fucking good at cock-sucking, do you know that. But I don't want to come yet.'

He banged her unceremoniously on the side of her head and she opened her mouth and he withdrew his penis. He stepped away from her.

'Give me your knickers.'

Obediently, she stooped down and picked up her knickers from the floor and handed them to him. He put them on, drawing the satin material all the way up to his waist.

'I've always fancied wearing my mum's. This is the nearest I've got.'

As he spoke, he bent at the waist as though in agony with stomach ache. In fact, he was in ecstasy. She watched as he clutched the shaft of his penis and shook and squeezed it as he came into her knickers, a spreading stain darkening the pink material.

'Shit! that was nice,' he said, as his pleasure subsided.

'I take it you won't be requiring me any more, sir,' the maid said, viewing his flushed face.

'Of course I bloody will. That was just letting off a bit of excess steam. I'm going to fuck you senseless after I've spanked you on the arse; that way I'll get stiff quicker.'

'What do you propose to spank me with, sir?'

'A whip, of course. Is there one in your room?'

'Yes, sir.'

He followed her out of the room observing her hips and buttocks. 'You've got a nice-shaped arse for a middle-aged woman. I'm going to fuck you in your arse.'

'This is my room, sir.'

She opened a door and he went past her into a small room. It was furnished like a secretary's office; swivel chair behind a small desk, a phone, a large calendar on the wall marked with appointments, and a filing cabinet. She followed him in.

'If you are going to use my back-passage, sir, I suggest you cover your appendage in petroleum jelly. It is more accommodating, but possibly you

know that already, sir.'

'Of course,' he said, in the assumed tone of man-of-the-world.

She went behind the desk and sat in the swivel chair and opened a drawer and took out a handgun, which she aimed at a spot between his eyes. His mouth opened in alarm but no sound came out as he saw the knuckle of her trigger-finger whiten.

'Please don't shoot.'

She smiled. 'I can't think of a reason not to. Could you give me one.'

'It would be murder. You would go to prison for life.'

'Self-defence. You were threatening to rape me. After having made me do an obscene act on your person. I would have a good defence in law. Assuming anyone ever found your body. I bet no one knows you're here.'

He was on the point of fainting; weak at the knees.

'My friend knows I'm here. He's with me.'

'I will shoot both of you. He's probably as bad as you are.'

The gun-hand was rock-steady. She half closed one eye, and looked down the barrel, like a sharp-shooter at a gun range.

'Please, I'm sorry I threatened you. I am, really.'

'Too late,' I'm afraid. And the only thing you're sorry about is that I am pointing my gun at you. I'm going to count to five. And say goodnight.'

'Please no.'

'One, two...'

Thinking he had nothing to lose but his life, he ducked, turned, and dived through the still-open door, his ears reverberating as the gun banged. He flew along the passage to the front door, wrenched it open, and fled into the dark street. He had run the length of three, residential roads, panting heavily, before he realised that he was dressed only in his pullover, shirt, damp bloomers, and no shoes.

Having recovered his breath, he looked behind and saw nobody chasing. Then he adopted the jaunty, high-knee steps of a fit jogger. Keeping on the dark side of the road, and hoping no pedestrian he passed would observe him closely, he high-stepped as fast as he could towards Adam's houseboat moored on the river, wondering if he would ever see his friend again.

THREE

ADAM IN THE DUNGEON

'What was that bang?' Miss Dexter asked, rushing into the maid's room. Adam, still attired as a naughty schoolboy, was behind her.

The maid smiled serenely at them, and blew at the end of the barrel, and replaced the gun in the desk drawer.

'The other Mr Jolly wanted to rape me so I had to dissuade him.'

'Where is he?' Adam asked, somewhat shocked by this allegation against his friend.

'Ran out into the street, leaving his underpants and trousers behind.'

'You didn't hit him?' Miss Dexter asked, looking worried. 'We don't want the police following a trail of blood to our door.'

Again, the maid smiled serenely. 'You know I have two guns, darling. I fired the one with the blanks.' She reached into the drawer again. 'The one with real bullets is this one.' She took out a handgun with a silencer.

'I'd better go after him,' Adam said. 'I think things have got a bit out of hand. Where are my clothes?'

The maid's smile disappeared. She pointed the gun at him. 'You're going nowhere.' The maid was now in charge. 'Darling, take him down to the dungeon. I'll be with you in a few minutes.'

'If that's what you want, Mum.'

Adam looked from one woman to the other. He could now see a facial resemblance. They appeared to be mother and daughter. The mother was the one calling the shots. He needed to get away.

'You can't keep me here. I'm best man at a wedding tomorrow.'

'Shut up,' the mother said sternly. 'From now on you speak when you're spoken to.'

The mother handed the gun to her daughter, who prodded Adam with it. 'Strip.'

'May I lower my hands?'

'Yes, but don't make any sudden movements or you'll get a bullet in the back of your head,' the daughter said.

Thirty seconds later he was naked.

'Hands behind your back,' the daughter said.

He crossed his wrists and felt handcuffs encircle them.

'Turn around,' the daughter instructed.

He turned, keeping his head down, and not daring to look at either woman, as the mother swivelled out of her chair and came over to him and took hold of his limp penis in one hand. It was too frightened to stiffen, even at her expert touch.

'Mum, leave it alone.'

The mother ignored her daughter's request. 'Let's see how big it gets, shall we.'

Her fingers gently massaged the shaft. Almost against its will the penis achieved semi-stiffness. 'Not exactly a rod of iron, is it. You have a go, darling.'

'You know I don't like touching them,' the daughter said, making a face as though she had been asked to stroke a sewer rat.

The mother let his penis droop, pulled down her knickers and stepped out of them. The penis wavered upwards as she did this. She looped and twirled the silk material so that it covered the now-bulbous head, and squeezed, letting go as it erupted.

'Most men I know like coming in my knickers. Your dad certainly did.'

'Mum, you're disgusting.'

'This is the second clean pair I've had to put on today. His friend came in the first pair.'

The mother was six inches or so shorter than Adam and peered up at him as she unwound her damp-stained knickers from his discharged-penis. 'Like that, did you? That's going to cost you a hundred.'

Adam gulped and swallowed hard. 'I'm not sure I have that much left on me.'

The mother laughed in his face. 'I'm talking about a hundred lashes of my favourite whip.'

'What have I done to upset you?'

'You brought your friend here and he was going to bugger me. As he's run away you'll have to be punished as his stand-in. Although, you won't be standing when I've finished with you.'

'Please let me go.' He started to weep.

'Mum, I don't think we should blame him for his horrible friend. Maybe we should just let him go.'

The mother stood away from Adam and looked at her daughter with a cross expression. 'He needs a good whipping.'

'I caned him earlier.'

The mother laughed. 'He enjoyed being caned by you. He won't enjoy being whipped by me. Why do you think I just wanked him. There's nothing more painful for a masochist than being whipped with their balls empty. Take him down to the dungeon and chain him to a beam with his hands above his head. I want both his front and back exposed.'

Adam started to tremble as the daughter held him lightly by his upper arm and guided him into the corridor. 'Please let me go.'

'I would, but my mum would throw a fit.'

'She's a monster.'

'Your friend shouldn't have tried to rape her. And I'm going to whip you myself for calling my mother a monster.'

She opened a door in the passage and flicked a light switch at the top of bare-wooden stairs leading down. She prodded the gun in his back to encourage him to go down ahead of her.

In the dimly lit basement, she opened a heavy wooden door, and gun-prodded him into entering a darkened room. She switched on the interior lighting; fake-flame torches flared on mock-stone walls. He stopped dead in his tracks. To his horror, he saw that the basement-room was furnished like a medieval torture chamber, with gallows at the far end. She held him more tightly by the arm and tugged him towards the centre of the room. Manacles dangled from chains attached to a beam in the ceiling.

'Stand there.'

He stood staring up at the manacles which were at the height of his forehead, as she went to the side of the room. She put the gun on a bench and picked up a length of chain, with manacles at both ends, and came back and knelt at his feet.

'Feet wide apart.'

He spread his feet, and she manacled them, and stood up.

'You won't be doing a runner like your friend.'

Then she went back to the bench and returned with the gun and stood in front of him. 'Open your mouth.' She raised the gun so that it was pointing at his mouth. 'Suck the end.'

He sucked the cold metal of the silencer, with eyes closed.

She angled the gun upwards slightly. 'Are you going to obey me?'

He nodded ever so slightly.

'I am now going to take the gun out of your mouth and put it on the floor. Then I am going to take off your handcuffs, and you will raise your hands so that I can manacle your wrists above your head. Are you going to resist me?'

He shook his head ever so slightly to confirm that he would not resist.

'Because, if you show the slightest sign of resistance I will pick up the gun and shoot you in the balls. Do you understand?' He nodded.

Placing the gun on the floor, she went behind him and unlocked his handcuffs. Straight away, he raised his hands meekly above his shoulders. She stood in front of him and manacled both wrists. He stood with his arms chained to the beam above his head.

'Why are you looking so upset,' she asked, mockingly. 'You've got more than you bargained for. You only paid to get your arse caned. Usually, it costs ten times as much to have a session with me and my mother in this dungeon. And we're not charging you any more money; aren't you a lucky boy.'

She looked down at his shrivelled penis. 'Have you got a girlfriend?'

'Not at the moment.'

'How long since you had one?'

'Couple of weeks.'

'Why did you break up?'

'She left me.'

'Why?'

'We didn't see eye to eye.'

'Was she submissive or dominant?'

'I don't know.'

'So you never played games. Not that we're playing a game. This is for real.' She stared into his eyes with a menacing expression as she said this. Then her stern mouth relaxed into a smile, as she went to the bench and opened a drawer. He saw the glint of metal as she took out something small and came back to stand in front of him with her left hand behind her back.

'What do you think I am holding?'

'I don't know.' His throat was dry. His penis was now really downcast.

'Why is it so limp. Is it scared of me?'

'Yes.'

She laughed. 'And so it should be. I asked you to guess what I am holding behind my back.'

He swallowed hard again to try and get his voice strings to make a sound. The noise he made was a barely intelligible gurgle. 'What's in your hand?'

'Close your eyes tight.'

He closed his eyes and felt cold metal over his penis and heard the slight click of a lock.'

'Open your eyes.'

He looked down. His penis was encased in a metal tube. She had locked him into a penis restraint.

'How are we getting on?' the mother asked, coming into the dungeon.

The dowdy 'maid' now looked like a life-model for an Eric Stanton art class, with thin black lines for eyebrows, thick black eyelashes, roughed cheeks and scarlet lipstick. She was in shiny, high-heeled boots, SS-style jodhpurs with a wide leather belt emphasising her flared hips, and a tight, white satin blouse, the top buttons undone to reveal a heavy cleavage. Her hair was drawn back into a severe bun at the nape of the neck. In this outfit, she was as tall as her daughter, but far more curvaceous and commanding and scary.

A bullwhip was coiled in her left gauntlet. In her right gauntlet she held coiled rope which ended in a hangman's noose.

FOUR

THE NOOSE

His terrified eyes flicked from the noose to the whip and back again. He did not know which hand to fear the most. To his relief, the mother dropped the noose in a corner. It looked as though he was going to be whipped; not hanged.

The daughter, still attired as a school teacher in her floppy-bowed blouse and pencil skirt, took a cine camera from a shelf. She fiddled with its buttons and the camera whirred. Then whilst her mother stayed out of shot, she walked around him in a circle, filming him chained with his hands above his head. She lowered the camera as her mother put on a black, leather mask, and went behind him. The camera whirred again as the whip slashed his back and he screamed.

The daughter lowered the camera. 'Mum, don't give him any more with that whip. It's too vicious.'

'It's my favourite whip. I've hardly marked him.'

Her daughter went behind him and viewed the red stripe seared diagonally across his back. 'Use a playtime one.'

With a muttered, 'You're too soft,' her mother threw her whip into the corner on top of the discarded noose and took a less vicious-looking whip from a rack of spanking implements attached to a wall. She held it up for her daughter to inspect. 'This do?'

The daughter nodded to give her seal of approval. 'I'll use a camera to take stills.'

'A bit tame, darling, but as you wish,' her mother said, posing freeze-framed with the whip as if about to strike.

The daughter put the cine camera down and picked up an ordinary

camera. She clicked away as her mother changed whipping-poses several times.

'I think that's enough pretend whipping,' the daughter, said, 'now you can hang him.'

'This is the bit I really like,' her mother said.

His knees sagged and he would have collapsed in a faint had he not been chained to the beam. The daughter saw his distress. She stood in front of him and lifted up his chin which had also sagged onto his chest.

'We're not going to hang you for real, just pretend to.' She let go of his chin.

'Why did you say that to him? I might decide to hang him for real.'

'Mum, please stop it. You'll frighten him to death.'

The daughter smiled at him, reassuringly. 'I'm just going to take a few picture of my mum putting a noose around your neck and pretending to hang you. Nothing to worry about.'

'Why?' was all he dared ask.

'You belong to us now. You're our slave,' the mother said.

Realising that the were not going to execute him, he felt emboldened to ask, 'Do I get to fuck either of you?'

In response to the question, the daughter slapped him hard across his cheek.

Her mother slapped him harder across his other cheek. 'You're too much of a wimp to give a woman a good fucking.'

With his eyes screwed shut in case of further slaps he ventured to say, 'Actually, I'm quite good at sexual intercourse, so I've been told by many girlfriends.'

He half-opened his eyes. The mother was staring at him, hands on hips, with the hint of a smile.

'In that case, I might let you fuck me, but if you don't give me an orgasm, I'll hang you. Do you want to take that risk? And I warn you, I'm difficult to please.'

'No.'

'Would you like to take the risk with my daughter?'

He didn't answer.

'I'm waiting for an answer. And I don't like waiting,' the mother said.

'Possibly.'

'So you'd risk being hung to have sex with her?'

He thought it prudent to say 'Yes'.

The daughter was cross with her mother. 'He's not fucking either of us - ever.'

'Alright, we'll keep him locked up in his penis-cage, except, if he's a good boy we might unlock it once a month for him to wank. Won't that be kind. Let's get back to business.'

The mother picked up the noose from where she had dropped it, flounced onto the gallows platform, threw the rope over the gibbet-arm, and tied the end of the rope to a ring on the upright post. Then she stood next to the dangling noose, ready to be photographed as his executioner.

'Send him up to me.'

He was still manacled to the beam with his hands chained at head height. The daughter put down the camera and stood in front of him.

'I'm going to unchain your wrists and handcuff them behind your back. You're not going to resist, are you. Because, if you do, my mother will hang you for real.'

He remained docile and subservient as the daughter un-manacled him and then handcuffed him with his wrists behind his back. And then she clicked the camera as he mounted the five steps onto the gallows, and her masked-mother posed, unsmiling, as he stood in front of her.

'Turn around,' the mother commanded.

He turned so that his back was towards her, and the daughter flashed her camera as her mother looped the noose over his head and around his neck and tightened the knot behind his left ear. Then the daughter put down the camera and fetched a foot stool from the corner and handed it up to her mother who placed it in front of his shins.

'Stand on the stool,' the mother ordered. He did so, the length of chain between his ankles being long enough to allow him to step up. The camera flashed as the mother posed as if she was whipping him to make him to stand on the stool.

With a thumping heart, he stood on the stool, trying to keep his balance. His knees wobbled alarmingly as the daughter photographed. If he fell, or was pushed off the stool he would hang for real. He was trembling and shaking with terror. He tried to keep his mind blank. He felt like a tight-rope walker, with vertigo, midway across Niagara Falls.

'Enough pictures?' the daughter asked her mother.

'For the moment. As long as he remembers that the next time I put a

noose around his neck we'll take a picture of him swinging from the beam.' As she said this, she loosed the end of the rope from the ring on the wall.

'Down,' the mother said, like a mistress with a cur.

He stepped off the stool.

'I'll go and get changed while you sort him, darling,' the mother said, putting the whip back on its hook, and leaving the dungeon. He let out an audible sigh of relief that she had gone.

The daughter gave him a friendly smile. 'What's your real name? You've got no identification on you. We've looked.'

He did not answer. She stood in front of him. Her smile had disappeared. 'You need to understand. When I ask you something, you answer. Otherwise, my mother will make you wobble on that stool again. And I won't stop her doing what she wants to do. Understand? Now answer my question.'

'Adam - Adam Smith.'

'And where do you live, Adam?'

'Houseboat on the river.'

'How quaint. And I think you said you don't have a girlfriend?'

'No.'

'Just as well,' she fingered the brushed-metal of the cage around his penis and testicles as she said this. 'I'm not sure we'd give you permission to fuck her, even once a month. You may call me Julia which is my real name. But you had better call me 'mistress' when my mother's around. Do you understand?'

'Yes, Julia'

She patted him on the cheek. 'Good boy. Now I'm going to take off your handcuffs. Turn around.' He turned his back to her and she unlocked his handcuffs. 'Here's the key to the manacles around your legs.'

He took the key and bent down and unchained his legs. He straightened up, and then looked pointedly and hopefully at his chastity restraint.

'My mother's got the only key.'

Naked except for the penis restraint, he followed her up the stairs to the ground floor and meekly along a corridor, admiring the sway of her hips and rump in the tight pencil skirt. His penis craved its freedom.

Her mother was sitting behind her desk as Julia ushered him into the small room. She had made a quick change. She still wore the garish make-up, but was now in an elegant expensive dress befitting an evening at Covent Garden watching a ballet. Her face was as welcoming as the Black Swan in

Swan Lake.

'Sit down.'

Obediently he sat on the chair in front of her desk. The leather padding felt cold on his naked buttocks. Julia stood behind him near the door.

'Have you enjoyed yourself? Do you think we gave you your money's worth?' The mother asked, her elbows on the desk and her fingers together as a platform for her chin. She stared into his eyes intently as if trying to read his mind. 'Well?'

'I think I got more than I bargained for,' he said slowly and quietly.

Julia laughed.

Her mother did not appear to find the comment funny. 'Believe me, we haven't started on you yet.'

She picked up her pen and held it ready to write, clearly expecting him to give her information without the encouragement of threats. 'What's your real name?'

'His name's Adam Smith and he lives on a houseboat.' Julia was now sitting on a chair in the corner, having crossed her long legs.

'Name of your houseboat and where it is moored?'

'Saucy Sal; moored at Kingsway lock.'

'What's your friend's name?' Adam swallowed hard and did not answer.

The mother looked displeased. 'I don't like asking questions twice. I expect an answer - a correct answer - the first time I ask the question. Otherwise, I'm likely to get cross. And then my whipping-arm pumps like a steam hammer. Do we understand each other?'

He nodded.

'It's Augustus.' Julia giggled at the name. Her mother smirked. Adam half-smiled. 'He's known as Gus.'

'Will he be on your boat?'

'What are you going to do to him?'

The mother looked up from writing, and stared at him with rounded eyes, like a particularly stern teacher looking at an impertinent schoolboy before administering six of the best.

'I will remonstrate, to put it mildly, when I catch him.'

'I think you mean 'castrate', Mummy.'

He gulped as the mother gave him a glare like a hundred-watt, spotlight shining in the eyes of a prisoner being harshly interrogated. Then she stood up and came around her desk to stand over him.

'What I would like you to do, Adam, is put your hands up my skirt and take down my knickers.'

'Mummy, please,' Julia said, in a disapproving tone.

Her mother ignored her and pushed her stomach out slightly as if to confirm what she wanted him to do. Tentatively, as if he were about to touch hot coals, Adam placed his two hands on either side of the mother's waist.

'Go on, do as you are told,' the mother said.

His hands slid gently down the pleats to the knee-length hem.

'Speed up. The last time a male was this slow in taking off my knickers was behind the bike-shed at school thirty years ago.'

'Mummy, please don't be so crude.'

Adam lifted the hem up to the point where plump-thighs spilled out of her stocking-tops, hitched by suspenders. He was bending forward from a sitting position; his forehead close to her groin. He smelt the odour of female-arousal. The mother's clitoris was enjoying his discomfort - and fear.

The knickers were pink with a satin sheen and frilly-laced edges. His penis stirred - despite its fear - in the confines of his penis-restraint. He hooked his forefingers into the elasticated waistband and gently pulled them down to her knees; paused, then doubled-up in his seat, pushed them down to her ankles, above black stilettos. Placing her hand on his shoulder for support, she stepped out of her knickers. 'Pick them up.'

He picked the warm material from the floor.

'Stand up and put them on.' He stood and stepped into the knickers and pulled them up to cover his penis-restraint.

'Doesn't he look pretty,' Julia said. 'But we can hardly dress him in just knickers. I'll fetch some clothes from the transvestite's wardrobe.'

FIVE

A CHANGE OF CLOTHES

The mother watched her daughter leave the room and listened as the clicking of her high heels receded on the parquet flooring in the passage. She was still standing close to Adam who was still sitting on his chair. Coming closer, so that her stomach was adjacent to his head, she lifted her skirt to her waist. Keeping her dress rucked up with one hand, she raised the edge of the girdle.

'Use your tongue and be quick.'

He stared up at her as if not comprehending what she required him to do.

'If I have to tell you twice you'll be wearing the rope necklace again.'

He arched his head to her groin. His tongue snaked out, and, with his eyes closed, he licked and slurped and tried to stiffen the point of his tongue the more easily to penetrate.

Her breathing came in short sharp bursts, as she gripped the back of his head and jammed his nose against her lower stomach and gyrated her hips. He was gasping for air as her legs wobbled and she achieved her aim; an orgasm. Then she dropped her dress, returned to her chair behind her desk, opened a drawer, took out a handkerchief and threw it at him.

'Wipe your face, and don't say anything to my daughter - understand.' Then she gave him a beaming smile. 'As we now know your real name, you may know our real names. Mine is Audrey - not Maud. My daughter is Julia. You may call me Madam Audrey and my daughter Mistress Julia.'

'She told me her name, already.'

'Did she.'

He wiped his face, and leaned forward and handed the handkerchief back to her. She shoved it back in the drawer, just as Julia returned with an armful of clothes.

'I've brought some surgical-type stockings which should hide the hairs on his legs; a girdle, blouse, pleated skirt and cardigan, and a brunette wig, and some high heels, same size as his shoes,' Julia said, dumping the clothes on a pile on a chair. 'And we need to make him up; rouge, scarlet lipstick and eye-liner. Like you're wearing, Mummy.'

'You take him to your room and make him up. And then bring him back here and I'll dress him,' Audrey said. I'm going to phone and book a table at Le Coq d'or.'

Julia took Adam lightly by his upper arm, and guided him out of his chair and the room into the corridor.

'Did you give my mother a tongue-wash?' she asked in a low voice. He was too frightened to answer. Madam Audrey had told him not to say anything.

'Answer me.'

He mumbled something, not intending the words to make sense.

They had reached the door to a room he had not been in before. It was furnished like an actress's dressing room, with a large mirror with multi-coloured bulbs attached to the frame, and a big wardrobe crammed with costumes, and various wigs on stands on a shelf. It was clear that Julia could assume the persona of any dominant female through the ages.

'Sit there.' She pointed to the pink, rococo-style chair in front of the mirrored-dressing table.

He sat, still naked, apart from her mother's pink panties and his penis-restraint. She drew up a chair from the corner and sat next to him, like a hairdresser about to give a customer a cut and blow dry.

'Do you want to get out of here alive?'

He nodded to confirm that he would like to leave, still breathing.

'Then answer my question. Did you lick my mother's cunt?'

His face went as white as Grimaldi's without the red, bulbous nose. He knew he had to give an answer.

'She made me.'

Without warning, she slapped him hard across his cheek and then across his other cheek.

'Touch her again and you'll be leaving here at midnight in a weighted sack on your way to the river. Do I make myself clear?'

He nodded.

She slapped him again, on both cheeks, to emphasise that she was being

serious. Then she smiled like a beautician in the cosmetic department of a store.

'What shade of lipstick would you like?'

Ten minutes later, Adam, made-up to look like an Amanda, was back in Madam Audrey's room. She stood up as he entered and came close and looked at his face as though looking for blemishes.

'You should have made him have a close shave. You can see his five-o'clock shadow. Also, his legs and armpits need shaving.'

'We're only going to a restaurant with fairly dim lighting. Anyway, he's too masculine to pass for a female. And also too dim.'

He managed a slight smile, pleased at being complimented on his masculinity; if not the suggestion that he was dim.

'Even if he is a total submissive,' Julia added.

Without thinking, he started to say, 'I'm not...' and received a another slap across his cheek from Madam Audrey, and a slap across his other cheek from Mistress Julia.

'How many times do we have to tell you; don't speak unless you're spoken to,' Audrey said.

He lowered his chin as a sign of meek submission.

'How much money have you got left on you?' Julia asked.

He gulped before answering. 'Don't remember.'

'I went through his pockets,' Audrey said. 'He has enough for a meal for two plus champagne and wine at Le Coq d'or.'

'Two?' Julia queried.

'I have other things to do, darling. And, as they say, three's a crowd.'

Julia looked agitated. 'What do you mean three's a crowd?'

'It's a saying, that's all.'

'I've never heard you say it before.'

'Maybe because you never go out with a male.'

'He's not a proper male. He'll be dressed as a tranny with a cock-restraint.'

'Do you want me to give you the key?'

'No I don't want you to give me the fucking key. You can stick it up his arse.'

'Then he'd be able to retrieve it.'

Julia paused, like a boxer having had a strenuous exchange of fisticuffs and needing a breather, and hoping the bell would sound for the end of the round.

Adam thought he saw a chance to ingratiate himself with his captors. 'I would be delighted to take you both to dinner.' He said this in hushed tones, mindful that both women were in a high state of agitation, and likely to vent their combined anger and aggression on him.

Julia glared at him. 'Did I hear you speak out of turn?'

'I'm sorry,' he mumbled.

'Get your arse over the back of the chair; palms on the seat.' She reached for a school cane propped in a corner as she said this.

For once, the older woman seemed the less violent and aggressive of the two. 'I don't understand why you're going to cane him for inviting you out to dinner.'

'Keep your nose out of this. And his nose out of you.'

The two women squared up to each other, stiletto-toe to stiletto-toe, conical-breast to conical-breast. Her mother pushed Julia with her palms on Julia's chest. Julia almost toppled backwards, and Adam, like the gentleman he was, despite being facially made up as Amanda, steadied her by placing both hands on her waist. Immediately, she spun around towards him and slapped him a neck-snapping blow across his cheek. 'Take your hands off me.'

'I don't think he deserved that. He stopped you from falling.'

'You pushed me into him.'

'I did not. Let's calm down, shall we. Are you going to let him take you to dinner or not?'

'Not dressed as a transvestite if it's just me and him.'

All the while, Adam was keeping as much distance from the two women as the dimensions of the smallish room would allow. He cowered as Audrey brushed past her daughter to stand in front of him. Unexpectedly, she had a wide, friendly smile, like a society hostess greeting an honoured guest at her soiree.

'Adam, my sweet, perhaps it would be best if we returned you to your manhood so that you can escort my daughter to dinner in a posh restaurant like a gentleman. I will take you to the bathroom.'

'What are you going to do to him in the bathroom?' Julia asked

suspiciously.

'Clean his face and make him sweet-smelling and presentable enough to take my daughter out for the evening. On second thoughts, I'll take him into the shower-room downstairs. Why don't you have a quick bath upstairs and make yourself ready to go out with a man for once.'

'Are you suggesting I'm a lesbian?'

'I'm merely suggesting you don't like men.'

'I wonder why,' Julia said, caustically.

As the barbed exchange ended, Audrey took Adam by the arm and guided him back into the corridor. 'In here.' She led him into a small, washroom, with a shower-cubicle and also a toilet. 'This room is for our guests to freshen up before and after the entertainment we provide.'

The sanitary wear and tiled-decor and toiletries above the wash basin were like those to be found in a five-star hotel.

He expected her to leave him alone, but she closed the door and clicked the lock, and began to undress. She smiled at him staring at her. 'I don't want my dress to get splashed.'

He stood with his back to the toilet and watched her disrobe. As he knew from the cunnilingus he had performed on her, she was encased in an opened bottomed-girdle. It was a salmon-pink and with elasticated-panels, from and back, to flatten her stomach and bottom, and give smooth curves to her wide hips. Also, as he knew, her thighs 'plumped' over the tops of her stocking held up by suspenders. He stared at her like a punter in a night club watching a high-class striptease.

'I do so like a man to wear my knickers but would you mind taking them off.'

Quickly, he pushed down the knickers she had made him wear and stepped out of them, holding them in one hand.

'Drop them in the linen basket, then come closer to me.'

She was standing with her back to the door. He came close to her. She looked down at his penis-restraint. She had its small key in her hand and unlocked the restraint and took it off his penis. Immediately, throbbing with joy at its release from confinement, his penis reached the point of ejaculation.

She stared down at it as its eye stared up at her. She spoke, still staring at it, as if mesmerised by a cobra swaying in its basket. 'There are some packets of condoms in the wall-cabinet; what I would like you to do is put one on.'

She watched as, obediently, he opened the cabinet, chose a packet and

came back to stand in front of her. He unwrapped the oily rubber from its packet and looked down at his penis. He had a problem. 'I don't know how to do this.'

The friendly smile disappeared and she pouted. 'You slide it over the head and down the shaft.'

'No - I meant, if I touch it, it will...'

She smiled. 'Oh, I see. It fancies me that much does it. Or did you think you were putting it on ready to fuck my daughter? Or possibly both of us; one after the other. Can you manage two copious fucks in quick succession. I do so adore a man who can come twice without too much of a wait in between.'

Her amused expression, whilst she waited for his answer, held a hint of menace; the wrong answer would result in his receiving pain.

'I have to admit, I really do fancy you,' he stuttered.

'And what about my daughter; do you fancy her as much?'

'Yes.'

'Then I will allow you to fuck me - without a condom. As we don't have much time to 'fuck-about' as they say. My daughter will have finished her bath and will be banging on the door unless we get a move on.'

As she spoke, she backed towards the door, until she was propped against it and widened her legs.

'In,' she said, imperiously.

He came close to her, with the palm of his left hand over her right shoulder and against the door to steady himself.

'Speed up,' she hissed.

Her face was sideways on; he glanced at her profile. Her eyes were closed, her cheeks blushed as though she had just been slapped across the face. Tentatively, he made his presence felt. Without shoes, Adam was about four inches taller than Audrey, but he was in bare feet and she was in four-inch heels, so they were almost the same height; convenient for a standing ovation. Flexing his soles, he pushed hard into her and came at a rush like a force ten gale rocking a tanker in the English Channel. The storm subsided. He was almost gasping for air. Her breath came in short sharp bursts.

Both held their breaths momentarily as there was a loud bang on the door. 'What's going on in there?' Julia called.

'Adam's on the toilet,' her mother shouted back. 'Constipated.'

'Open the door.'

'Pull the chain and then get in the shower,' Audrey hissed at Adam, as she

grabbed her dress.

'What are you doing?'

'You don't want to come in just yet.'

'Why?'

'The atmosphere could be better.'

'I'll be in your room.'

Audrey breathed a sigh of relief as she heard her daughter's heels click away. By the time Adam came out of the shower, she was in her dress and looked poised and elegant, her make restored and in place. His make up was removed, and he was fresh-faced in a masculine way with a five o'clock shadow.

'A couple of things; one, you don't mention what just happened to my daughter, ever, and two, you treat my daughter in the restaurant as though you are in love with her. Do we understand each other?'

He nodded.

'Oh, and one more thing, you must bring her back here after the meal, but not earlier than, say, two hours from now.'

He nodded. She gave her charming smile again.

'And if, when you return, she wishes to - how shall I say - prolong and enhance your relationship I will not object.'

He looked at her blankly, as if he did not understand, causing her to look exasperated.

'You can fuck her if she lets you. And be gentle. She's a virgin, so far as I know. In the meantime, I will have to lock up your thing again, otherwise she will wonder why I unlocked you. I'll give her the key to use if she wants to use it later.'

SIX

THE HOUSEBOAT

Gus knew the town well, and raced through residential streets and away from the bright lights of the town centre, keeping in the shadows of trees, zig-zagging from one side of the road to the other to avoid walkers. Eventually, he slowed to a walking pace as the soles of his feet hurt. He would have to soak them in a basin of steaming, salt water when he got to Adam's houseboat. It had no bath, just a shower.

Two women were silhouettes some twenty yards ahead of him. He guessed who they were from their shapes; his tall, slim, fiancée and her wide-bottomed, bridesmaid. And he knew where they were going; the Le Coq d'or restaurant for a 'hen night'. He could not resist the temptation to jog up behind them to be within earshot, still keeping in the shadows like a Peeping Tom.

'Personally, I think Gus is a total tosser. I wouldn't marry the bloke if he was the last male on the planet.' The speaker was Delia, Yvette's fat friend. 'And he's got a small cock.'

'How on Earth do you know?' he heard Yvette ask.

'You told me.'

'Did I?'

'They say size doesn't matter; personally, I think it does,' Delia said.

'Your lodger Tony has a small cock.'

'How do you know that?'

'You told me.'

'Yes, well. I bet it would be quite big if he was about to fuck me,' Delia said.

'I quite fancy Tony. He would make a very pretty girl. Not like my

chubby fiancée,' Yvette said.

At this point Gus thought it prudent to jog backwards and take a diversion through an alleyway, scaring a neighbourhood cat in the process. His vision was blurred. He was crying. His cock wasn't that small.

He arrived at the houseboat exhausted, and stood on the towpath, gasping for breath like a runner who has just come last in a marathon. He stared at the blinking lights of the houseboat reflected in the dark river, and sat on a bollard reflecting. 'I don't think I want to get married. Even if her father is rich.'

Fifteen minutes later, he was showered and sitting naked on a chair with his feet in a washing-up bowl containing steaming salt water, contemplating his future. It was bleak. Could you still get sued for breach of promise if you broke off an engagement? He knew you could in Victorian times. Probably Adam would know. He'd ditched quite a few women in his time. To think Adam liked being whipped by a woman - talk about a surprise!

Gus looked down at his navel and surprised himself to see that his stubby penis was stiffer than a concrete gherkin. What had caused this? Thinking about Yvette had not caused it. It was the fleeting thought of the crazy 'maid' with a gun. He heard the gangplank creaking.

'Adam, is that you?' he called out.

'We meet again, darling.'

With a shock, like a thousand volts in his groin, he recognised the voice but not the curvaceous female, as she ducked her head to enter the small cabin. It sounded like the maid's voice, but it was not the maid. This female was much more glamorous, in figure-hugging jeans and a tight sweater. Then he realised she was holding a gun with a silencer.

'Please don't stand up. You just carry on having a nice soak.' She held a pair of handcuffs in her other hand.

'What is it that you want?' he stuttered.

She didn't answer, but walked behind his chair as he sat with his feet in the bowl.

'Hands behind your back.'

He obeyed and felt the handcuffs around his wrists. His penis has softened through fear of her, but stiffened again, as she sat on the sofa-bench opposite him.

'Bit pokey in here, isn't it,' she said. 'I've been on a few yachts in my time, but I always feel a bit claustrophobic.' She looked around her as she spoke,

and then refocused her attention on him, and his penis. 'Do you always have a stiff cock when you're soaking your feet?'

He didn't answer. Her nostrils flared slightly and she gave him a look which said 'please answer the question.'

'It's because you're here.'

She smiled. 'What a nice thing to say. So you do fancy me.'

He nodded.

'Stand up and turn sideways on to me.'

He obeyed. His penis slanted towards the lightbulb in the ceiling.

'I'll let you into a little secret. When I was younger I was terrified of men with big cocks. The first man who had me was enormous and really hurt. Since then I've always preferred men with short and stubby cocks, like yours; less threatening. I also prefer men who are younger than me. How old are you?'

'Thirty.'

'Ten years younger than me. How delightful.'

Despite his predicament, handcuffed with his feet in a bowl of water and facing a woman with a silenced-gun, he smiled with pleasure.

'Stay like that,' she said, as she moved from her seat and stood next to him. Her gun was still in her right hand as she fondled his genitals with her left hand.

'Would you like me to wank you?'

'Yes.'

'Yes please, madam, is what I think you meant to say.'

'Yes please, madam.'

'Where are the knickers I made you wear?'

'On the floor.'

She looked around and spotted the discarded knickers.

'Pick them up. No, of course you can't because you're handcuffed. How silly of me. Turn around.'

She went behind him and unlocked his handcuffs.

'Face me with your eyes closed, but don't try anything silly. I know how to use a gun.'

He turned to face her with his eyes screwed shut as though he was facing strong sunlight instead of the dim ceiling-light in the cabin.

'Hands together at waist height.'

He positioned his hands as she required and she handcuffed his hands in

front. He was now able to pick a towel from the back of his chair and dry his feet as he stepped out of the bowl. And then, sheepishly, he picked up the knickers and stepped into them.

He had pulled them up towards the top of his thighs when she put up her hand as a gesture to tell him to stop the upward movement. The knickers rested just below his testicles. Once again, her facial expression was that of a stern dominant female and she looked even more frightening in the shadowed-lighting of the cabin than she did in her house.

'I'm not sure you deserve a wank. If I remember rightly, you tried to rape me.'

He opened his eyes, blinked, and closed them as though afraid to look at her. 'I'm sorry.'

'You will be even more sorry when I've finished with you. Can you swim wearing handcuffs?

'I can't swim.'

'Unless you answer all my questions, and do what I want, I will make you jump in the river at the point of my gun, like pirates used to make their captives walk the plank as the point of a cutlass. Do we understand each other?'

He nodded.

'Now sit.'

He sat, thinking that he was more likely to be out of harm's way if he was sitting on a chair rather than bending over it.

'I would like you to tell me all that you know about your friend, Adam.' She sat back on the sofa-bench, with a slight smile. 'And about his girlfriends.' she added.

'He's had lots of birds.'

She grimaced. 'I do not like women referred to as birds.'

'Sorry.'

'Do you tell each other about your sex-lives?'

'No.'

'Adam is very good looking.'

'Matter of opinion,' Gus mumbled.

'It's my opinion which matters.'

'Sorry.'

'So, we both know that he likes having his bum whacked by a female, but what else does he like?'

'I don't know. I didn't know he liked having his bum whacked until this evening.'

'Who is this?' She picked up a framed photograph as she asked the question.

'Delia. She's my fiancée's best friend. She's the bridesmaid tomorrow.'

'She's dressed in leather and holding a whip. In fact, I have a very similar costume. So does my daughter.'

'It was a fancy dress party. I went as a bunny.'

'A bunny girl?'

'Peter Rabbit.'

'What did Adam go as?'

'Spartacus.'

'A slave. Delia looks very plump.'

He grinned. 'Arse needs two seats, one for each buttock.'

'Does Adam fancy big girls?'

He thought before answering. 'Most of his girlfriends have been very curvy. But not as fat as Delia.'

'What did your fiancée go as?'

'A gigolo.'

'A man?'

'Yes.'

Audrey mulled over this information with a slight smile. 'So, at this party, we have a dominant female, a slave, a bunny rabbit and a woman dressed as a man. And did you all have sex at this party?'

'No. We just got drunk. That's when I asked Yvette to marry me. Apparently, just before I passed out.'

'And she said yes?'

'We were both too drunk to remember. The others said they heard me ask Yvette to marry me and that she said yes. Adam swears she did. So does Delia.'

'I would like to meet Delia. In the meantime, you sit there whilst I have a good look around this houseboat.' She stood as she said this. 'Where does Adam sleep?'

He pointed to a small door.

It took her five minutes to search Adam's cabin-bedroom. She returned to the main cabin clutching an assortment of books and magazines. 'Whose are these?'

He looked at the various covers. 'They're not mine. I don't like dominant women.' And then almost chuckled, as he looked through the pages of one of the magazines, 'I didn't know he did. I've never seen these before.' Then added to himself, as if in disbelief, 'He likes birds with whips. He'll never live this down.'

'Yes, he will. Because you're not going to say anything, are you.'

He stared at her.

She smiled her menacing smile, 'Because, otherwise people might see you dressed in pink knickers and being whipped by an older woman. Do we understand each other?'

He wanted to ask why she was protecting Adam, but he thought better of it.

'Where have you been sleeping?' she asked.

'Other cabin.'

He sat, handcuffed in his chair, as she disappeared into the smaller of the two sleeping-cabins and emerged a few minutes later.

'Seems you like pictures of men spanking women.'

'No.'

'So who does this magazine belong to?' She held up a 'spanking' magazine.

His chin went to his chest and he remained silent.

'Did I not tell you that failure to answer my questions results in a severe whipping, much like some of the women in the pictures appear to be receiving?'

'Sorry.'

'What does 'sorry' mean?'

'They're not mine.'

'Adam seems to prefer being whipped. I don't think they are his.'

'I've only been staying here a couple of days, for the wedding. They must belong to another mate of Adam's.'

'Stand up, we're going.'

'Where to?'

'Just do as you're told.' She waved her gun airily in his direction.

He stood. 'I can't put any clothes on with these handcuffs.'

'You won't need clothes where you're going.'

'It's freezing out there.'

'I'm warm enough.' She pointed the gun between his eyes. He stood, and

with her prodding him in the small of his back with her gun, he led the way out onto the deck, wearing only her knickers and handcuffs.

Her car was parked in the street parallel with the tow path. Both the path and the street were dark and deserted. He huddled in the front passenger seat shivering, more with fear than with cold.

'Where are you taking me? I'm supposed to be getting married tomorrow.'

She didn't answer, but switched on the car radio as if to drown out any more of his questions.

SEVEN

GUS IN THE DUNGEON

She was laughing as she closed the front door behind them. 'Its a good job we're at the end of a cul-de-sac and not overlooked, otherwise you would have been arrested on suspicion of stealing knickers.'

He looked morose.

'Come.'

She gun-prodded him into leading the way down the stairs to the dungeon.

She opened the heavy door and switched on the lights. As Adam had done, he faltered on the threshold, viewing the gallows with alarm.

The gun prodded the nape of his neck. 'In.'

He stumbled through the door, and jumped like a startled rabbit, as the door closed behind them with a loud bang. The gun prodded him further into the middle of the room.

'Stand there and don't move. I'll be back in a minute.'

She vanished through a side door, as he looked around at the dungeon-furniture, dreading her return. His gaze kept returning to the beam from which dangled a hangman's noose. It seemed a 'lifetime' since he and Adam had been in the pub. And where was Adam? Had this woman and Miss Dexter put paid to Adam? And where was Miss Dexter?

'Sorry to have kept you waiting.'

Audrey reappeared in latex; boots, gloves and a mask which covered her head and face, apart from her eyes, mouth and chin. She was otherwise naked. Her breasts were large but not over-floppy, her hips were wide, which made her waist look almost narrow despite her rounded stomach; her thighs were proportionately plumper than the rest of her.

Under less intimidating circumstances, his penis would have stood as the lady entered. However, it was shrivelled with fear, like the rest of him. She stood close in front of him and stared down at his penis, visible in outline under the opaque satin of the knickers he was still wearing..

'Doesn't it fancy me?'

'Yes,' he croaked, his mouth dry. 'It's just - I'm a bit scared of you.'

'Darling, what a delightful thing to say. I do so like a man to be scared of me. What do you think I am going to do to you?'

Blood-red lipstick smiled as she waited for his answer.

'I don't know,' he stuttered.

'Let's go up onto the platform, shall we.'

She held him by his upper arm and, almost gently, made him walk with her up onto the gallows platform to stand behind the stool positioned under the noose. His heart thumped like an over-wagged dog tail, as she adjusted the end of the rope in a ring on the wall so that the noose was now dangling in front of his face.

Just then a buzzer sounded outside the dungeon.

'I think some friends of mine have arrived to see the fun. Please do excuse me whilst I let them in. Sit on the stool and take the weight off your blisters.'

Almost in a trance, and feeling sick in the pit of his stomach, he sat on the stool and waited. His wrists were handcuffed in front of him. His mind told him to stand up and try and escape before she came back with whoever had just arrived, but his legs wouldn't move. So he sat, desperately needing a pee. The need became so urgent that he feared he would flood her pink knickers. He tried to clear his head. He was a fit, thirty year old male, in his prime physically. He could overpower her. He would try to do so the second she put down her gun.

A thought struck him. She was not holding her gun when she left the room. He looked around. He should have spotted it before. The gun was on the floor near the door. He ran down the steps to the gun and picked it up. Then flattened his back against the wall behind the door waiting for her and her visitors to arrive.

He heard footsteps coming down the stairs. Maybe three set of footsteps? Impossible to say. He flattened his back against the wall; gun poised, ready to spring out. She put her head around the door, as if she expected him to be there. He pointed the gun at her forehead.

'There are no bullets in it. Please do go and stand on the gallows.'

'You're bluffing. I'm going to shoot you.'

Her head disappeared. He heard her say. 'Vanessa, darling, could you ask Henry to sort him for me.'

He heard another female voice. 'Yes, of course, Audrey darling. Henry, sort him if you please.'

He started to tremble violently as a male head appeared around the door; a youth rather than a man.

'Name's Henry,' the youth said, by way of an introduction. He then stepped into full view. The shaking gun pointed at Henry; knuckle white on the trigger.

'Put the gun down, mate, otherwise I'll do you a damage.' The accent was cockney; the face was that of Adonis. 'Put it down,' Henry repeated. 'Do as Audrey says.'

Gus lowered the gun.

'Go and stand on the gallows. I won't tell you again.' It was Audrey's voice. Her face appeared again. 'My guests are a bit alarmed by your behaviour.'

'I'm not alarmed, Audrey.' It was the voice of the woman she had called Vanessa.

He did not look behind him as, feeling defeated, he mounted the steps to the platform. His eyes were closed as he reached the stool and his shin banged into it. He stood blindly fearing the worst. He heard high heels clicking up the wooden steps.

'Henry would like a pair of pink knickers like those, wouldn't you, Henry.' It was the voice of Vanessa.

Gus dared to half-open his eyes and squinted at Vanessa, his vision blurred by tears welling. The vision came into focus. She was statuesque with the face of a flamenco dancer, but in a tightly-fitting business suit and court shoes. If he had seen her in the street he would have been tempted to follow her. Thin, black, eyebrows arched over slanted, almost oriental, eyes and cheek bones. The mouth was wide, the lips plump, and amused.

'Are you going to hang him, Audrey darling?'

'He tried to rape me.'

Vanessa was now staring around the dungeon like an interior designer appraising a competitor's handiwork. 'I do rather like the furniture. Especially the gibbet. Who built it for you?'

'One of my clients is a carpenter.'

'I would like one in my basement, although there might not be enough headroom. It has rather a low ceiling if you remember.'

'Why don't you dig a hold in the floor and then cover it with a trapdoor,' Audrey suggested.

'What an ingenious idea. That might work. Henry, make a note.'

The youth was standing to attention behind Vanessa. 'I don't have a pencil and paper.'

'Not the sharpest pencil in the pencil-box,' Vanessa whispered to Audrey. 'But I am very fond of him.' Then, in a normal voice. 'Henry's just become a father, haven't you, Henry. And I've become a grandmother at the ripe old age of thirty six.'

'Of course, Mandy was pregnant. I forgot to ask.'

'Little girl. Francesca. Born on Tuesday.'

'Francesca. What a sweet name,' Audrey said. 'You must show me some pictures. Talking of which, I need to ask a favour. Could you take a few snaps of me punishing Augustus?'

'Delighted to. But why don't I help you with the punishment and Henry can take the pictures. He has an artistic bent.'

'What a splendid idea. But what about...?' Audrey looked meaningfully at Vanessa's elegant suit.

'Perhaps you have a spare mask?'

'Yes of course. You can change in there.' She pointed to the door to the side room and Vanessa's stilettos clicked towards the door and she disappeared.

Audrey smiled at Henry. 'How old are you, Henry?'

'Eighteen.'

'How sweet. A father at eighteen. A big responsibility.' Then she smiled less sweetly at Gus. 'Are you a father?'

'No.'

'Relatives?'

'None that speak to me.'

Her smile vanished. 'So no one is likely to miss you.'

He swallowed hard. Henry looked worried on his behalf. 'My fiancée would,' he managed to stammer.

'Are you going to...?' Henry started to ask, but his voice trailed off.

Audrey interpreted the unfinished question. She looked towards Gus, like a rat catcher viewing a caught sewer rat. 'I'm afraid so.'

Gus was sobbing as Vanessa emerged from the side room dressed identically to Audrey; that is to say, she was wearing nothing but latex boots and gloves and a mask. She saw Gus sobbing. 'Oh, dear, he looks a little upset; no stiff upper lip.'

Both women mounted the steps up onto the platform. Audrey came close to Gus and slapped him hard around the face. 'No stiff cock either.'

'Are you going to keep him handcuffed?' Vanessa said, laconically.

'He might become violent,' Audrey said.

'Oh, I'm sure he won't. Henry would stop him, wouldn't you, Henry. And I do so prefer a man's hands to be tied behind his back with cord.'

'I prefer cord as well, darling, but Julia likes handcuffs and sometimes they are handier.' As she spoke, Audrey looked dubiously at the slim Henry. She was doubtful that he would have the upper hand if it came to a fight with the plump, but solid, Gus. But, always the perfect hostess anxious to keep her guests amused, she picked up a small key and released Gus from his handcuffs. He stood massaging his freed wrists and viewed the opposition. Two women, old enough to be grandmothers, and a skinny, young bloke.

Gus had been a boxing blue at Camford University. He could throw his weight around. Yes, he had been intimidated by Audrey, but only because he had thought her gun was loaded, and also because she had blackmailed him with photographs. He had had enough. He now knew that the gun had no bullets and he no longer cared if anyone saw the photos. He would fight his way out if necessary. 'I'm going,' he announced.

'And where exactly are you going?' Audrey asked.

'Back to the boat.'

'He is staying on a houseboat which belongs to his friend, Adam, who was here earlier. Adam is having dinner with Julia,' Audrey explained to Vanessa, like two women gossiping in a teashop over Earl Grey and cucumber sandwiches and cream cakes.

The information that Adam was having dinner with 'Julia', whoever she was, surprised Gus. Then it occurred to him that Julia was the Miss Dexter. Typical of Adam to have 'picked up' another bird and taken her out.

'Gus is supposed to be getting married tomorrow. Adam is his best man,' Audrey continued to her friend. 'Although I don't think Gus wants to get married, do you, Gus.'

He shook his head to confirm that he did not want to get married. 'I've decided I'm not going though with it.'

'Poor girl,' Vanessa said, looking cross on the fiancée's behalf. 'Personally, I think ditching a bride the day before her wedding is a hanging offence.'

'I do so agree, Vanessa.'

Despite his new found bravado, he gulped, and took a step backwards and raised his fists in a classic 'Marquis of Queensberry' stance. 'I'm not afraid of any of you. I'm going.'

'Are you,' Vanessa said, unimpressed.

There were two chairs in the corner of the room. Without saying anything, Vanessa dragged both chairs closer to the centre of the room, and sat in one. She patted the other seat, inviting Audrey to sit next to her. 'Ringside seats, darling. I do so enjoy a bout of fisticuffs, don't you.' And then smiled at Henry. 'Please incapacitate this gentleman, but not so he can't stand on a stool.'

The masked women watched as Henry ambled lithely towards Gus, who poked out a fist towards Henry's nose. Almost leisurely Henry ducked and snapped a karate chop to Gus's midriff. Gus doubled-up, collapsed to his knees and rolled into a foetal position, clutching his stomach as though he had severe food poisoning. 'No more.'

'That was over quickly,' Audrey said, 'I'm so glad we didn't pay an entry fee to watch. Let's put him out of his misery now, shall we.'

EIGHT

GUS ON THE GALLOWS

Audrey gave Gus a kick in the ribs as he squirmed on the floor. 'On your feet.'

Gus struggled slowly to his knees, gasping for air, to enable him to plead. 'Please let me go.'

Audrey's response was to kick him once more. 'Up. If I have to tell you again, we'll hang you by the balls before we hang you by the neck.'

'Is it possible to do both at the same time?' Vanessa asked.

'Interesting question, darling. Shall we try?'

Gus was now on his feet, winded.

'Take off your panties,' Audrey ordered. He obeyed, mechanically. 'Put them over your head.' Vanessa giggled as, weeping, he covered the front of his face with the seat of the knickers. 'A bit on the small side.'

'His head?' Audrey asked.

'I was thinking more of his penis.'

The two women stared down at the shrivelled specimen.

'Perhaps we ought to grant him one last request,' Vanessa said.

'Sex with one of us,' Audrey suggested.

'Possibly both of us,' Vanessa said. 'Mind you, looking at how small it is, I'm not sure we would know he was fucking us.' She turned and looked at Henry, standing behind them. 'Henry, come here.' He stepped forward. 'Show Audrey the size of your cock,' Vanessa commanded.

Immediately, Henry's hands went to his fly and he unbuckled and unzipped, and pushed down his trousers and underpants sufficiently, to expose a long, thick penis. Audrey went close to him and fingered it, like the lady of the manor seeing a prize-specimen cucumber at the village fete and

giving it a squeeze to check it was firm. 'I don't think I've ever seen anything as big, except possibly, on a bull-elephant.'

Vanessa laughed. 'Henry's penis is rather out of proportion to the rest of him. Why don't you try it for size, darling?'

'It's a bit big for me, I think?'

'Nonsense, darling. You're about the same size as me, and I accommodate Henry; don't I, Henry darling.'

Vanessa then viewed Gus's much smaller specimen. 'How big did it get when he tried to rape you?'

'Why don't you see,' Audrey said.

Vanessa came close to Gus, whose face was covered by Audrey's panties, and raised the silk-material to the top of his head. His exposed face was florid, his eyes wide open with fear. Vanessa patted his cheek and gave it a little squeeze with her thumb and forefinger.

'I do find a man in women's underwear rather sexy.' Her right hand fondled his penis to no effect. 'Are you scared of me, darling?'

He nodded to confirm that he was scared. 'How lovely. I do so adore a man who is scared of me. Henry is terrified, aren't you, darling.' Henry nodded to confirm that he was terrified of Vanessa.

She turned towards Audrey. 'Darling, let's play a game - unlucky dip. Henry likes a game of unlucky dip, don't you Henry.'

Gus looked at Henry through watery eyes and saw Henry shake his head ever so slightly, as much as he dared, to indicate that he did not like this game.

'It sounds fun, Vanessa darling. Do tell me how you play it,' Audrey said.

'It's very simple. We need three slips of paper and a pencil. I have a small notepad and an eye brow pencil in my handbag.' She went over to her bag.

Gus looked at Henry for some inkling as to what was in store for him. Henry had gone pale, and avoided Gus's eyes.

'We also need a hat,' Vanessa said, coming back to Audrey. 'Or perhaps that waste paper basket would do. Bring it here, Henry.'

She pointed to a bin in the corner and Henry obeyed the order.

Vanessa looked in the bin. 'Empty. Good. Now I need to write out three words on three bits of paper and put them in the bin.'

Audrey looked over Vanessa's shoulder as Vanessa tore off three small sheets from the notepad and wrote on each. Her eyes widened as she read the words and a hand went to her mouth.

'I'm not sure we should do that to him; too messy. And I tend to faint at the sight of...'

'Perhaps your right, darling. Although it would ensure he can't threaten rape again.'

'Doesn't the first word do that?' Audrey queried.

'Yes, I suppose it does,' Vanessa agreed, screwing the paper into a small, tight ball and launching in into the corner where the waste bin had stood. She wrote another word on a fresh sheet.

Audrey was still looking over Vanessa's shoulder and laughed. 'Which one of us?'

'Both,' Vanessa said. 'Otherwise the sentence is the first word.'

'A one-word sentence,' Audrey said.

Gus's knees wobbled and Henry stepped forward and stopped him from falling.

'Best grovel, mate. That's you're best chance,' he whispered.

But Vanessa's eyes were sharp. She had seen Henry's lips move as he whispered. 'What did you say to him, Henry?'

Henry now looked worried for his own wellbeing. 'Nothing, Vanessa.'

'Don't lie to me. Come here and touch your toes.'

Gus watched with increasing alarm as Henry, seemingly his only hope, stood close to Vanessa with his feet wide apart to give himself stability, and bent at the waist, his outstretched fingers reaching for the toes of his rubber soled shoes.

'Darling could you do the honours.' Vanessa smiled sweetly at Audrey.

'With pleasure. What shall I use?' Audrey asked as she went over to the rack of flagellation instruments hanging from their hooks.

'I've never seen such a comprehensive assortment,' Vanessa said with appreciation. 'I am envious.'

'I like to use a rattan,' Audrey said, pointing to the thickest item in her collection of school-handled canes with the air of a hostess recommending a chocolate from a selection box.

'Darling, perhaps you could use something lighter and swishier, as long as it stings. Mandy does not like Henry to be beaten too much. She's altogether too soft. Isn't that right, Henry?'

'Yes,' he muttered, keeping his head down and fingers pointed at his toes.

'Julia is very soft,' Audrey said. Then she whispered to her friend, 'I think she prefers spanking women.'

Vanessa whispered back. 'So does Mandy, but don't quote me.' Then spoke in her normal voice. 'Henry will have to take down his trousers and underpants, won't you, Henry, so that I can gauge how long the resulting marks are likely to last.' As Vanessa said this, Henry straightened up, and unbuckled and unzipped his fly again and pushed his trousers and his underpants down over his calves and then resumed his position to be beaten.

Gus saw his chance to escape before they had him on a string. Both women were focused on selecting a cane to use on Henry's exposed buttocks. Henry's trousers were around his legs. He would be inhibited from giving chase. He heard a cane whack Henry's buttocks. Without further thought, Gus lurched towards the dungeon door, wrenched it open, and leapt up the stairs, three at a time, to the ground floor. Behind him he heard females cursing.

He reached the front door. It was locked. He twisted the key and the doorknob. The door still refused to open. There were bolts across at the top and bottom. He looked behind him. The trouser-less figure of Henry was silhouetted at the far end of the corridor. Gus reached up and drew back the top bolt and reached down and drew back the bottom bolt. But it was too late. Henry was a yard away. Gus flattened his back against the front door, with his palms pressing on either side of the letterbox, as Henry came close.

'Please let me go.'

He trembled uncontrollably, his limbs as stiff as jelly, as Henry stood in front of him. 'That was a pretty stupid thing to do, mate.'

'They're going to hang me.'

'No they're not,' Henry said, almost in a whisper, his mouth by the side of Gus's mouth. 'They both like frightening blokes to death, that's all.'

'How can you stand it? Why don't you run away?'

'Dunno, mate. Its just the way I am. I do as Vanessa tells me. And she's told me to take you back to the dungeon.'

Gus had stopped shivering with fear as Henry seemed friendly and conversational, but the trembles returned as Henry took him gently by the arm and led him along the corridor towards the stairs leading down to the dungeon.

Henry halted them both at the top of the stairs, and whispered again. 'They might threaten to castrate you.' Gus sank to his knees at this news. 'But don't worry; they won't actually do it. Vanessa's threatened to cut my cock off more times than I've had a hot dinner lady, and that was every day when I was at school. Just grovel at their feet and plead for mercy, and you'll stay in

one piece. Oh, and don't try to run away again, understood? There's always a first time.'

Gus nodded that he understood, his legs once again able to support him and walk him down the stairs.

Audrey and Vanessa were sitting on two chairs, still dressed - or undressed - and masked, and both holding whips. They both looked stern. Henry stopped Gus in front of the women, and stepped away.

Then, slowly, Audrey rose from her seat and turned towards the gibbet and mounted the five steps to the platform, her naked, pear-shaped buttocks wobbling as she did so. She stood on the platform looking down at Gus, the noose dangling next to her shoulder. She elongated her arm and stretched a pointed finger at Gus.

'Come up here.'

Gus glanced at Henry, who gave him a slight nod as if to say 'Do as she says, mate, and you'll be alright,'

'Henry, are you giving signals to him?' Vanessa enquired, having noticed his nod.

'No, Vanessa.'

Gus was still standing stock still, not having moved since Audrey's instruction to join her on the gallows platform. With a glare over her shoulder at Henry, as if to say 'We'll deal with you in a moment,' Vanessa took Gus by the arm and guided him towards the steps to the gallows.

'Go on up and stand in front of Audrey with your back to her.'

As if in a trance, he mounted the steps again, tripping on the third step and falling on his knees onto the platform. He remained in that position.

'Stand up,' a woman's voice said. His mind was a blur and he was not sure whether the voice belonged to Vanessa or Audrey. He struggled to his feet, feeling his fate was sealed; best get it over with, he thought. His vision was blurred because he was crying.

A leather-gloved hand on his shoulders pushed him closer to Audrey. Something stung his buttocks. Vanessa was behind him with a whip.

'Move.'

He stood in front of Audrey with his back to her.

'Hands behind your back,' she said.

He knew this was his very last chance to make a run for it whilst his hands were still free. The dungeon door was open. This time he would fight to the death if Henry tried to stop him. But Vanessa seemed to read his mind.

'Henry, stand by the door.'

Meekly, Gus put his hands behind his back. Instead of handcuffs he felt his wrists tied with rope by Audrey.

'Make a nice bow in the knot, shall we, darling,' Audrey whispered in his ear. 'I haven't tied your wrists too tight, have I? I don't want to cut off your circulation just yet.' Then she slipped the noose over his head, and adjusted and tightened it behind his left ear.

'Adam knows I'm here,' he said in a husky whisper.

'No he doesn't. If you remember you escaped from here earlier this evening. Adam doesn't know I brought you back.'

'Is there a trapdoor, darling?' Vanessa asked, viewing the platform.

'No. We have to use a stool. It gives one a bigger kick.'

He had made up his mind not to open his eyes again. He would remain in darkness. Their voices merged. He was now unsure which one of the two women was speaking.

'Mummy, what are you doing?'

He opened his eyes. Through water he saw a female figure standing next to Henry. His vision cleared enough to see that it was a shapely girl.

'Hello, darling, what a surprise,' Vanessa said.

'I've come to fetch Henry. The front door was open.'

'Hello Mandy, darling. You look radiant,' Audrey said, still standing on the platform.

'Who is he?' the girl asked.

'This is Gus. Audrey and I are just about to hang him.'

'Why?'

'He tried to rape Audrey.'

The girl pulled a disapproving face. 'How disgusting. Is Gus short for disgusting?'

She walked towards the gallows, and up the steps to the platform. Audrey went forward to greet her and put an arm around the girl's waist as they kissed each other's cheeks, French-style. 'Careful, darling, we don't want you falling off the platform.'

'I'll be careful.' She stepped in front of Gus and looked him in the face. He stared at an extremely pretty blond, a younger version of Vanessa.

'There isn't really enough space up here for four, darling. Why don't you go down and sit in a chair and watch,' Vanessa said.

Instead of answering the girl reached up to the noose. Gus flinched,

expecting her to tighten the knot even more. It was already so tight he was having difficulty breathing. Her breasts pressed against his chest as she reached forward to his neck. Surprisingly, she loosened the knot and then unlooped the noose from around his neck. He hardly breathed for a few seconds. And then let out a sigh of relief.

'Darling, why did you do that?' her mother asked.

'I don't want you executing anyone with Henry in the room.'

'Why?' Audrey asked.

'Because the two of you could be arrested for murder and I don't want the father of my child arrested as an accomplice.'

Audrey humphed in annoyance. 'Is it alright if we hang him once you and Henry leave?'

'Yes of course,' Mandy said. 'Rapists are disgusting.'

'Please don't leave, Gus pleaded.

Mandy ignored him, and held out her hand for Audrey to help her back down the steps.

'Do put your trousers on,' Mandy said to Henry and looked over her shoulder at her mother. 'Henry is coming home with me. He needs to learn how to change a nappy.'

'I do so adore a man in a nappy; so decadent,' Audrey said, and Vanessa laughed.

Mandy looked stony-faced. Then she seemed to have a change of heart. She looked up at Gus. Thought for a moment, and then walked back to the gallows and up the steps to the platform and again stood in front of him. She stared into his eyes, and then without a word went to his left side, reached for the noose, looped it over his head, and tightened the knot behind his left ear, as her mother had done. He gasped. She stood in front of him again. He stared back at her with terrified eyes as she looked down at his penis.

'I've seen bigger on a cherub in a rococo painting.'

'It's about six inches, darling,' her mother said.

'Mummy could you go down and leave us.'

'Are you going to hang him after all, darling?'

'It depends, Mummy.' Mandy watched her mother descend the steps and stand next to Audrey, both women looking up at the gallows, then went to Gus's left side and put her mouth close to his ear. 'I do not like rapists.'

'Please. I won't do it again. I'm getting married tomorrow.'

'Good. Because if you try raping someone again I will get Henry to find

you and then I will hang you myself. Understood.'

He nodded. Mandy smiled, then, once again, un-looped the noose from around his neck, and walked back down the steps.

Henry was now dressed, and her mother emerged from the side room, also dressed. 'I take it we're going home now, darling.'

'Yes, Mummy.'

After kissing her three visitors goodbye and closing the dungeon door, Audrey walked slowly back up the steps to stand next to Gus on the gallows. Using her right hand she gently swung the noose, like a pendulum, in front of his face. 'Now that Mandy has gone with her mother and her boyfriend, and there's just the two of us, give me one good reason why I shouldn't hang you on my own.'

'I promise I wouldn't try and rape you again.'

'I'm sure you wouldn't but you still need to be punished for the attempt in the first place.'

'I will be your slave,' he said in desperation.

'Now that possibly is a reason not to hang you. But I'm going to have a think, in my bath, about what to do. In the meantime...' She didn't finished the sentence. For the third time that frightful evening, a female placed a noose around his neck and tightened the knot behind his ear as he stood on a gallows stool.

NINE

IN THE RESTAURANT

'My mother likes you.'

'I like her,' Adam mumbled.

'No you don't. You're terrified of her.'

Just then the waitress coughed politely to announce that she was beside their table. 'Will madam and sir be ready to order?'

Julia looked up and viewed the waitress; a doll-like vision with almond-eyes and black hair. Adam glanced at the waitress as well. Pretty; if you have a penchant for small, dark girls. He did not. He preferred plump blonds with big bottoms. He glanced back at Julia. She was blond and leggy and very pretty, but too slim. And her gaze was lingering on the waitress.

'What do you recommend?' Julia asked, with a dazzling smile at the waitress. She held the menu slightly sideways so that the waitress could come close to her and point to various items on the menu.

'Does madam like meat or fish?'

Julia smiled. 'Meat, I always think of as a masculine dish, and fish as a female dish. I prefer fish. Which do you prefer, may I ask?'

The waitress blushed slightly. The undercurrent would have pulled any female swimmer into the clear blue waters around Lesbos.

'Shall I ask the chef to make a special meat dish for sir and a special fish dish for madam?'

'That would be lovely.'

Julia's attention returned to Adam as the waitress skipped away in the direction of the kitchen.

'I prefer fish too,' he said. 'I'm not that keen on meat.'

'You'll get what you're given. So, tell me about your sex life. And I want

the true version. Because if I find out you're not telling the truth I will be very cross, with painful repercussions for you.'

'Where do you want me to start?'

'Tell me about your first girlfriend.'

'I don't remember her.'

'You're lying. I warned you what would happen if you lie to me. You will receive a whipping from both me and my mother.' She had raised her voice. His eyes darted around the restaurant like a rabbit emerging from its hole. They were the only customers; it was still early evening. 'Everyone remembers their first girlfriend.'

He felt a surge of bravado. 'Do you remember yours?'

Her facial expression changed from jovial and mocking to stern and threatening. 'What do you mean by that comment?'

He quavered under the intense glare. 'I only asked if you remember your first boyfriend.'

'I ask the questions.'

'My first girlfriend sat on me,' he said.

'Do you mean literally?'

'She was big and heavy and used to pin me on the floor and sit on my chest.'

'Did you like her doing that to you?'

'No.'

'I bet you did. How big was she?' Was she fat?

'Yes.'

'Do you like fat girls?'

'No.'

'I bet you do. I'm probably too thin for you.'

'I prefer slim girls,' he lied.

'Do you find the waitress attractive?'

'No,' he said, truthfully. And stopped his tongue from wagging 'but you do.' He returned his gaze to the menu and flipped to the wine list. He remembered that her mother had ordered him to treat Julia as the love of his life.

'What would you like to drink?' he asked.

'Champagne,' she said, and added 'as you're paying.'

'I don't have a great deal left on me as your mother took most of my money.'

'It's alright, I have on me what was your money. I will loan you the money to pay for the meal and you can reimburse me later, with interest. I like vintage pink champagne.'

'You have champagne and I'll have a bottle of red wine,' he said.

'I would prefer you to drink fizzy water. Its a more suitable drink for a sissy. Plus, I don't want you getting drunk when you're my escort.' Her smile left no room for argument.

But he felt peevish. 'Why don't I just have bread and water?'

She gave him a warning look. 'You will be on bread and water, locked up in my mother's dungeon for the rest of your life, if you're not more respectful to me.'

He looked back at the menu. He needed to get away. But he also needed the key in her handbag, otherwise he would have the choice of engaging a locksmith or becoming celibate. At that precise moment, celibacy appealed to him. Women were nothing but trouble. And it was his cock which had got him into trouble. Possibly, it would be a good idea to keep it locked up.

He looked across at Julia. She was viewing the deserts. 'I like crème brûlée.' She was very pretty - certainly. But, she was right; he found her too thin. He didn't fancy her; except, maybe, when she played at being a headmistress. And he didn't fancy crème brûlée; bread and butter pudding was more to his taste. He would do a runner; push his chair back, stand up, and bolt for the door.

She was now staring at him as if reading his mind. 'Am I boring you?'

'No.'

'You're not a great conversationalist, are you.'

'I don't know what to say. This is an artificial situation.'

'We met because you're a sex pervert and my mother and I provide services for sex perverts; is that what you mean?'

This was said just as a waiter glided to their table. 'Are you ready to order some drinks, madam and sir?'

This time, Julia's smile at the waiter was not lascivious, but that of a polite customer. 'I will have a bottle of pink champagne. Is it vintage?'

'No, madam, but it is very nice.'

'Very good. And my friend will have bottle of sparkling water and a bottle of the house claret.'

She smiled sweetly again as she handed the wine list to the waiter, who departed, and then focused her smile on Adam. 'I relented. I might need you

to perform later. And I suspect you cannot unless you have imbibed alcohol to give you Dutch courage.'

'Perform?' Adam's complexion was the palest of ales.

Julia smiled her semi-smile with its hint of menace. 'My mother, no doubt, has told you to try and fuck me.'

'Why does your mother...?'

'A good question. And one I find difficult to answer. But I usually do what she wants - eventually. And so will you, as you now work for us.'

'Work for you and your mother?' he queried. His complexion was now devoid of colour, pale or otherwise. 'Doing what?'

'Odd jobs around the business; maybe some domination.'

'Domination?'

'Whipping female customers. Believe it or not, some women like being dominated by a man and will pay for the pleasure. Hard to believe, I know. That's where you come in - if you'll excuse the pun. You will dominate these women; do what they want you to do to them, and then give what you earn to me and my mother. We may allow you some pocket money, if you're a good boy and do as you're told.'

He felt like a rat lost in a sewer with no light at the end of the smelly tunnel. 'Why me?'

'At the moment, we don't have a man around to provide the service. My mother's best friend, Vanessa, sometimes loans her slave, Henry, but he's just become a father. And his girlfriend, Mandy - Vanessa's daughter - doesn't like him having sex with other women now he's the father of her daughter.'

She cocked her head sideways as if appraising him professionally. 'You are very good looking and you've got a six-pack, and a big cock. Women will pay us for you to fuck them. Although, as I hope I've made clear, you're not my type.'

'I can't fuck anyone, can I, as you've locked me in a penis restraint.'

The waitress had returned with the champagne and an ice bucket. Behind her, a waiter held the sparkling water and bottle of red wine. Both had heard the last bit of the conversation and were trying to suppress grins. Adam felt himself blushing. Julia gave her usual sweet smile at the waitress and an icy stare at the waiter. 'The gentleman will pour the wine and champagne. You may go.'

She watched the waiting staff place the bottles and ice bucket on the their table and return to the kitchen. 'Nice bum.'

Adam was not sure whether she was referring to the waiter or the waitress; he suspected the latter.

She returned her attention to Adam. 'Don't spill when you pour the drinks,' she said imperiously as she watched him begin his task.

Julia was in the seat against the wall with a view of the door. Adam was facing her. Behind him, he heard the door open; other customers had arrived. Two women. Judging by the raucous laughing, the newcomers had already poured themselves a few drinks.

One of the women was singing loudly 'I'm getting married in the morning,' and the other woman shouted 'ding dong, his balls are gonna shine.'

'Shit,' Adam muttered under his breath, as the cork popped and champagne fizzed from the bottle.

Julia glanced at him. She suspected that the expletive had not been caused by the volatile champagne.

'Do you know these two?'

He didn't answer. She kicked him in the shin with the point of her stiletto under the table. 'Answer me.'

'It's Gus's fiancée and her bridesmaid.'

'Which is which?'

He turned his head slightly to glance over his shoulder at the two women. 'The thin one's Yvette, his fiancée. The plump one's Delia, her bridesmaid.'

'Plump' is downsizing the bridesmaid a bit,' Julia said. 'I think 'obese' is more descriptive.'

'It's Adam.' The cry of recognition from Delia, the bridesmaid, was also a screech of delight, as she headed in his direction, gripped him bodily in a hug, and glued her mouth to his. Her powerful arms encircled him and pushed him back down into his seat. Eventually she disengaged from him, becoming aware that the lady sitting with Adam at the table looked anything but pleased.

Delia smiled at Julia. 'Sorry, is Adam a friend of yours?'

'We are together,' Julia said, frostily.

'Where's Gus?' Yvette sat at the table as she asked.

Delia grabbed the fourth chair next to Adam and sat, squeezing up to him, oblivious to the glare Julia was still giving her.

'I think he's gone back to my boat. He wanted an early night to be fit for the big day tomorrow.'

'All the better to shag you my dear,' Delia said to Yvette, in slurred tones

The waitress was back at the table. 'Will mesdames be joining sir and madam.'

'No,' Julia said softly.

'Yes, we will,' Delia said. 'Us dames will have what dame and sir are having, including champagne and wine.'

Yvette nodded to the waitress to confirm. 'What are you having as a matter of interest?' she asked Adam.

'Julia ordered,' Adam said.

'Adam, remember your manners, and formally introduce me and Evie to your friend,' Delia said.

Adam looked at Julia, as if for permission to make the introductions. She smiled slightly which Adam took as being that it was alright to do so.

'This is Julia.'

'And we are,' Delia said, nudging Adam in the ribs.

'This is Yvette and Delia.'

'Old friends of Adam,' Delia said. 'We've not heard of you, Julia. And Adam usually boasts of his numerous conquests.'

'I do not consider myself to be your conquest, do I, Adam? Possibly the other around.'

'Julia is just a friend,' Adam said quickly.

Julia gave one of her sugary smiles at Delia. 'Adam has not mentioned you to me. Although, Adam did mention that he was to be a best man at a wedding tomorrow.'

'I get thirsty staring at full bottles of booze,' Delia said, looking pointedly at the champagne.

Adam picked up the champagne and the three women watched as he filled four champagne glasses and then handed them around.

Delia had assumed the role of mistress of ceremonies. 'Cheers,' she said, raising her glass. 'To Evie and Gus tomorrow.'

They raised their glasses; Julia, somewhat slowly.

'We're going to have plenty of champagne tomorrow, aren't we, Evie,' Delia said. 'Ice buckets of the stuff.'

'I'll need it,' Yvette said.

Julia smiled her sweet smile. 'Is it a big wedding?'

'Low key,' Yvette said.

Julia started giggling at the words 'low key' as Adam blushed, and so did his penis in its cage.

'Sorry. I always get the giggles when I have champagne,' Julia said.

'It's in a registry office,' Yvette said. 'There will be me - obviously - Gus - obviously, Adam as best man. And Del here, as my bridesmaid.'

'I wouldn't be Gus's bridesmaid, would I,' Delia said, and both she and the bride-to-be dissolved into fits of giggling.

'What about relatives?' Julia enquired.

'My parents are coming,' Yvette said. 'Gus's parents are not coming as his mum doesn't know about the wedding.'

'Because he hasn't had the bottle to tell his mum,' Delia said. 'His mum wouldn't think any woman was good enough for her son. If she'd been around when the Vikings were raping and pillaging they'd have used her as a battle axe.'

'Or maybe as the dragon-figurehead on the front of their boat,' Yvette said.

'Have you known Adam long, either of you?' Julia asked sweetly.

'I am Adam's oldest friend,' Delia said. 'I've known him since we were kids.' She smiled at Adam. 'Haven't I, Adam my cherub. I used to pin you to the ground and sit on your chest. You were my first boyfriend.' Then Delia looked at Julia with undisguised hostility. 'Are you Adam's girlfriend?'

'Just good friends, as Adam said.'

'How long have you two known each other then?' Delia asked.

'Not long,' Julia said.

'Have you met Gus?' Yvette asked.

'No,' Julia said.

'But Adam and Gus we supposed to be together tonight. It's Gus's last night of freedom, as he puts it,' Yvette said.

Julia smiled to herself.

Just then the waitress arrived with the first course. 'Oyster Rockefeller', she announced.

'Why is it called Rockefeller?' Yvette asked.

'The sauce is very rich,' the waitress said.

'Just like your dad, Evie. Smells lovely,' Delia said with her snub nose almost in the bowl. 'Aren't oysters supposed to help a man get up?'

'You mean as in 'get up and go'?' Yvette queried.

'As in get up and come,' Delia responded.

Even Julia giggled. The joke seemed to break the ice, like a heavyweight skater doing one twirl too many.

Even Adam, who had looked morose, was forced to smile. He remembered that Delia was always good company. The thought flashed through his mind as to what she would be like in bed. Probably inventive. Although there was not much point in speculating with his penis restrained as it was.

Delia tucked in as she was prone to do when something appetising was on the menu. Sauce dribbled down her chin until she wiped it with her napkin.

Yvette was more ladylike. 'I do find eating oysters is a bit masculine,' she said.

'I like oysters,' Julia said.

'Maybe we'll find a pearl,' Delia said.

'Pearls grow in oysters because of irritants,' Julia said, chewing the succulent flesh.

'Most people find me irritating,' Delia said. 'Maybe I'll become a pearl eventually.'

'Strung, hopefully,' Julia said softly.

Yvette smiled at Adam. 'You're very quiet, Adam darling. I do hope Delia and I haven't interrupted a tryst.'

'What's a tryst?' Delia said.

'A meeting of lovers,' Yvette said.

'I've had a few trysts then,' Delia said. 'Although I thought they were called fucks.'

Yvette, gripped the open champagne bottle and refilled her glass to the brim and beyond so that the tablecloth became soggy. 'It's my last night of freedom. I wouldn't mind a tryst.'

Delia smirked at Adam. 'You up for it Adam as you're the only one here who can provide a fuck?'

'I think this conversation is becoming a little risqué,' Julia said.

'Risky?' Delia queried. 'It's alright, I've got a packet of rubber-johnnies in my handbag. Be prepared is what they taught me in the Girl Guides. In case you get scouted.'

Yvette and Delia dissolved into giggles. Julia suppressed a smile. Adam did not smile. He glanced down at Julia's handbag, by her ankles, which held the key. He thought about snatching her handbag and making a run for it.

Delia was smiling at him. 'Think you can manage the three of us, Adam?'

'Manage?' he queried.

'As in tryst - the new word for fuck,' Delia said. 'You've never fucked me

even if I was your first girlfriend. Mind you, it would have been illegal then.'

'You sound regretful, Del,' Yvette said, her words more slurred.

'I am. But we can always make up for lost time, can't we, Adam.'

'Why don't we have an orgy?' Yvette said, draining her glass, and burping. 'Excuse me. I'm getting bubbly.'

'Great idea, Evie. But we've only got one bloke, amongst three of us,' Delia said.

'Count me out,' Julia said.

Delia looked pleased. 'Just me and you with Adam, then Evie.'

Yvette, through her drunken haze, looked concerned. 'We'd better not tell Gus.'

'I'm not going to,' Delia said.

'Excuse me, but has anyone asked me whether I want to be part of this orgy?' Adam asked, feeling left out of the discussion.

Julia watched with amusement as Delia pursed her lips, looked cross at Adam and said, 'You always did what I told you when we were kids. You'll do what I tell you now.'

Adam opened his mouth to say something but thought better of it. He glanced across at Yvette. She was staring into her empty champagne glass with a fixed expression. Julia and Delia also looked at her. She seemed to be making a decision. 'I don't think I want sex with a man.' She was wild-eyed with panic as she spoke.

Delia looked at her in amazement. 'A bit late to decide you don't want to be fucked by a man. You're getting married in a few hours.'

'I don't think I want to marry Gus. I don't think I want to marry a man.' Suddenly she smiled at Julia, who returning a flashing smile. 'What would you do, Julia?'

'I'm not keen on men either so I'd be unlikely to marry one.'

Julia and Yvette eyed each other as if seeing each other in a new light.

Suddenly Delia stood up. 'I need the loo. You come with me, Evie.'

Yvette looked surprised, but stood. 'I probably need the loo as well; too much to drink.'

Julia and Adam watched the two women sway towards a door marked 'toilets'.

'Quite a pair, aren't they,' Julia said.

'Are you talking about Delia's tits?'

'You like Delia, don't you?'

'Everyone likes Delia.'

'I bet not as much as you do. You would like to fuck her but you won't admit it to yourself.'

'At the moment, I can't fuck anyone, unless you give me the key.'

Julia smiled in a meaningful way. Although, Adam did not get the meaning at first. 'I might do, so that you can fuck Delia, providing you leave me alone with Yvette.' Her smile vanished and she looked serious.

'You want to...?' he began.

'You don't ask questions otherwise I will change my mind about the key. You take Delia home and I'll go home with Yvette.'

'You prefer women to men?'

The waitress was back at their table. A slight blush to her cheeks and a smile playing on her lips, indicated that she had heard. 'May I take your plates,' she asked before clearing away.

Adam and Julia watched the waitress return to the kitchen.

'I bet you fancy her as well,' Adam said.

'I do as a matter of fact. Once we have finished desserts you may make an excuse to leave with Delia - understood?'

He nodded to confirm that he understood his instruction, and she reached down for her handbag.

Adam was smiling happily when Delia and Yvette returned from the 'ladies'. He gave Delia a particularly charming smile.

'Anyone else going for a piss?' Delia asked, in her forthright fashion.

'I think I might need the 'gents'.'

The three women watched him head for - what navy personnel describe as - the heads.

'Gorgeous hunk, isn't he,' Delia said. 'But out of my league. He's made it clear he would never look twice at a fat bird like me.'

'Life is full of little surprises,' Julia said, with a sweet smile.

Yvette suddenly looked thoughtful - if not to say - belligerent. 'You've never really explained what happened between you and Gus to enable you to comment on his size.'

'You told me.'

'No I didn't. I've never seen it.'

Delia swallowed her surprise by taking a slurp of champagne. 'Your thirtieth, if you remember. We'd all had more than an elegant sufficiency of the hard stuff, and Gus suddenly 'flashed' me.'

'Flashed?' Yvette requested an interpretation.

'As in - unzipped his shopping bag and showed me a small banana and a couple of grapes.'

'Maybe he didn't fancy you that much,' Yvette said.

'Oh, I think he did. He also told me what he would like to do to me.'

'Which was what?' Yvette asked.

Delia blushed slightly. 'He said he would like to cane my fat arse.'

'Wouldn't we all,' Yvette said, somewhat sarcastically. And then turned her attention to Julia. 'Does Adam have a big cock?'

'No idea,' Julia said, downing the remains of her champagne. 'Shall we open the wine?'

'Why not,' Yvette said. 'It's usually the man who pours.'

'Oh, I think you and I can manage without a man,' Julia said.

She and Yvette exchanged glances with lowered eyelids.

'I'm getting the message that three's a crowd,' Delia said.

Julia smiled at her. 'Maybe Adam...' She left the sentence unfinished.

Yvette finished it for her. 'Could you ask Adam to escort you home as Julia and I have things to discuss, woman to woman. After you've had your main course and pudding. I know how much you like your pudding, Del.'

'I've known you all these years, Evie, darling and I never guessed.'

'Guessed what?' she asked, slightly aggressively.'

Julia gave one of her sweet smiles at Delia. 'I think you might have misunderstood the situation. Just between the three of us, and you both promise it won't go any further.'

They both shook their heads to confirm the information Julia was about to impart would not go any further.

'Well, Adam has a certain quirk.'

'Quirk?' Yvette questioned, as Delia said nothing but hoped what the quirk might be.

'He keeps trying to persuade me to,' her voice trailed off.

'Fuck you?' Delia provided what she hoped fervently would not be the answer.

'He wants me to smack his bottom.'

Yvette burst out laughing in astonishment. 'Adam is a masochist. I would never have guessed.'

'Neither would I,' Delia said, her hopes raised sky high. 'I would smack his bum any time.'

All three women laughed as though one of them had just told the funniest joke imaginable. Then, as one, they glanced towards the toilets as Adam emerged.

Julia leaned forward and whispered to Delia. 'Could you take him off my hands tonight?'

'Pleasure,' Delia whispered back

'Comfy now, my sweet?' Yvette asked with a smirk as he took his seat.

'Yes thank you.'

'I can't even remember what we ordered for the main course' Yvette said. And added as the waitress approached, 'But here it comes.'

'I'm going to eat mine ever so quickly,' Delia said.

'Don't you always,' Yvette said, somewhat unkindly.

'I've just remembered I need to rush home as soon as I've eaten.'

'Why doesn't Adam drive you home in my car, if he doesn't mind being a gentleman,' Julia said.

TEN

DELIA

Adam sat a little uncomfortably on Delia's comfortable sofa.

'Nice of you to give me a lift home,' she said sipping her coffee.

'Pleasure,' he replied, draining his coffee cup. 'I ought to be going. Big day tomorrow.'

'We could have a big tonight,' she said demurely. 'If you don't go.' She smiled sweetly as she put down her coffee cup. 'I have some champers in the fridge.'

'I think I've had enough to drink for one evening.'

'Yes, you must be too drunk to drive. If the police were to catch you driving you'd lose your licence. Possibly even be put in prison. Do you remember Phil, my big brother?'

'Yes.'

'He's a policeman now. An Inspector. And if you remember he'd do anything I ask.'

Adam sensed a trap was about to be sprung. 'And what would you ask him to do?'

'That depends on you.'

'In what way?'

'It depends whether or not you try to be naughty with me.'

'What do you mean by naughty?'

'Perhaps you might try and rape me.'

'No, I wouldn't.'

'I think my brother might think you did.'

'Why would he think that?'

'He has a vivid imagination, like me.'

He stood up. 'Look....'

She remained seated but crossed her plump legs causing her tight skirt, with its thigh-length slit, to show an expanse of stocking-top and suspenders. Her expression changed from pleasant to stern. 'Sit down.'

He remained standing. The keys to Julia's car were on the small coffee table between him and the seated Delia. He reached for the car keys. Simultaneously, she reached for a phone on a side table beside the sofa. 'Just going to have a little word with my brother at the police station as I haven't spoken to him in a while.'

He froze in mid-reach. 'What are you going to say to him?'

She replaced the phone on the hook and smiled at him. 'Let's not beat about the bush, Adam darling. I'm thirty now. I would like to get married, just like Yvette. Although I suspect Evie doesn't really want to get married. At least, not to Gus.' She stared up at him with a copy expression. 'I would like you to marry me.'

He sat down heavily in his seat with shock.

'Would you like a brandy?' she asked.

'Yes.'

She stood up and went to a drinks cabinet in the corner of the room and poured two balloons of brandy. She handed him one and sat back on the sofa. She eyed him over the rim of her large glass. 'This is vintage cognac. I get even naughtier on cognac than I do on champagne. Why don't you sit next to me?'

'I'm not the marrying kind, Del.'

'But I think you are. And it's what I think that matters. As you will find out.' As she said this her smile vanished, and then returned.

'Are you blackmailing me, Delia?'

'Is there something I should know about you to blackmail you with? Because, if there is I will use it to get my 'wicked way' with you.'

'We've known each other since we were kids, Del. You know all there is to know about me.'

'I've not known much about you for the last ten years. But I've heard lots of gossip.'

'What gossip?'

'You've had hundreds of girlfriends.'

'A bit of an exaggeration.'

'And you're now an architect.'

'That bit of gossip is true. What do you do, Del?'

'Chemist. Although when we were kids I wanted to be a nurse and you wanted to be a doctor. And we used to play doctors and nurses. Do you want to play that now?'

He was reluctant to play but his penis was not. And she sensed she was making headway. She crossed her legs again and exposed even more plump thigh above stocking-top. 'If you remember, after we had taken our clothes off, I used to pin you down and sit on your chest. And once or twice I sat on your face until you started coughing.'

'I remember you nearly suffocated me,' he said, taking a swig of cognac. Some of the drink went the wrong way down his throat and made him splutter and cough. She laughed. 'That's a noise I remember.'

'Could I have a glass of water?'

'Of course. I'll get you a glass.'

He watched her go out of the small lounge and into the kitchen. The door was open and he could see the stove. He heard the clink of glass and a tap run. He waited for her to return. She was not as fat now as when she was young. She was still over-curve, and bottom-heavy, but she had slimmed down. And now she had a definite waist, accentuated by a girdle, no doubt. But he had a sneaky-peaky liking for big women in girdles. She still had a double chin, but her face - always very pretty with dimple-cheeks - was slimmer. All in all, he thought she was now rather beautiful. His penis agreed. However, he could not go out with her; his mates would accuse him of fancying 'fat birds', which, of course, was true.

She came back into the lounge with a radiant smile and handed him a glass of water. 'I put a drop of lemon juice in it; helps when you're prone to coughing.'

'Does it,' he said taking a mouthful of water.

She sat opposite him again, without crossing her legs, and watched him intently. 'Drink it all, there's a good boy. Water's good for you.'

He gulped down all of the water.

'If you need the loo, there's one upstairs.'

'Yes, I think I do. I went in the restaurant, but I've had an awful lot to drink today.'

'I'll pour you another cognac while your gone.'

He stood up, slightly unsteadily, and followed her directions out of the lounge and up the stairs. He was beginning to feel a bit groggy, but found the

bathroom and managed to unbutton his fly and urinate without missing the toilet bowl. He pulled the chain, washed his hands, had some difficulty unlocking the door as he could not focus on the latch, and came unsteadily onto the landing.

Delia was at the top of the stairs, with a broad smile. 'You alright, sweetie. You look a bit unsteady. Why don't you have a rest on my bed.'

'Yes, I feel I could do with a lie down.'

She came beside him and holding onto his elbow guided him into her bedroom, and let go of him as he collapsed on the bed.

He heard voices when he started to surface; distant at first and then the voices came closer.

'You shouldn't do this to blokes, Del. One of these days they're not going to come round. What did you give him?'

'A Mickey Finn.'

'Dangerous, Del.'

'I don't need to do it any more. Adam is going to marry me.'

Adam opened his eyes half way. His vision cleared enough to see Delia smiling down at him. 'Have a nice nap?'

He tried to move his arms, and then realised that his wrists were tied in front of him. And he was naked. 'Let me go. Where are my clothes?'

'All in good time. Do you remember, Tony?'

Adam opened his eyes wider and viewed a female figure standing next to Delia. The figure had a 'Marilyn Monroe' hairdo, very rouged cheeks, heavy mascara-eyelashes, scarlet lipstick, and a flouncy, party frock. It was like staring up at a life-size doll.

'Hi, Adam, long time no-see.' It was a voice he had not heard for some ten years.

Adam raised his head off the pillow. It swam a little and he waited for his brain to clear before speaking. 'Why is Tony dressed as a girl?'

'I'm Antonia now and again.'

'I always thought you were weird when we were at school.'

Delia's smile disappeared. 'Antonia, would you like to whip Adam as a punishment for being rude to you.'

'Can I cane him?'

'Of course. I think the cane's in your room.'

'I'll get it.'

Adam raised his head again and watched Antonia shimmy out of the bedroom.

'He's not going to cane me.'

'I'm afraid he is, because you called him weird.'

'He is weird, dressed like that. He's queer.'

'And I'm going to whip you for calling him queer after he's caned you.'

Despite himself, Adam felt his penis tingling and swelling.

Delia giggled. 'Likes the idea of you being spanked, does it. Which does it like best, the idea of being spanked by a transvestite in a frock or by a naked, fat girl?'

'You've got clothes on,' he said, stating the obvious. 'Do you sleep with Tony - or Antonia?'

'No. He's my lodger. He just rents a room from me. I'm afraid your suggestion that I sleep with my lodger is going to mean a very severe whipping. You won't be able to sit down for a week.'

'But I'm supposed to be Gus's best man tomorrow.' His eyes swelled with tears as his penis became rock hard.

'Actually, it's just gone midnight so the wedding is this afternoon, assuming it takes place.'

'Why shouldn't it take place?'

'I rather think Yvette would like to marry your friend, Julia instead of Gus. But of course, women can't marry other women so Yvette and Julia will just have to stay very close friends. I'm guessing they're very close as we speak.'

'I can't find the cane,' Antonia called from the landing.

'It might be downstairs then. Yes, it is because I last caned you downstairs. And my whip will be down there as well,' Delia called back. Then she smiled at Adam. 'No matter how hard I spank my lodger he is still useless about my house.'

'Does he spank you?'

He flinched as she bent down and slapped him hard across his cheek. 'No man has ever spanked me. No man ever will. That suggestion means I will whip your cock as well as your back and your arse.' She grinned as his erect penis wavered upwards at the threat, and sat on the bed next to his midriff

and fingered his penis. 'I've had some very sexy, wet-dreams about your cock ever since we were kids. And now its mine, to do with it what I want.' She was now gripping his penis in her fist.

'Please let go or I'll come,' he burred.

She let go instantly. 'Don't! The only place that thing comes from now on is in me. If you come anywhere else you will get another whipping.'

'Wow! that's big.' Antonia was in the doorway holding a whip and a cane and eyeing Adam's penis.

'That's because it likes me,' Delia said.

'Possibly, it likes me more,' Antonia said, coming into the room.

The penis subsided as he entered.

'I don't think so,' Delia said, standing up. 'Do you want him over the bed or over a chair?'

Adam trembled. 'I don't want to be buggered.'

Delia laughed. 'What you want is irrelevant. But I was asking Antonia how he wants to cane you. Now stand up.'

Slowly, Adam sat up and rolled off the bed to stand facing Delia. 'I would like to go to the toilet.'

'You went just before you flaked out,' Delia said. 'What is it you need to do?'

'I need to sit.'

'You need to shit?' she clarified. He nodded. 'How inconvenient. Antonia take him to the loo. Tie his ankles when he sits and then untie his wrists. Here's some cord.'

As she spoke, Delia went behind Adam and, for the first time that evening, saw his nude buttocks. She started giggling. 'Someone's whipped your arse already. Who?'

'I really do need to go to the lavatory.'

'Alright, you can tell me who whipped you when you are sitting comfortably after your shit. Although, with those marks its difficult to see how you can sit comfortably. I'm surprised you managed to sit on your seat in the restaurant.'

Adam allowed Antonia to take him by the arm and lead him out of the bedroom.

'Lovely to see you again after all these years, Adam. Maybe we could go for a beer sometime.'

'Do you go to pubs dressed as you are?'

'Corse not. I would get beaten up.'

'Your landlady beats you up.'

'I know, but she's always beaten me up. I quite enjoy it.'

They had reached the lavatory. Antonia bent down and tied Adam's ankles. He patted Adam's buttocks as he straightened. 'Nice bum. I look forward to caning it and adding to the marks. Someone really has caned you quite harshly.'

Then he put his mouth close to Adam's ear and whispered, 'I would like to fuck you in the arse as well as cane you but Delia won't let me. Unless, of course, you really upset her and then she might let me.'

'I'm not going to upset her,' Adam whispered back. 'Are you going to untie my hands?'

Antonia answered the question by untying Adam's wrists.

'Like I said, try anything funny and she will beat the shit out of you, and then I will fuck you.'

Adam sat without saying a word and Antonia left the bathroom, leaving the door open. Two minutes later he had done what he needed to do and shuffle-hopped out of the bathroom as his ankles were tied.

Delia was on the landing coming towards him. She was wearing large knickers but otherwise naked in bare feet and looked a lot dumpier and shorter without high heels. She was holding another length of cord. He stood still and surveyed the vision, as did the eye of his penis; pendulous breasts, wide hips, very plump thighs. Bereft of a girdle, rolls of fat circled her waist. His penis wavered horizontally as she came close. Her cheeks flushed with delight as she saw his penis stiffen.

'I think it likes fat women even if you don't.'

'I do like you, Delia.'

'That's good, because it and you will be fucking me.' She stroked his erect penis gently as she spoke. 'The only question is whether the fucking takes place before or after I beat you. Hold up your wrists.'

Obediently, he held up his hands to be tied in front of him.

'I love tying up a man; it gives me tingles. Do you think I'm kinky?'

He didn't answer. She finished tying his wrists then, without warning, looked cross and slapped him hard across his face.

'Do you think I'm kinky?'

'No,' he stuttered.

'Are you scared of me?'

'Yes.'

'Walk ahead of me back into the bedroom. I like to see the marks on your bum move and stretch as you walk. Was it a whip or a cane?'

'Both,' He said, stopping as he reached the bedroom door.

'Who?'

'A mother and her daughter.'

'Wow! That is kinky. You'll have to tell me all about it when we're in bed.'

A chair had been positioned at the foot of the bed and Antonia was standing next to it swishing a school-handled cane like a headmaster awaiting a pupil sent to the headmaster's study for six of the best. He had taken off his frock and petticoats and was now dressed only in an ill-fitting bra, suspender belt holding up fishnet stockings and a pair of can-can knickers. An erect penis was endeavouring to tunnel its way out of the satin. Antonia looked displeased on viewing Adam's buttocks.

'I like a blank canvas. I'm an artist when it comes to the cane.'

'Fraid you're out of luck. Someone obviously got to spank him first this evening. Isn't that right, Adam sweetie? Was in your friend, Julia? Is she the daughter you mentioned?'

He did not answer and received a slap on the back of his head.

'Answer me.'

'Yes.'

'She's into spanking, is she?'

'Yes.'

'I must say, I'm surprised at that. But you can never tell what people like when it comes to sex. Bend over the chair-back with your palms on the seat so Antonia can cane you.'

Adam did as he was told. Delia sat on the bed and positioned herself so that she could watch Adam's face as he was caned.

'Keep you head up so that I can drool over your handsome features.'

He raised his head with his eyes shut as if he did not want to look at her. Antonia whacked the cane across Adam's bum and gave a simultaneous shout of pleasure as a semen stain flooded the front of his knickers. Then he looked distressed. 'Bugger!'

Delia looked anything but pleased.

'Talk about trigger-happy. Go and have a shower and then amuse yourself in your bedroom until I call you.'

With a grunt of displeasure, Antonia laid the cane on the bed and left the room.

'I thought that might happen. You have a very sexy bum. It was obviously too much for my lodger. Now he's come and gone we can get down to business, you and I.'

Adam opened his eyes. Because he was still bending over the chair his head was the height of her belly-button. She held the back of his head in her two hands and pulled his nose into her crotch of her knickers.

'Can you smell I'm so excited that I've got you for the night. And for the rest of our lives.'

He pulled his head away from her stomach at the reminder that she intended them to be together until death did them part. Her tone of voice had been jocular; it became serious. She let go of his head and stepped back from him, hands on wide hips.

'And, darling, if you try and leave me I will kill you. Do you want me to show you how I would kill you?'

'No,' he said, straightening.

'I think I should show you now, to ensure there is no misunderstanding between us.'

He was now standing with his back to the side of the bed. Suddenly, she stepped towards him with her fists clenched as if she intended to give him an uppercut to the chin. Instinctively, he raised his tied hands to protect his face, and she raised her plump knee and thumped it into his unprotected groin. He gave an agonised shout as painful shock-waves radiated from his testicles up into his stomach nearly making him vomit. He collapsed backwards onto the bed, his fingers gripping and massaging his genitals in an effort to ease the pain.

'That, sweetie, was just for starters.'

ELEVEN

IN DRAG

Delia picked up the whip which Antonia had brought with the cane from downstairs. Adam was now spread sideways across the bed, looking up at her anxiously, his tied hands covering his genitalia in case of another assault. She lashed his legs with the whip.

'Lay straight; head on pillow.'

She lashed his legs again to underline her order. He shuffled his body so that he was lying on the bed on his back with his head on the lace-edged pillow. She dropped the whip onto the floor, took off her knickers, and then climbed onto the bed with one knee either side of the pillow.

'Slide down a bit.'

He guessed what she intended to do. Her vagina was hovering over his face.

'I nearly suffocated my last boyfriend doing this. Antonia had to give him the 'kiss of life' to revive him.'

He closed his eyes as she lowered herself onto his mouth. He gasped for air. He was blacking-out; at the gates to eternity. Her vagina was rubbing and pressing into his nose and mouth. Then he gobbled a gust of air as she lifted off him.

'That's how I will kill you.' Her tone of voice which had been jovial was now harsh. 'Now turn over onto your stomach. Let's see your arse and back again.'

She slashed his legs until he swivelled to lie on his front.

'Whoever beat you before was clearly an amateur. I am going to show you what a real whipping is. I am going to whip you until I know I have your undying devotion and obedience to my every wish and whim, to put it - more

or less - poetically.'

She began whipping him from his shoulders to the backs of his knees, slashing him most across his buttocks.

He was on the point of fainting with the accumulated pain, when he heard Antonia's voice. 'Leave off, Del. You'll kill him.'

'Sorry. Once I'm holding a whip, and my arm gets going, I can't stop.'

'I know. But one of these days...'

Adam did not hear Antonia complete the sentence because the bedsprings creaked as Delia sat on the side of the bed adjacent to his midriff. She patted his buttocks lightly.

'Sorry, Adam darling. I didn't mean to whip you like that. I just got carried away.'

'You should have given me a safe word,' he sobbed.

'How do you mean a safe word?'

Antonia answered her question. 'A safe word is what pros tell their client to say when the client's had enough.'

'Didn't know that,' Delia said. 'But then, I'm not a pro.'

Adam was now sobbing uncontrollably. Even Delia looked worried. 'Would you like a hot bath, sweetie?'

'I think he needs some cold cream on his back. I'll go and get some,' Antonia said.

As Antonia left the bedroom, Delia bent towards Adam's ear and whispered. 'Would you like to be whipped, sweetie? As I've been a naughty girl, whipping you so hard.'

'Yes.' Adam stopped sobbing and opened his eyes. 'Yes, I would like to be whipped.'

Delia was taken aback at the speed at which he accepted her invitation. 'Shall we say a couple of strokes with the cane across my bum.'

Adam sat up and swung his feet off the bed. 'Twenty with the cane and twenty with the whip.'

Her hand went to her mouth in shock, at the severity of the punishment, just as Antonia returned with a tube of soothing cream, looking a bit more male having taken off his female wig.

'I'm a male nurse by profession. Turn around.'

Adam stood, and turned his back to Tony to allow him to spread the cream over the worst of the whip marks. Delia sat watching.

'Does that feel better?' Tony asked.

'Yes, thank you. A bit better. But it still bloody hurts.'

'Fortunately, there's no blood; just the marks and redness. I'm going to bed now. I'll leave you two to your own devices.' He left the bedroom closing the door behind him.

Adam stood in front of Delia, so that she was backed-up against the glass-fronted wardrobe, and raised his tied wrists.

'Untie me.'

'Please don't hurt me,' she pleaded as she untied his wrists. Her flab was now wobbling as if with fear.

He took the cord from her. 'Wrists up.'

Obediently she raised her wrists and he tied her in the same way she had tied him, using the same cord.

'Roles reversed,' he said affably, stepping back and viewing her at arm's length. 'Do a twirl,' he said, and watched her rotate. 'Your arse really is enormous. There's a medical name for women who have such large arses. Steatopygia, I think it is.'

He positioned the chair in front of the wardrobe mirror; the same chair he had been made to bend over. 'So you can get a good view of your arse being caned.'

Looking flushed in the face, as if with embarrassment, she stood meekly behind the back of the chair, ready to bend over.

'I would like you to be a bit taller. Put on your high heels.'

Obediently, she fetched the shoes, and put them on, and returned to her position behind the chair.

'This is quite a vision,' he said, as he patted the rump, rippling the fat.

'Its amazing no one's caned you before. Your arse was made for caning.'

'If you're going to do it - do it.'

He walked around to the front of the chair, his penis as stiff as they come. 'There's no rush. As you said yourself earlier, we've got all night. Are you on the pill?'

'No.'

'Where do you keep condoms?'

'Bedside draw.'

He walked over to the draw and took out a packet of condoms. Carefully, he rolled one onto his penis and then beckoned her to come to the bed.

'Change of plan. I'm going to fuck you before I cane you otherwise I'm likely to come, same as your lodger did, as soon as I start caning you.'

She moved to the bed. 'Do you want me on my front or my back?'

'On your back.'

'I thought you were a masochist, and masochists are not supposed to be the ones doing the beating,' she said, as she climbed onto the bed and lay on her back with her chunky thighs wide apart.

'You might be in luck. I might lose the urge to cane you once I've come,' he said, as he laid full length on the bed and propped himself up with one arm, and insert his penis into her.

'Don't you believe in foreplay,' she said, in a husky voice, with hooded eyelids, blushed cheeks and blood-plumped lips.

He pushed once and came with a big intake of breath and a gasp of delight. He wiggled and jiggled until the sensations departed. 'Fuck me that was good!' he gurgled.

'I glad you think so. I've know someone stay up longer. In fact, I have to say that that was the shortest fuck I've ever had.'

As she had done to him, without warning, he slapped her hard across her face. She started to cry. 'One more cheeky comment and I'll double your beating.'

'I wasn't being cheeky, I was only stating a fact,' she whispered in hushed tones, and received another slap across the face.

He sat up, unrolled the condom carefully so not as to spill any of the semen and dangled it over her mouth. 'Open.'

She stared up at the condom. 'I'll suck your cock, but I don't want to swallow it from a rubber.'

Without saying anything else, he upturned the condom and dripped the contents over her face.

'Bastard,' she whispered, semen dripping down her cheeks.

'It's now forty strokes with the cane and forty with the whip. Do you want to keep being cheeky and increase the number?'

She remained silent.

'Resume your position.'

He watched her buttocks wobble to the chair, and his penis, despite its recent discharge in service, swelled to semi-stiff. It stiffened more as she bent over the back of the chair with her hands on the seat. He was enjoying being a sadist. It was nearly as much fun as being a masochist.

The chair was positioned facing the wardrobe mirror so that she could see him flexing the school cane behind her buttocks, like a naked, rampant

headmaster. She winced and closed her eyes as she saw the cane raise, remain poised in the air, and then swish down. The whack to her posterior was sharp; pain rippled through the fat making her knees bend and flex as if she were exercising.

'Shit! That's too hard.'

'I don't think so. I think that blow was quite mild, compared to the whipping you gave me earlier.'

'I'm sorry I whipped you - I really am.'

'But not as sorry as you will be by the time you've had forty.'

He swished the cane down again as he spoke. This time her knees sagged and she collapsed to a kneeling position on the carpet, crying and whimpering.

'Do you want me to ask your lodger to come in and watch?'

'No.' The alarm in her voice was palpable.

'Well, stand up and take your punishment.'

She stood, but instead of bending again she turned and faced him, tears streaming down her face. 'Please can we be friends?'

'We are friends. I'm going to be best man and you're going to be bridesmaid at a wedding. And we'll be having a dance together. Now get your arse over that chair.'

He swished the cane up and down to underline he meant business.

With a sigh, she half turned towards the chair, and then like a deserter facing a firing squad, made a request.

'Can I have a cigarette first?'

'If you want. I'll have one too.'

She walked passed him, unsteadily, and bent to a lower draw in her bedside table. He admired her enormous backside which spread widely as she bent with her back to him. She opened the draw, fumbled inside, and straightened and turned towards him with a handgun, held in her two tied hands, and pointed at his forehead.

He flinched and took an involuntary step backwards.

'Hands up.'

He raised his hands towards the ceiling, as she came close to him, the gun now pointed down at his genitals.

'I would like you to until my wrists very carefully. Make one false move and the gun will flash.'

Very carefully he untied the knot, and stepped back. She waved the gun at

him with a free hand, smiling sweetly.

'I'm a dame with a gun,' she said, stating the obvious. 'You do exactly as I say. We are back to square one. Kneel on your hands and stay like that.'

He did as he was ordered.

'I'm now going to put my knickers over your head.' His head was enveloped by satin as she said this. 'You might find that the crotch is a bit damp and smells of a lady's 'come'. Me being the lady. Sorry about that, but you caused it. Now, very slowly put one hand behind your back and keep kneeling on the other hand. And remember, I've got a gun.'

She prodded the barrel of the gun into the nape of his neck. His right hand came behind his back. She put down the gun on the carpet and looped the cord around his wrist. Then she picked up the gun and prodded him in the neck again.

'Other hand - slowly.'

His other hand came behind him back. She guided his wrist so that it crossed his corded-wrist, put down the gun, and swiftly tied his wrists together.

'On your feet and face me.'

He stood and faced her, still effectively blindfolded by her voluminous panties over his head. She raised the panties so that they were draped over the top of his head and smiled pleasantly at him.

'Pink suits you; you should wear it more often.'

He blanched as she picked up her small gun.

'We never did get to smoke, did we. Would you still like a last cigarette?'

'Last?'

She poked the tip of his penis with the tip of the gun barrel.

'You've been very cruel to me, caning me like that.'

'You whipped me much harder.'

'The difference, darling, is that you enjoy being beaten by a woman. And I enjoy beating a man. Whereas, I don't enjoy being beaten by a man.'

She raised the gun and poked the tip of his nose. He felt sick; on the point of throwing up. 'Please don't.' Urine started to trickle from his limp penis.

'Shit! Not on my carpet.'

She snatched her panties from his head and bunched them over his leaking penis. Then she reached under her bed and pulled out a potty and positioned it under the leak. 'Kneel and dangle your cock over the rim.'

The flood worsened but most of the stream, filtering through the panties,

poured into the potty.

She left the room. He heard her call 'Tony'. A few seconds later she returned with a camera, and snapped flash-photos of Adam peeing into the potty. Her lodger appeared in the doorway. He was wearing pyjamas.

'What going on, Del?'

'Adam has got so frightened of me he's pissing himself. Why are you staring at me?'

Tony closed his eyes. 'Sorry, Del. I'm not used to seeing you with no knickers.'

Delia blushed. 'Keep you eyes closed till I put some on.'

She grabbed a pair of pearl-white panties from a draw, stepped into the panties and pulled them up.

'You can open your eyes.'

Landlady and lodger watched as the drips into the potty lessened.

'Good job he had a shit earlier,' the lodger said, 'otherwise I dread to think what state your carper would be in. What were you doing to him?'

'I offered him a fag, that's all.'

'You threatened to shoot me.' Adam felt safer now that her lodger was in the room.

Tony look bemused. 'What was she going to shoot you with?'

'That gun.' Adam nodded towards the gun on the dressing table.

With a grin, Tony picked up the gun, pointed it at his ear, as if he was playing Russian roulette, and pulled the trigger. A 'cigarette lighter' flame shot out of the top of the gun.

Delia laughed. 'We'll give him a fag and a light it after we've taken some more pics.'

Adam felt the need to ask, 'What sort of pictures?'

Delia grinned, 'The kind you won't want anyone else to see. Before we start, you can come with me to the bathroom. Follow.'

Adam shuffled after Delia onto the landing and into the bathroom, the sopping, pink panties still - just about - covering his genitals. She pulled the panties off his penis so that he was entirely naked, except for the cord binding his wrists. 'Stand in the bath.'

He climbed into the bath as she unhooked the shower from the integral shower tap and turned on the cold water. She sprayed his genitals and the rest of his body, including his whipped back and buttocks. He was shivering from the icy water.

'A bit cleaner and less smelly,' she said, by way of pronouncing herself satisfied at her handiwork. 'Out of the bath.'

He climbed out and stood, still dripping from his cold shower.

'Seems to have made your cock go small. It will have to be up and about for the pictures. Back to the bedroom.'

He followed her, still shivering. He paused in the bedroom door. Staring at the frilly knickers and a blond pig-tailed wig on the bed.

'My best wig and panties,' Tony said.

'Isn't Tony kind. He's going to let you wear his panties and makeup.'

'I don't want to,' Adam stuttered.

'What you want, Adam sweetie, is irrelevant,' Delia said.

Tony was grinning and seemed anxious to tell his landlady something.

'Adam's got a penis-restraint in his jacket pocket.'

Delia giggled. 'Show me.'

Tony held up the penis-restraint and its key.

Delia giggled even more. 'Who does this belong to?'

'Not me,' Adam said. 'And I don't think Tony should have searched my things.'

'I told him to,' Delia said. 'I'm sure you don't put a chastity-thing on yourself out of choice. So, who makes you wear one?'

He remained silent and flinched in anticipation that he would receive a slap across the face; he did.

'Julia.'

Delia's burst of giggling seemed almost uncontrollable.

'I don't believe it! She looks as if butter wouldn't melt in her cunt.'

To Adam's surprise, Tony picked up the discarded whip and lightly flicked Delia's big buttocks. 'That's crude, Del. Cunt is not a nice word.'

Adam was even more surprised when Delia looked suitably chastened and mumbled, 'It is if you've got one, but sorry.'

She flinched as Tony flicked her buttocks harder. 'I do not like such language. It is not landlady-like.'

'I said I'm sorry.'

Tony now seemed to be in charge - at least - in charge of the camera. And it looked a professional model.

Tony smiled at Adam in answer to Adam's unspoken question. 'I'm a keen photographer.'

'Tony likes taking pictures of cocks,' Delia said. 'You have quite a

collection, haven't you, Tony. And now you are about to add to it.'

She slapped Adam gently around the back of his head.

'Sit on the stool with your back to the dressing table.'

He sat on the stool, and she came close and picked up an eyebrow pencil.

'Head up.'

He raised his face with his eyes closed as she applied makeup including rouge and scarlet lipstick.

'Open your eyes so I can put on your eyelashes.'

He obeyed; her large breasts dangling and pushing against his chest as she focused on the work in hand. Satisfied with her handiwork, she took a step back to view him. Her lodger stood next to her appraising Adam's newly adorned features.

'What do you think?' she asked her lodger.

'A good job, Del. Couldn't have done better myself. He looks almost pretty.'

'He'll look prettier with pigtails,' Delia said.

Tony picked up the blond wig and placed it on Adam's head, carefully brushing under the wig any protruding strands of real hair. He stepped back.

'From the neck up he could be a 'pantomime dame',' Tony said.

'Widow Wanky,' Delia giggled.

Adam looked distressed. 'Please - whatever you are going to do, please get on and do it and get it over with.'

Delia looked petulant and stepped forward and slapped Adam hard across his rouged cheek. 'Speak when you're spoken to.'

Tony was unhappy at the assault on Adam.

'Go easy, Del. You'll mess up his makeup.'

Delia still looked cross, standing in front of the seated Adam with her hands on her hips. 'Stand up.'

Adam stood, fearing another slap.

'Go and stand with your back against the wall.'

He obeyed. She came close to him squashing her breasts against his chest, her hand fondling his penis. With expert-fingers she made it go stiff, then stood away from him. The camera flashed.

'Nice one,' Tony said.

Adam's penis subsided rapidly as if it were camera-shy.

'Now one with him wearing your frilly knickers,' Delia said.

She picked up the knickers and bent down to his feet, and made Adam

step into the knickers. Then she pulled them up the just below his testicles leaving his penis exposed. As she had done before, she fondled his penis until it was erect then stepped away quickly to be out of camera-shot. The flash flared a second time.

'How many more?' Tony said. It's gone midnight. I'm getting tired. We can take some picture of Adam in a dress in the morning.'

Delia laughed. 'Yes, and then we might make Adam go to the wedding in a dress. He could be a bridesmaid with me instead of the best man. One more pic, and then we all go to bed.'

'Is Adam going to bed with you?'

'Yes, of course. And if he doesn't do as I ask, we will distribute these photos amongst his friends, won't we.'

Adam was subjected to another photo, this time with the knickers pulled up, but the shot taken with him standing sideways on to show his erect penis jutting-out the material. Then Tony collected the cameras and left the bedroom shutting the door behind him.

Delia smiled at Adam. 'Now I'm going to untie you, and you and I are going to go to bed. But before you go to sleep you will fuck me 'senseless' at least three times; failure to do this will mean a severe whipping in the morning.'

TWELVE

YVETTE

'Adam is very good looking, isn't he,' Yvette said.

'I suppose so. But he's not really my type,' Julia replied.

They watched Adam and Delia depart from the restaurant and returned to sipping their postprandial cherry brandies and coffee.

'What sort of man is your type? Yvette asked, as she unwrapped the mint which had been delivered with her coffee.

'I don't think any man is my type,' Julia replied, also unwrapping a mint. 'I assume Gus is your type of man.'

'Not really. I'm not that keen on him.'

'So why are you marrying him?'

'I'm nearly thirty. The body clock is ticking. And my mother would like grandchildren.'

'My body can tick all it likes but I'm not having kids - or a husband,' Julia said, savouring the mint. 'My friend, Mandy, has just had a kid at eighteen - unbelievable.'

Yvette smiled as her lips hovered over the rim of the small liqueur glass. 'Your body does tick all the right boxes as far as I am concerned.'

'I could say the same about you,' Julia responded, with lowered eyelids.

'Would you like more coffee?' The waitress was back at the table.

'Just the bill please,' Julia said. Both women watched the waitress go over to the cash till.

'Isn't she gorgeous,' Yvette said, referring to the waitress.

'Yes, she is. I think her parents own the restaurant and the waiter is her brother. Do you find him as attractive?' Julia asked.

'No. Do you?'

'No.'

'Adam and Delia left without paying,' Yvette said. "You and I will have to split the bill.'

'It's alright, Adam will be paying in full. I took his cash off him before we came.'

She opened her handbag and took out a wad of notes as she spoke.

Yvette giggled in disbelief. 'He lets you take his money?'

The waitress came back with the bill. 'Was everything alright?' she asked as she placed it between them. 'Sir and the other madam left suddenly, I thought perhaps...'

'No, everything has been delightful,' Yvette said, smiling at the waitress, 'especially the service.'

'Thank you, madam.' The waitress almost gave a curtsy as she took the silver plate, on which Julia had placed the money, and returned to the till. Both women stared at her rear again as she went.

'Gorgeous,' Yvette said.

'Rather,' Julia agreed.

'Shall we go to my place to get to know each other better,' Yvette said.

'But you won't want to stay up too late as you're getting married tomorrow.'

'I'm feeling lively. I don't feel like going to to bed.'

In fact, Yvette's bed is where the two women headed for as soon as she closed her front door. They had walked arm in arm the short distance from the restaurant to Yvette's maisonette. Neither had talked much on the walk in joint anticipation that actions would speak louder than words. Inside the front door, they had locked in their first embrace and kissed like two newly-weds collapsing into their honeymoon bedroom after a hard day at the wedding, and looking forward to an even harder night.

'We shouldn't be doing this,' Julia said breaking apart from Yvette's two-arm lock.

'Why?'

'You're getting married tomorrow.'

'So? It's not as though I'm having sex with another man.' She kissed Julia

passionately again, before breaking away, and starting to undress. 'And I am allowed to have a 'hen night'; this is it.'

'You had a 'hen night' with Delia?'

'Delia likes men. Unfortunately, not many men like Delia, because of her size.'

Yvette was now down to her bra and panties. Julia had not begun to undress. Somehow, she wasn't sure that leaping into bed with Yvette was such a good idea. Her ardour, and her clitoris, were cooling.

'Yvette bounced onto the bed and lay on her back, shifted to one side and patted the vacant side to encourage Julia to join her.'

Slowly, Julia began to unzip her dress.

'You said in the restaurant that you've never slept with Gus.'

'No, I haven't. It's not something I'm looking forward to.'

Julia stepped out of her dress. 'So, why are you marrying him? It can't be just because your mother wants you to.'

'Because I'm a simple soul. If I agree to do something; I do it.'

Julia was standing in her bra and knickers, slowly undoing the suspenders holding up her stockings.

'I thought everyone wore tights these days.'

'Call me old-fashioned. And you agreed to marry Gus?'

'I don't actually remember agreeing. But Adam and Delia both swore they heard Gus ask me to marry him and that I said yes. But we were all drunk. I don't remember a thing about it. Neither does Gus. To be honest, I'm not sure he fancies me.' A solitary tear dribbled down her cheek. 'No one fancies me.'

'I fancy you,' Julia said.

In response, Yvette turned back the bedclothes. They snuggled up together, tentatively, at first; lips brushing lips, and then tongues snaking out and licking, and hands feeling breasts and then vaginas.

Julia was the first to 'come up for air', and propped herself up on her elbow, staring down at Yvette. 'Do you do this very often?'

Yvette laughed. 'That sounds like a variation on 'do you come here often'.'

Julia laughed with her. 'I could have said do you 'come' here often, but possibly, rather a personal question as we've only just met.'

Yvette laughed again, but the laugh was almost quizzical. 'How old are you, darling?'

'Nineteen.'

'You're remarkably formal.'

'I take after my mother.'

'Is your father very formal?'

'No idea. My mother threw him out shortly after I was born. She never mentions him and I never ask?'

'My mother has nearly thrown my father out a couple of times. She rules the roost; dominates my father.'

'She beats him?'

'Not literally, so far as I know.'

Both girls laughed.

'Would he like it if she did?' Julia asked.

'What a strange question, darling?' Yvette said.

'Why is it strange? Some people like being beaten up,' Julia said.

'How weird,' Yvette said. Then a thought struck her. 'By beaten up do you mean spanked?'

'Spanked, whipped, flogged...' Her voiced trailed off as Yvette started giggling uncontrollably.

'Why is it so funny?' Julia, asked, not understanding Yvette's merriment. 'Has no one ever spanked you?'

Yvette stopped chortling. 'No, of course not.'

'There is a saying - there's always a first time.'

'No one is going to spank me.'

'What about your husband, assuming you get married tomorrow?'

'Gus would never try and spank me. He's a wimp. He hasn't got an aggressive bone in his body.'

Julia tried to keep a straight-face, thinking back to Gus's assault on her mother. 'All men can be aggressive.'

'Let's forget about men. Why don't you give me another kiss?' Yvette said, puckering her lips.

The two women melted into each other arms again underneath the bedclothes, kissing and fingering erogenous zones. Julia, although ten years younger, was evidently the more experienced and talented with her talons, expertly nailing. All of a sudden, Yvette came with an ear-splitting scream of delight. And then started sobbing.

'That was wonderful; much better than with a man.'

'Have you ever been with a man?' Julia asked.

'No. I'm imagining what it must be like with a man.'

'Have you done it with another woman?'

'Once or twice. But they weren't as good as you.' She sobbed again. 'I usually sort myself out. There's nothing like a box of chocolates, a good book and a dildo when you sleep alone.'

'What type of book do you like?'

'Romantic weepies. What type do you like?'

Despite her attractive bedmate, Julia was getting bored. She had given Yvette an orgasm but Yvette had not reciprocated. Julia was feeling randy; simmering but not quite on the boil. She knew what would cause her kettle to steam and rattle its lid.

'Have you ever read Astrid Cane?' Julia asked.

'Never heard of it.'

'It was written in Victorian times. It's about a woman, about my age, who is subjected to whippings and floggings by an older woman.'

'That doesn't seem my sort of book.'

'It's my sort of book. Would you like to spank me?'

Yvette started giggling again. 'You're not serious?'

'Yes,' Julia said, pulling back the bed clothes.

'What do I spank you with?'

'Your hand across my bum for starters.'

Yvette sat up in the bed with her back propped against the bedhead, and patted her naked lap. With alacrity, Julia spread herself, face down, and positioned her bum across Yvette's thigh. Tentatively, Yvette patted the boyish buttocks.

'You certainly have a very nice bum, darling.'

She patted it harder. Julia wiggled slightly in response. Yvette gave six hard slaps. She was warming to her task. 'I hope this stings your bum because it is certainly stinging my hand.'

'Can we swop?'

'You want to spank me?'

'Yes, please.' Julia rolled off Yvette's lap as she spoke, and stood. 'Have you got a slipper?'

'Why.'

'I would like to slap your bum with a slipper.'

Yvette looked dubious. 'I don't know where they are.'

'I will look. If I find a slipper I will give you twenty whacks with it.'

She looked under the bed and found a pair of slippers. She slapped one against the palm of her hand.

'I prefer using a cane or a whip, but this will have to do.'

'You've got a whip and a cane!' Yvette hand went to her mouth in evident shock at the thought of a girl possessing such things. 'Who do you use them on?'

'You and I will have to know each other a lot better before I answer that question.'

Yvette stared at her new-found friend with renewed interest. 'What's your job?'

'I work for my mother. I'm her personal assistant in various business enterprises. What's your job?'

'Publishing.'

'It's a wonder you never heard of Astrid Cane.'

'It sounds like pornography; not the sort of thing we publish.'

'I love porn; especially spanking books. But actions speak louder than words, as they say. So, can I be active and spank you with this slipper with you bent over your dressing table chair?'

Yvette was aghast. 'There's no way I'm bending over a chair to have my bum whacked with a slipper.'

'Alright, I'll bend over the chair.'

As she spoke she held the back of the chair at the dressing table and repositioned it next to the bed, and bent over the back with her palms on the seat, legs wide apart for balance. Without speaking, Yvette went behind Julia with the slipper, but instead of starting to spank her, she slid the tip of her finger onto the vulnerable clitoris and 'fingered' it.

'Darling, that's very pleasant but it's not what you're supposed to do,' Julia said.

'I prefer doing this to spanking you. I'm not really a spanker by inclination.'

Julia straightened to face Yvette. They were close, their nipples touching. They kissed until Julia pulled away.

'Alright - I know when I'm beaten - no pun intended.'

'Sorry, darling, but it's just not my thing.'

Julia looked pensive. 'What are you going to do if Gus wants to spank you?'

'Kill him. Why do you think he would want to spank me?'

The doorbell rang before Julia could answer.

'Who on Earth is that? Yvette said. 'You stay in the bedroom, I'll answer

the door. Where's my dressing gown?'

Julia waited until Yvette had left the bedroom and then started dressing. Whoever the caller was, she did not wish to be found naked in another woman's bedroom. As she dressed she heard two female voices in the lounge. She re-applied her smudged lipstick and prepared to make 'an entrance'. She heard Yvette say 'I'll just go and make you a coffee. Do you take milk and sugar?'

'Black please.' It was a voice Julia had heard that evening.

When Julia entered the lounge, the waitress from the restaurant was sitting on the sofa, smiling at her.

'Hi,' Julia said, with a degree of surprise in her voice.

'Yvette left her handbag under the table. I brought it.'

'How sweet of you,' Julia said. 'What's your name?'

'Dolores. But I'm known as Dolly.'

Yvette emerged from the kitchen with three cups of coffee and a plate of biscuits on a tray.

'Isn't Dolly absolutely brilliant bringing me my handbag. How stupid of me to have left it in the restaurant.'

The belt of Yvette's satin dressing gown loosened as she placed the tray on a low table in the centre of the room, revealing that she was naked under the gown. Dolly did not avert her eyes. Yvette lingered in this revealing position longer than seemed necessary to Julia.

'This is Julia,' Yvette said to Dolly as she handed coffees and proffered the plate of biscuits. Then she sat on the sofa next to Dolly, taking the middle of the three seat cushions so that her hip and elbow were touching Dolly.

'We did so enjoy the meal this evening, didn't we, Julia.'

'Yes,' Julia agreed, sullenly sipping her coffee, and nibbling a custard cream; a biscuit she had never liked and normally would not have nibbled.

Dolly almost preened. 'My father is the chef and my brother is the other waiter and he is also the wine waiter.'

'A family affair,' Yvette said. 'Is your husband or your boyfriend in catering?'

'I do not have a husband or a boyfriend.'

'Very wise,' Yvette said.

Dolly became agitated all of a sudden. 'You are becoming married tomorrow, I think.'

'I think I'm thinking about it. At the moment I have what you might call

'cold feet'.

Dolly took this literally and looked down at Yvette's feet in a cosy pair of 'fleecy' slippers. 'They do not look so cold.'

Even Julia, who was feeling anything but warm towards Yvette, or the newcomer, had to suppress a smile.

'When I say 'cold feet' I mean I am not sure whether I will be turning up at my wedding tomorrow.'

'Was the man in the restaurant this evening your fiancé?'

'No. He is Julia's gentleman friend.'

Julia almost snorted into her coffee. 'Calling Adam a gentleman is like painting gloss on rotten wood.'

Yvette sniggered at the comment. 'That's a bit harsh darling. I've known Adam for years. He's not that bad. I like him better than I like Gus.'

She was now leaning into Dolly, who pressed back against her. 'And take it from me, Julia, you're his sort of girl.'

Julia stared at Yvette for a moment, and then made a decision.

'I'd better be going. May I call for a taxi? Adam has my car.'

'Yes, of course.'

'I had better be going as well,' Dolly said, without actually moving her body away from Yvette's.

'No, Dolly, why don't you stay a bit longer and have another coffee,' Yvette said, putting an arm around Dolly's shoulder and pulling her tighter against her - if that were possible. 'I need to reward you properly for bringing me my handbag.'

THIRTEEN

GUS'S FATE

Audrey was luxuriating in a scented bath, sipping champagne, and thinking what to do about Gus, presently standing on her gallows in her dungeon with a noose around his neck. The soapy fingers of her left hand wandered down to her crotch as she thought about him. Playing the executioner was her favourite scenario. Not too many of her clients wanted such extreme domination by a female, but those that did always paid a high premium for the privilege of being threatened with 'the drop'. Her thoughts turned to one of her favourite customers. A handsome debonair man in his late forties or early fifties; she had fallen for him when she first threatened him with the noose. He gave his name as Jack. She guessed he was probably an accountant or a banker. He seemed to have plenty of money and wore expensive clothes, including silk socks. His socks were all he wore when standing on her gallows. At his request, she wore a tight-fitting, business suit, white silk, blouse and a pearl necklace, and high heels, in her role as a prison governess supervising his execution. Underneath the suit she wore an open-bottomed girdle, with suspenders holding up seamed, silk stocking. Julia's role was to act as 'executioner', dressed in a Gestapo-style jacket, straight-skirt, jackboots and Germanic pigtails beneath an SS peaked-cap, with a holstered-luger. Julia always had her hair cut short which enabled her to wear a variety of wigs easily. His penis remained erect or semi-stiff throughout. It was big, but not too big.

On one of his visits, she had been tempted to go through his pockets when he was blindfolded, and strapped to a whipping bench prior to his mounting the gallows. On this occasion, the whipping was administered by Julia with a leather whip. But there was nothing to identify him; obviously he took care to

preserve his anonymity.

Thinking about Jack had brought her close to an orgasm. She succumbed to a delicious surge of sexual enjoyment as she remembered how Jack's penis had spurted when she had granted him 'his last wish' on the scaffold. As the pleasure in her groin subsided she began to wonder whether he was married. If so, what was his wife like. Obviously they didn't play 'hangwoman' at home. But did she whip him? Every time Jack had visited his back and buttocks were unmarked; no sign of recent flagellation. It was always possible he spanked his wife, she thought.

Reluctantly, her thoughts returned to the present. The bathwater was cooling and the champagne bottle was empty; time to get out and return to the dungeon. She had decided what Gus's fate would be.

She towelled herself, applied fresh makeup, put on the clothes she had been wearing; that is to say, only the mask, leather glove, and stiletto-heeled boots, with a whip as an essential fashion-accessory.

She teetered back to the dungeon, hip swaying in an exaggerated way as she entered. Gus eyed her fearfully as she walked slowly towards him and up the five steps to stand in front of him. The fact that she was dressed as she was gave him cause for concern. In fact, it gave him cause to be terrified.

'Please,' he managed to say in a husky voice as she stood in front of him.

'Please what?' she asked in a severe tone.

'Don't kill me.'

'Do you have a last request?'

His legs lost their ability to hold him up and his bowels and bladder felt the need to empty. He sagged at the knees, held from collapsing by the noose which threatened to strangle him.

She put the sole of a boot on the stool on which he was wobbling.

'I'm going to count to ten and say goodbye.'

'Mum, what are you doing?' Julia was back, striding towards the gallows, like a one-woman seventh cavalry.'

'Hello, darling,' her mother said, in a slurred voice.

'You're drunk.' As she said this, Julia untied the end of the rope from its ring, and loosened the tension allowing Gus to fall off the stool onto the floor. He curled up, his knees as close to his chest as his belly would allow.

'Have you gone crazy,' Julia said to her mother.

'I hate men.'

'So do I, but that doesn't mean you should kill one.'

Gus was now rolling around on the floor, blubbering. Both women stared down at him as though he were a slug on a lettuce leaf.

'Now what are we going to do to him?' Julia asked her mother.

Gus looked up at the women with pleading eyes. 'I will be your slave for life.'

Julia looked at her mother. 'Do we want him as your slave?'

'Why not,' Audrey said. 'I'm going to bed.'

Julia watched her mother depart and then turned her attention back to the sobbing Gus, and kicked him in the ribs. 'On your feet.'

He struggled to his feet, the noose still tight around his neck. She loosened the noose and looped it from his head so that it dangled in front of his face.

'Remember, if you upset my mother or me again, I won't stop her hanging you. In fact, I'll hang you myself. Understood?'

'Yes,' he mumbled.

'You smell horribly shitty,' she said, as she went behind him and untied his hands. 'Clean up the mess you've made, and have a shower. Then come upstairs.'

After Julia had left the dungeon, he used a mop and bucket to clean the scaffold platform, and then used the shower adjacent to the dungeon, for the use of guests after a session, and then went up stairs to the ground floor, as instructed.

He called 'Hello' in a weak voice.

'In here,' Julia called.

Both women were sitting in their nightdresses at a kitchen table drinking cocoa. He stood just inside the door, naked, and awaiting further instructions.

Audrey looked bleary-eyed. 'Where is he going to sleep; in my bed or yours?'

'I'm not sleeping with him,' Julia said, as if the idea disgusted her.

'He can sleep with me then,' her mother said, staring at his very limp penis.

Gus trembled, as if the idea of sleeping with Audrey scared him to death. He was terrified of Audrey's volatile personality. She was about to hang him until her daughter stopped her, and now she was saying he would have to sleep with her. She was still inebriated. What would she do to him in her bedroom?

'I can sleep on the floor,' he mumbled.

'You will sleep where you are allowed to sleep,' Audrey said.

'Yes, madam.'

'And from now on you will work for us as a dogsbody without pay. You will do whatever we tell you to do. Understood?'

'Yes, madam.'

'We'll have to give him pocket money. Say, a shilling a week,' Julia said. 'Providing he has been a good boy. Otherwise, he will be shitting himself again.'

'Darling, please don't be crude. I'm going to bed. Slave can clear up in here before he comes up.'

Gus almost jumped to open the door for Audrey who swept past him in her nightgown without a nod or a 'thank you'. He then resumed his position, standing like an attentive butler awaiting orders from Julia, his mistress.

'I met your fiancée this evening.'

'Where?'

Julia frowned. 'What I think you meant to ask, slave, is 'may I be permitted to ask, mistress, where you met the lady.'

He bowed his head, as if in shame, and said, 'May I be permitted to ask, mistress, where you met the lady, my fiancée?'

'In Le Coq d'or restaurant. She was with her fat friend whose name escapes me.'

'May I be permitted to suggest that her name is Delia.'

'Unpleasant creature.'

The slave thought of asking whether his mistress meant that Delia was unpleasant, or possibly his fiancée, but he thought better of asking.

'I quite liked your fiancée, up to a point. The point being when she cuddled up to another woman.'

Gus could not resist asking, 'What other woman?'

'I don't feel like telling you. You didn't ask permission to ask. Touch your toes and remain in that position.'

Slowly he bent to touch his toes as Julia left the kitchen.

He remained in that position until she returned with a cane. 'Twenty five, I think.'

'May I be permitted to ask why, mistress?'

'Because I like caning a man nearly as much as I like caning a woman.'

She rested the rattan across his buttocks and swished. He gave a grunt of pain.

'I like a man to receive his caning in silence. If you utter a sound at any stroke it will be repeated. Do you understand?'

'Yes, mistress.'

He screwed his eyes tight and took deep breaths at each anticipated stroke and managed to endure twenty five strokes in silence. She viewed the marks she had made. 'Alright, finish clearing up down here and then go up to my mother. Her bedroom door is the first on the landing. Mine is next door.'

With that, Julia left Gus in the kitchen, and went upstairs. She knocked on her mother's door and entered.

Audrey was in bed reading a book. Julia said on the edge of her mother's bed and took the novel from her mother's hand and read the title, 'Exhibition of Female Flagellants.'

'It's a classic bit of Regency smut, darling. Some people say it was written by Mrs Berkeley, who, as you know, is my heroine. Would you like me to come to your room, tuck you up in bed like I used to do, and read you the first chapter? It's women whipping women; just your cup of tea.'

'Who says I like whipping women?' Julia said, defensively.

'We both know you do, darling. If that is your kink, that's fine by me.'

'I've decided I prefer whipping men. I've just enjoyed caning your slave.'

Further discussion was stilled by a light tap at the bedroom door.

'Enter, slave,' Audrey said imperiously.

The door opened slowly and a naked Gus entered.

'Have you cleaned the kitchen?' Audrey asked.

'Yes, madam.'

'I hope you have because if I find a speck of grease or dirt in the morning you will get a whipping.'

'I'm off to bed,' Julia said. 'Make sure he wears a condom. You never know who he's been with. His fiancée doesn't let him fuck her.'

Gus opened the door wide for Julia as she departed and then closed it softly after her and then stood at the end of the bed awaiting instructions.

With a smile, Audrey closed her book, placed it on the bedside table, and flipped back the covers on the vacant side of the bed.

'You will find a packet of condoms in the draw on your side of the bed. Put one on and get in.'

She watched him put on a condom on a limp penis.

'Turn around and let me see your bum.'

He turned.

'I see my daughter caned you quite heavily, as she is prone to do. I don't think the marks will be gone by morning. That is unfortunate for you. I assume your bride might ask questions if we let you go to your wedding.'

He felt emboldened to mention, 'My bottom does hurt very much.' And then remembered his manners and added, 'madam.'

Tentatively he put a knee on the bed and then climbed in and lay on his back, rigidly, apart from his penis which was far from rigid.

Audrey turned her body towards him.

'You do know how to fuck a woman?'

'Yes.' Then he added, 'madam.'

'Well, I would like you to fuck me.'

He gulped, felt his limp penis, with its condom fitting as well as an overcoat several sizes too big. She raised her bottom and hitched up her nightdress to her waist. And waited. Slowly he put one leg across her and raised himself on one elbow, but his penis was as stiff as an ice lolly melting on a hot beach. 'I'm sorry, madam. I'm too scared of you.'

Audrey's aggressive tone softened. 'Most men are frightened of me. My husband - Julia's father - was terrified of me, right up until the day he disappeared.'

Gus would have liked to ask the circumstances of the disappearance but thought better of it. He knew that one word out of place would see him back in the dungeon standing on that fearful platform.

'Unless you get it up within the next minute I will take you back down to the dungeon.'

He swallowed hard and tried hard to concentrate on achieving an erection. His thoughts turned to Ursula, his fiancée's mother and what he would like to do to her.

Thoughts of Ursula always had the desired effect and usually terminated in a wank. She was the woman of his dreams, albeit some twenty years older. In many ways she was similar to his mother; same shaped bosom and hips and a slight facial resemblance. He wished she was his fiancée instead of her daughter. He had always been more comfortable with much older women - Audrey being the exception.

He imagined Ursula's rotund posterior - naked, with large frilly, satin, flesh-coloured knickers - similar to the lingerie he knew his mother wore - pulled down to the backs of her knees as she bent over a chair and he administered the cane across her bum. His imaginings had the desired effect.

He achieved an erection strong enough to insert into Audrey. It became stronger as he imagined he had his mother-like Ursula beneath him and he managed several 'hearty' thrusts before an orgasm began accompanied by a shout of 'Ursula - I love you'.

His imagination had caused him to forget Audrey's requirements, but as his 'pleasure' expired he sensed that she seemed quite pleased.

'That was quite nice, slave.' Rather nice, in fact. By the way, who is Ursula?

He subsided, exhausted, beside her, and thought he had better tell the truth.

'My fiancée's mother.'

Audrey laughed. 'How old is she?'

'I'm not sure. Probably about fifty.'

'Ten years older than me. How pleasing. I always like to know of a woman who is sexually attractive to a younger man and also older than me. It gives me hope. So what would you like to do to Ursula apart from fuck her?'

'Spank her bum.'

'You really are a sadist. How delightful. I do rather enjoy dominating a sadist rather than a masochist. It gives me a greater sense of power. What does Ursula look like?'

'Plump. A bit dumpy. With big breasts and a very fat bottom. And a very pretty face.'

Audrey looked surprised. 'And you find her attractive?'

'Yes. In a girdle and stockings.' Gus was becoming almost agitated. His penis was tingling again. Audrey sensed what was happening. She fondled his swelling shaft to make it swell even more. 'Would you like to take Ursula down to my dungeon?'

'Yes please.'

He was now ramrod stiff. A gunner on the Victory at the Battle of Trafalgar could not have had a stiffer rod with which to ram his balls into a muzzle.

Audrey kept fondling. 'Well, if you can entice her here you can show her the dungeon. In the meantime, you'll have to pretend I'm Ursula in a girdle.'

'Can I spank you as well as fuck you?'

'You most certainly cannot spank me. But you may fuck me again.'

FOURTEEN

WEDDING INVITATION

Ursula was unhappy. Her husband, Malcolm, was driving too slowly. 'We're going to be late.'

'No we're not. You told Yvette we wouldn't be there until eleven.'

'You're on a go-slow because you don't want your daughter to get married.'

Malcolm stopped at an amber light.

'If you'd speeded up we could have got through the lights.'

'Why don't you sit in the back. That's where a back-seat driver sits usually. Better still, I'll sit in the back and you drive.'

The lights changed to green and Malcolm moved forward. 'I will admit that I am not ecstatic about this chap marrying my daughter.'

'His name is Gus. I think he's quite sweet. I wouldn't mind marrying him.'

'You have my permission to do so. Any time you want a divorce just tell me and I should be delighted to oblige.'

'I will. And I've got plenty of grounds on which I could divorce you.'

'Such as?'

'You're sexual predilections.'

'You joined in. When we were first married.'

'I was naive in those days. I thought a wife's duty was to obey her husband, especially in the bedroom. But all you ever wanted was to obey me. And for me to beat you if you didn't.'

'Water under the bridge,' he said, overtaking a slow-moving lorry. 'My daughter's fiancé is who we should be discussing, not me.'

'I assume Gus will not expect Yvette to spank his bottom with a cane.'

'You haven't told anyone, have you?'

'No. But I might.'

They relapsed into silence, each with their own thoughts. Eventually Ursula broke the silence. 'I wouldn't mind spanking Gus.'

Malcolm swerved on a straight road with no other traffic about.

'I don't believe I just heard you say that.'

'Heard me say I wouldn't mind spanking Gus? Perhaps I should tell Yvette that her father likes being spanked and that she should try it on husband to see if he does. And I will help her spank him if he does. I bet you would have liked my mum to spank you. It's a wonder you didn't ask.'

Malcolm skidded the car to a halt in a lay-by. 'If you continue in this vein I will...'

'You will what? Spank me? You should have tried. You never know, I might have liked it.'

'I was brought up to respect women. I have never laid a finger on you.'

'I know. You are so fucking boring.'

'Please do not swear, Ursula. You know I do not like women who swear.'

'Or chew gum, or have tattoos, or smoke. I know. I would like a divorce.'

'Good. At least we agree about something.'

'I think I would like a fag. And possibly a chew. Although, not a tattoo, unless I was getting married to a sailor. Yvette's friend Adam has a boat. I wouldn't mind being his mate. Now, could you start the engine so that we can get to our daughter's wedding on time.'

He started the car, crashing the gears in the process. 'At least I won't have to make a speech as it's only a registry office.'

'It might be nice if you said something about our beloved daughter. There are a few guests. And there is a reception in a hotel afterwards. I think you've taken a wrong turning. You should have turned right at that last junction.'

'I know the way. I've been to this town before.'

'When? I didn't know. You told me you'd never been there.'

'Business meetings. I forgot about them when I said that.'

Adam, the best man at the forthcoming nuptials, did not sleep well. He tossed and turned as the woman next to him snored her head off. Delia always snored when she had too much alcohol, which was most nights. He had just

managed to doze off when he was rudely awoken by a thump on the shoulder.

'Wake up, sleepy head.'

He opened bleary eyes to see a large bulk of naked flesh hovering over him.

'You only managed to fuck me once before I went to sleep. I warned you that I would whip you unless you managed three.'

'Have a heart, Del. These days it take me at least half an hour to recover from a full-scale fuck. I'm thirty. It takes longer between fucks as you get older.'

She mulled over his explanation. 'It wasn't because you don't fancy me?'

'Of course I fancy you. I really do.'

He thought it best to play for time. Once he was out of this isolated house, and out of her clutches, he would disappear to Patagonia, or possibly to a monastery in Nepal, and get away from women. But he was not yet out of her clutches.

'Alright, I'll just give you a little whipping; not so fierce as you won't be able to stand next to Gus and hand him the ring. Turn over onto your front.'

He turned as she stripped the bedclothes from him. His arms were straight down by his sides as she commenced to whip his back and buttocks.

'As you're thirty I will give you thirty.'

Quite often Adam woke with a semi-stiff penis. It was semi-stiff as she began to whip him. His masochism kicked into play and he became stiffer at each slash of the whip. Big Ben began to chime on the twelfth stroke, and he ejaculated copiously, and then suffered the increasing agony of a whipping without the antidote of sexual arousal. He had to grit his teeth and bite the bullet to stop himself screaming as he received the thirtieth slash.

'Now you can fuck me. Turn over. You lay on your back and I'll sit on it and we'll do it that way.'

He stayed on his front without turning, and received an extra slash of the whip over his already well-marked bum.

'Turn over.'

He turned.

She saw the damp stain. 'You haven't!'

'I'm sorry. I couldn't help it.' Tears welled as he expected another whipping.

But instead of whipping him she burst out laughing. 'I love blokes who like being whipped. It's lucky for you I'm in a good mood this morning. But

from now on, if you do that again without permission, it's a hundred with the whip. Understand?'

He nodded; grateful to have escaped so lightly. Just then, there was a knock on the bedroom door, and Tony entered without being told he could come in.

'Fucking get out. I'm not wearing knickers.'

'Sorry, Del. I'll avert my gaze. Morning, Adam.'

'What is it you want?' Delia asked, gruffly.

'You seem to have overslept. It's nearly eleven; wedding's at twelve.'

The bridegroom awoke on his wedding day. At first, he wondered where he was. The bed was comfier than his own bed; more like a bed in a five-star hotel with luxurious sheets and pillows. The body next to him, slept soundly. He knew it was not his fiancée because he had never slept with her. He raised his head off the pillow and recognised a sleeping Audrey. Then he remembered it was his wedding day. And then he remembered that he was Audrey's slave.

The bedroom door opened. Julia stood in the doorway in a babydoll negligee. The light from the landing backlit Julia, making the negligee even more see-through than the designer had intended. He could not help admiring her curves. Then he spotted her whip.

'Up, slave. You have work to do, making breakfast.'

He sprang out of bed.

'Don't just stand there looking gormless, go down to the kitchen.'

'Can I go to the toilet first?'

'If you must.'

Julia viewed his buttocks as he left the bedroom to go down to the kitchen with a detour to the toilet, thinking that she would prefer to cane Adam. She would very much like to cane Henry but he was 'off limits' as he belonged to Vanessa and Mandy and she did not want get in their 'bad books'. She got into the side of the bed recently vacated by Gus and snuggled up against her mother's back.

Her mother, surfaced drowsily, 'Morning, Gus darling.'

'Excuse me, but why are you calling your slave, darling?'

Her mother reached the surface. 'It's you, darling. I thought I went to bed with Gus.'

'He's in the kitchen making breakfast. Good fuck, was he?'

'Darling, you know I do not like the word 'fuck'. It's ever so rough.'

'You like a bit of rough.'

Her mother sat up. 'If you are going to be so hatefully impolite to your mother I would prefer you to go to your room.'

Julia ignored her mother's admonishment. 'I take it you're not going to allow your slave to get married.'

'I've decided not to. He's quite a good fucker.'

'Tut tut. I thought you didn't like that word.'

'I don't, darling. I'll give myself a slap on the wrist for using it. We'll lock him in the dungeon for the rest of the day, after breakfast.'

'Good. I'll go down to the kitchen just in case he needs whipping into shape. Would you like tea or coffee.'

'Coffee, I think. And lashings of toast and marmalade would be nice.'

'Your slave can provide the toast and marmalade and the coffee and I'll lash him.'

Working in a kitchen was not one of Gus's talents.

'The toast's burning,' Julia yelled as she came into the kitchen.

'Sorry, mistress.'

Gus leapt at the toaster to eject a charred piece of toast and yelped as her whip struck his buttocks.

'You'll be even sorrier. My mother likes her toast evenly browned. And I like men's arses evenly whipped.'

'I will improve, mistress.'

'You'd better.'

Julia sat at the kitchen table and watched his progress.

The kitchen door opened and Audrey entered in her nightdress and slippers, still looking sleepy. 'I can smell burning.'

Audrey sat at the table with her daughter and they both viewed him.

'I think we're doing his fiancée a favour by not letting him marry her,' Julia said. 'Mind you, I think we're also doing our slave a favour. She prefers women.'

Gus stopped filling the percolator and stared at Julia, and ventured to ask a question. 'Permission to ask a question, mistress.'

'Granted,' Julia said, imperiously. And then continued. 'And if you're

going to ask how I know she prefers women to men it is because I saw her with another woman.'

'Was it Delia?' Gus asked, forgetting to ask permission to ask.

'The waitress in Le Coq d'or.'

Gus stared in disbelief, and then a small flicker of a smile appeared. 'I don't think I want to get married even if you let me.'

'Have you got a picture of your fiancée?' Audrey asked. 'As a matter of interest.'

'In my wallet, madam.'

'Where did you put his wallet, darling?'

'It's in this drawer.' Julia opened a drawer in the kitchen table and extracted the wallet. 'There's a photo in it. I've already taken the money and bank cards.'

'Yvette and her parents,' Gus said.

Audrey laughed as she took the photo from Julia. 'He fancies the mother that's why he's got a photo of her.' Her eyes opened wide in disbelief as she looked at the photo.

'What's the matter?' Julia asked.

'We need to get a move on and get ready.'

'Ready for what?'

'We're all going to Gus's wedding. He's just invited us; haven't you, Gus.'

Gus looked dumbfounded.

FIFTEEN

THE REGISTRY OFFICE

The registry office, in the small 'up market' town of Upcock, is situated next door to The Bedlam Arms, the best hotel in the town. A ground floor suite had been booked by Gus and Yvette for their wedding reception. The wedding was scheduled for twelve o'clock.

Yvette's mother and father were the first to arrive, an hour early, and went into the hotel for coffee. They sat in squishy-leather armchairs; a silver plated coffee pot and biscuits were on a low table between them.

'Nice place,' Malcolm said. 'Excellent coffee.'

'Have you been here before?'

'No.'

'I thought you might have done, as you were able to find your way here without having to ask the way, as you do normally in a strange place.'

'I have not been to this hotel before.'

'But you have been to this town before. You admitted as much in the car. On business, I think you said.'

'It was a good few years ago. Would you like a spot more coffee?'

'I would like a spot more of the truth. It was another woman, wasn't it?'

'No. It was a business meeting.' And he added, by way of a welcome diversion, 'I think the best man and the bridesmaid have arrived.'

Ursula turned her head to view the newcomers. 'I was never keen on Yvette's fat friend,' she said to her husband, in a low voice. 'Somewhat vulgar.'

Then her face broke into a beaming smile. 'Delia, how absolutely lovely to see you again. You look so much slimmer. I wouldn't have recognised you. And that dress is so flattering to your figure.'

'Ursula. You don't look a day older. You must tell me what cosmetics you use.'

Delia came close and the two women exchanged hugs at arms' distance.

'You remember Adam.'

Ursula turned to view Adam, semi-masked by Delia's wide body, and gave him a beaming smile. This time the beam was genuine delight.

'Adam. It's been ages. As handsome as ever. Especially in that suit. How suave and elegant you look.' She clasped Adam to her bosom and pecked him on each cheek like a hungry flamingo. Then she looked, with reluctance at her husband. 'You remember Malcolm.'

Adam smiled at Malcolm, a chap he had always liked. 'Hi.'

They shook hands and then Delia smothered Malcolm's cheek with a kiss.

'Isn't this nice,' Ursula cooed, and clicked her fingers at a hovering waitress. 'Two more coffees.'

'And more biscuits,' Delia added, as she sat on the two-seat sofa and patted the vacant cushion for Adam to occupy next to her.

Ursula held court. 'So, has anyone seen Augustus today?'

Her husband added, 'Has anyone seen my daughter today?'

Adam looked at Delia as if expecting her to answer the questions.

'I saw Yvette last night. We had a 'hen and hen' night in a restaurant. We met Adam and his friend, Julia, in the restaurant by chance and we had a meal together. Then I fancied an early night and Adam, very kindly, escorted me home.'

'How chivalrous,' Ursula said.

'We left Yvette and Julia in the restaurant. I've not spoken to Yvette since, but we'd always arranged that I would meet her here at eleven-thirty.' She smiled amiably having recounted events and arrangements.

'So where is Gus?' Ursula asked. 'What time was he going to be here?'

'Gus will go straight to the registry office, as they say it's bad luck to see the bride before the wedding. Worse than breaking a mirror, apparently.'

Ursula smiled at Delia. 'Some people are more prone to shatter mirrors than others. Is your friend Julia coming to the wedding, Adam?'

'Not as far as I am aware.'

'I think the answer is that she is,' Delia said, with a view of the lounge entrance.

Julia had made 'an entrance' and was walking towards them, swaying her hips like a model on a catwalk. Malcolm, remembering his manners, stood to

greet the stunningly-attractive, young lady. His welcoming smile froze as he recognised her. His wife spotted the change in his demeanour.

'Hello, I'm Julia. Adam, please introduce me to everyone.'

Adam stood to do the introductions. But Julia continued to introduce herself without any formality.

'Delia, I know. And you must be Yvette's parents. How absolutely delightful.' She extended her hand towards Ursula who touched Julia's fingers by way of a handshake. Then Julia focused on Malcolm. 'You must be Yvette's father. I don't think I've had the pleasure.'

Malcolm's tense shoulders relaxed slightly, as Julia, without asking, took Adam's seat, and Adam remained standing.

'Gus invited my mother and me to the wedding.'

Malcolm tensed again.

'I don't think any of you have met my mother, apart from Adam.'

Malcolm, relaxed ever so slightly, and looked towards Adam with a degree of interest, as if he just had learned that another male was a kindred spirit.

Her husband's reaction to Julia's arrival had piqued Ursula's interest in Julia. 'How long have you known Gus and Yvette, my dear?'

'I only met Yvette last night and I've known Gus for a little while.'

Malcolm now wondered whether he had found yet another kindred spirit in his future son-in-law.

Malcolm's future son-in-law, sat in the waiting room at the Registry Office with a woman Malcolm had met on several occasions - in her dungeon.

Audrey smiled at Gus. 'Don't look so nervous.'

'You make me nervous,' he said, feeling able to be slightly confrontational as she did not have a whip with her, as far as he knew. He was wrong, she had one in her handbag. And, as he understood it, she wanted him to marry Yvette, although he was not clear why she wanted him to do this. But marrying Yvette meant he would be out of Audrey's power and closer to Ursula, the most attractive woman on the planet.

'Tell me about your bride-to-be's father.'

'What about him?' Gus asked.

'What is he like as a person?'

'Why?'

'Please answer the question, otherwise I shall get cross.' As she said this she opened her large handbag, and showed him the handle of the whip. 'I never go anywhere without one,' she said closing the clasp.

'Do you want his business card. I have one in my wallet,' Gus asked.

'It is no longer in your wallet. I have it.'

'Why?'

'I ask you the questions. Do you like his wife? I believe her name is Ursula. I remember you mentioned the name when we were in bed.'

Gus didn't reply, but blushed.

'I take it you do. Why don't you marry her instead of her daughter?'

'Ursula's already married.'

'Divorces can always be arranged. I think the others are arriving.'

The reception door had been opened by Adam, who, as a gentleman should, stood to one side to allow Ursula, Delia and Julia to enter before him. Malcolm was not with them.

'Well, this is nice,' Ursula said, after the introductions had been made. 'So, nice of you to come to my daughter's wedding.' The comment was directed at Audrey.

'Gus asked me to be here as his mother isn't coming. Shall we say I'm here in her place, by proxy.'

'But you don't look old enough to be Gus's mother,' Ursula said.

'How sweet of you to say that. I don't think either of us look our age.'

The two women smiled at each other like two cats on a fence deciding whether or not to have a fight involving claws and snarling.

'My daughter is very lucky to be marrying Gus.'

Ursula leaned across to Audrey, sitting next to her, and whispered in a stage-whisper, so that Gus could hear. 'I wouldn't mind marrying Gus myself.'

Audrey answered, also in a stage-whisper, 'You would make a most handsome couple. But wouldn't your husband be disappointed to lose you?'

'I don't think so. My husband has in own interests; I have mine.'

Just then the door opened and a bespectacled woman came in. 'I'm Miss Bennett, the registrar. Is the groom here?'

Gus put his hand up to indicate that he was the groom.

'Excellent, one half 'all present and correct'. Will the bride be arriving shortly?'

'With her father,' Ursula said.

Malcolm coughed politely behind Miss Bennett. He looked embarrassed and was holding a piece of paper. 'I'm the bride's father,' he said to Miss Bennett. 'That is to say, I am the father of the young lady who was going to be married but...' He glanced at Gus, 'I am afraid my daughter has just sent a telegram to the hotel to say she will not be getting married today as she is going to Spain on holiday with a friend.'

Miss Bennett said 'Ah, in that case I will withdraw on the assumption that the ceremony will not be taking place and my services will not be required. Good day to you all.'

'So sorry to have wasted your time,' Malcolm said to Miss Bennett.

'I am not in the least bit put out, my dear man. These things happen. I will leave you all to your own devices.' She closed the door behind her.

Malcolm stood just inside the door. And then noticed Audrey smiling at him. His limbs went limp and his fingers dropped the telegram to the floor. It fluttered towards Ursula who picked it up and read it. 'It says she is going away with a friend named Dolly. Do any of you know anything about this Dolly?' She looked at Delia as if she might know.

Delia shrugged her shoulders as if to say 'sorry, no idea'.

Julia shook her head slightly to confirm that she did not know either.

'Turn up for the book,' Adam said, having said very little up to this point.

Delia giggled. 'I don't think 'turn up' is exactly appropriate; as she hasn't.'

Audrey was still smiling at Malcolm. 'Ursula, I assume that this handsome gentleman is your husband. We haven't been introduced.'

'He is, yes,' Ursula agreed. 'Malcolm this is Audrey, a friend of Gus's.'

'Please to meet you,' Malcolm said nervously. 'All of this has come as a bit of a shock. I don't think there is any point in our remaining here. Perhaps we should all go home.'

'Of course we're not all going home,' Ursula said. 'We need to stay here and cheer up Gus.'

'And there's a buffet laid on in the hotel. We don't want to miss that, as it's been paid for,' Delia said, almost licking her lips. 'Plus, I could do with several drinks.'

'Poor, Gus. How could Yvette do this to you.' Ursula said, taking him by the arm and leading him out of the room. 'I will give her a severe whipping the next time I see her. In fact, perhaps you could whip her for me.'

'Adam, darling I think your duty as bridegroom is to look after the

bridesmaid,' Delia said, taking Adam, by the arm and following Gus and Ursula out of the room.

'May I escort you two ladies,' Malcolm said, slightly less nervously now that his wife had left the room.

'Julia, close the door for a moment,' Audrey said.

Julia closed it and Malcolm started to tremble. He was now in a room with two women who had whipped him on five occasions, at a high cost.

Audrey smiled sweetly. 'You remember Malcolm, don't you, Julia darling.'

Julia gave the same sweet smile. 'Of course I remember Malcolm. Although, I don't think we knew him by that name.'

Malcolm almost stumbled and sat heavily onto a chair. 'What is it you want of me? If you want more money I'll pay, only, please don't tell my wife.'

Audrey moved to sit on the chair next to him and patted his hand reassuringly. 'Discretion, discretion, discretion' is our family motto, is it not, Julia darling.'

'Yes, Mummy.'

Malcolm looked surprised. His nervous stutter disappeared momentarily. 'You two are mother and daughter?'

'Yes,' Audrey said. 'Most people assume we are sisters, don't they, darling.'

'Yes, Mummy.'

'You certainly look young enough to be sisters,' he said nervously.

'By which he means we both look about thirty,' Mummy darling.

Audrey beamed, 'I do so like a man who thinks I'm only thirty.'

'I don't like a man who thinks I'm thirty when I'm only nineteen.'

'You're only nineteen?' Malcolm said in a surprised tone.

Audrey smiled. 'Yes, Malcolm darling, you were whipped by a young lady who has only just left school and is about to go to University.'

'Maybe he would like me to cane him in my school uniform, Mummy?'

Malcolm blushed scarlet.

Audrey smiled. 'Would you like that, Malcolm darling. Would you like my daughter to spank you with a school cane whilst she wears her school uniform? Or perhaps you would prefer her to wear her Gestapo uniform and use a whip?'

He hooked a finger in his collar to breathe more easily as his breath was coming in short sharp bursts, and his penis was in danger of doing the same.

'Maybe, Mummy, you could be the headmistress in your white buttoned-

up blouse and pencil skirt, both of which are a size too small for you.'

'That's because they belong to you, darling. You are the one who likes dressing up as a headmistress.'

He was gasping for air. 'Please, can we forget about my visits.'

'But I found them unforgettable, Malcolm. I enjoyed your visits; didn't you?'

'How many times did Malcolm visit us; was it five, Mummy?'

'Yes, five, darling. So Malcolm deserves one visit 'on the house' in the dungeon.'

Both women smiled at his evident distress.

Having taken Gus by the arm, Ursula pulled him close into her as they walked the short distance from the registry office to the hotel. Gus brightened at being so close to the woman of his dreams.

'I was quite serious, you know.' Ursula glanced over her shoulder to check that Delia and Adam were far enough behind so as not to be able to hear any of their conversation. 'About whipping my daughter. I would be quite happy for you to do it for me.'

'Yvette wouldn't let me.'

'I would hold her down for you. Perhaps tie her hands so that she couldn't struggle.'

'What would Malcolm say?'

'Forget about Malcolm. He won't be my husband too much longer.'

'Are you getting divorced?'

'Probably. Between you and I. But I don't like living without a man. Especially at night. I get frightened in case a burglar broke in and tied me up and raped me.'

Gus was becoming uncomfortable as he walked; his penis had stiffened to the point where it was in danger of exploding. 'I'd be quite happy to keep you company, Ursula' he said. 'Move in.'

'How sweet of you, Gus.' She gave him a peck on the cheek to emphasise how sweet she found him. She glanced behind again. Adam and Delia were engaged in their own conversation. But to be on the discreet-side, she whispered into Gus's ear, 'I would like it very much if you moved in with me.'

You might find me more accommodating than my daughter.' Gus blushed. 'By the way,' she whispered. 'Do you have a whip?'

'No.'

'Then perhaps you and I should go to a shop and buy one.'

'Where do you buy that sort of thing?' he whispered back.

'Probably a sex shop. We'd don't want anything too vicious do we, to use on my daughter. You might even decide to use it on me.' He would have ejaculated had their conversation continued but they had reached the entrance to the hotel.

Walking behind Ursula and Gus, Delia and Adam were also deep in conversation; or at least, Delia was doing the talking.

'It's no surprise to me that Yvette didn't turn up. Especially when she saw your friend, Julia. The surprise is that she went off with that waitress. Anyway, what about us?'

'What about us?' he said. 'And I've been thinking about it. I'm not bothered who you show those pictures you took of me to. My parents are not going to bother that much. And apart from Gus, and perhaps Yvette and you, I don't have that many friends. If people think I'm a kinky pervert, let them, I'm not bothered.'

'Well said,' Delia grinned. 'I agree with you. Why bother what other people think. In fact, you can have all the photos Tony and I took.'

'That's really kind of you, Del.'

'Think nothing of it.' She turned and pecked him on the cheek. 'You're one of my oldest mates.'

They followed Ursula and Gus into the hotel.

SIXTEEN

THE WEDDING RECEPTION

Waiting staff were setting out the buffet when Ursula and Gus entered the banqueting suite, closely followed by Delia and Adam.

'Looks a nice spread,' Delia announced, looking around. 'The room's private. We could have an orgy.'

Gus and Adam said 'Del' in unison, by way of admonishing their friend.

But Ursula smiled. 'An orgy at a wedding reception. How decadent.'

'I'm full of bright ideas when it comes to sex and food,' Delia said, unwrapping the cellophane from a plate of ham sandwiches, as the last of the waiting staff left the room. 'Is there any English mustard? I do like things hot and spicy.'

'Oh, so do I,' Ursula said, her arm around Gus's waist. 'Especially after a few glasses of champagne. Gus, do you think you could pour some bubbly.'

Gus picked up a bottle of champagne and popped the cork, and filled four glasses, just as Audrey and Malcolm entered, arm in arm, followed by Julia.

'I do love the sound of popping corks,' Audrey said, 'music to my ears.'

'A woman after my own heart,' Ursula said. 'And has Malcolm been attentive? He's not always a gentleman. I don't think his mother brought him up properly.'

'Mothers-in-law have a lot to answer for. I had to whip Julia's father on many an occasion, when he might have been easier to manage if his mother had used corporal punishment.'

'You are joking, Audrey?' Ursula did not quite believe what she had heard.

'No she isn't joking,' Julia said as she walked past and towards the drinks' table.

'Darling, you and I must get to know each other much better,' Ursula said, almost in a whisper. 'We appear to have views in common.'

'Let's sit on the sofa at the far end of the room and have a chinwag,' Audrey said, taking a glass of champagne proffered to her by Gus.

The sofa was a deep chesterfield, and the two women sank into it, placing handbags on the small, low table in front of the sofa. They raised their glasses to each other and sipped, their body language that of chess players waiting for the opening gambit.

Ursula made the first move. 'I rather got the feeling, - intuition, shall we say - that you have met my husband before. And what's more, that he seems rather intimidated by you.'

'You are very perceptive, Ursula.'

'Were you - or are you - lovers?'

'The truthful answer to that question is 'no'. Shall we move sideways on to each other just in case anyone can lip read.'

They shuffled their tightly-skirted bottoms so that their elegant silk-stockinged, knees were almost touching.

'My meetings with your husband were entirely 'business'. My business.'

'And what is your business?'

'We are both women of the world, I think. Whatever that phrase means.'

'I think it means that I am not going to 'fly off the handle' if you tell me you slept with my husband for money.'

'I have not had sexual intercourse with him.'

'Take it from me, it's not the most pleasurable experience known to a woman. Basically, he's a wimp. He has trouble, as Jane Austen would have put it demurely, priming his musket.'

'I spank men's bottoms.'

Ursula burst out laughing, causing the assembled group, congregated near the bottles, to look in her direction.

She bent her head towards Audrey, who reciprocated, so that their foreheads were almost touching. 'I think we are drawing attention,' Audrey said.

But Ursula was intrigued. 'You spanked Malcolm's bottom?'

'Subjected him to what is known in the trade as 'a bit of Sacher.'"

'As in torte? I do so enjoy a slice of Viennese chocolate cake.'

'As in Masoch.'

Ursula was humorously aghast; her hand to her mouth. 'Were you

wearing fur?'

'I think I was on the last occasion. One of my gentlemen gave me a mink which I find rather warm and cosy. Why don't you visits my premises and see me at work?'

'I'd love to, darling. Tell me when I could come.'

'What about tomorrow.'

'I'm supposed to be driving back home tomorrow; way up North. It's a bit of a trek.'

'I have an idea. Why don't you stay the night here - in this hotel?'

'Yes, of course. Yvette and Gus booked a room here tonight for their nuptials before going on honeymoon.'

Audrey edged even closer to Ursula. 'What you could do, if I may suggest, is console poor Gus. Be his surrogate wife.'

Ursula blushed underneath her rouged cheeks as though she was warm to the idea of surrogacy where Gus was concerned.

She moved so close to Audrey that they were almost kissing and whispered, 'But there is a fly in the ointment. Two flies, in fact. Gus might not want to sleep with me; I was going to be his mother-in-law. And my husband will expect me to drive home with him.'

'I think I can help on both scores. One, Gus will be pleased to spend the night with you, in the matrimonial bed, without question. Take my word for it. And two, I will take your husband home with me for tonight. Providing, of course, you are not adverse to that idea.'

Ursula gave a girlish giggle. 'You can take Malcolm off my hands anytime. Permanently. Do with him what you want. You have carte-blanche. Please do whip him severely.' Then she looked slightly worried. 'But are you absolutely sure Gus will want to spend the night with me?'

'Trust me, he will. Why don't we go over to the drinks' table and replenish our glasses, as no gentleman seems inclined to top us.'

The other guests were busy selecting alcohol and food from the buffet, politely elbowing a nearby companion out of the way, to get to a miniature sausage roll or a three-cornered smoked salmon sandwich, as people are prone to do when free food is available. Malcolm was a man apart. He stood with a beer glass and no food, worrying what his wife was discussing with the woman who, hitherto, he had known only as a Madam Sinister. It now seemed that his wife and Madam were bosom pals. He wondered whether they were discussing him; they probably were.

'Malcolm, let's go over to a quiet corner and have a chat.' Mistress Dexter, now known to him as Julia, was standing next to him with a full champagne glass and a plate of food.

He reacted by looking like a cockerel startled by a vixen. Seeing that her mother and Ursula had vacated the sofa to refill champagne glasses, she led Malcolm to the sofa. He sat next to her nervously. His left eye had acquired a twitch.

Julia smiled at him. 'This is nice,' she said without any indication to what she was referring. 'It is a pity your daughter could not be at her wedding. I do like a nice wedding, don't you. Did you have a speech prepared?'

He nodded. 'Ursula dictated it and I wrote it down.'

Julia's smile broadened. 'Does Ursula always tell you what to say?' He didn't answer. 'Julia looked towards her mother and Ursula choosing nibbles, and laughing merrily.

'My mother and Ursula seem to be getting on splendidly. Do you like my mother?'

'Yes, of course.'

Julia lowered her voice. 'She likes you.'

'Does she?' This surprised him.

'I'm sure she would like you even more if she got to know you better. So would I.'

His nervous twitch increased. 'I no longer wish to indulge in...' He paused, searching for a mot juste.

'Kinky sex,' Julia whispered.

He blushed.

'That's a shame,' Julia said. 'Mummy and I always enjoyed your visits, as we said earlier.'

'My wife doesn't know,' he stuttered. 'Your mother hasn't told my wife, has she?'

'My mother is the soul of discretion. As am I.'

'Of course. I'm sorry. Obviously, no one, apart from your mother and you, has knowledge of my predilection.'

'Your predilection is fun. Gives me a chance to practice my German.'

'How is it you know my daughter?'

'I've only met her once. Last night in a restaurant. The only person I know here, apart from you, is Adam. Although I did meet Delia last night in the restaurant. Such a jolly person.'

'Does that mean Adam...?'

Julia tapped her scarlet-nailed finger against the side of her beautiful nose. 'Discretion is our motto.'

'And is that how you met Gus?'

She tapped again without saying anything and with an enigmatic smile.

He smiled ruefully, 'You and your mother must make a great deal of money.'

'Mummy's thinking of retiring. A friend of hers has made her a good offer to take over. And she has 'muscle'.'

'Do you mean her friend is a body-builder?'

Julia giggled at the thought. 'No. Her daughter's boyfriend is an expert in all sorts of martial arts. He's lethal, in more senses than one. Mummy and I have always lacked someone with muscles in the organisation. Which is why we always keep a couple of guns handy.'

'Guns?'

'Yes. In case of trouble-makers.'

'So this man...?'

'He's eighteen. And very good-looking.'

'This youth - has more 'muscle'- as you put it - than Adam?'

'Adam's a wimp,' she said dismissively.

'I rather thought that Adam ...'

His voiced trailed off as Julia's attention was on a newcomer to the party, who stood in the doorway as if uncertain of the reception. Malcolm looked towards where Julia was looking, and saw a dazzling blond framed in the doorway.

'She is rather gorgeous,' Julia said. 'Is she a friend of Yvette's?'

'I've never seen her before,' Malcolm said.

'Obviously Delia has,' Julia said, as Delia greeted the newcomer by kissing her on both cheeks.

Had Julia and Malcolm been closer, they would have heard Delia say, 'Antonia, darling, you've made it. Better late than never. Let me introduce you to everybody.' She led Antonia to Ursula and Audrey. 'This is my lodger, Antonia. Isn't she beautiful.'

Audrey and Ursula eyed Antonia critically, as older women do on seeing a beautiful, younger woman.

'Thanks for inviting me. Which one of you is the bride?' Antonia said, in a girlish voice.

'How sweet of you to think I'm young enough to be marrying Gus?' Audrey said, with genuine pleasure.

'Are you a friend of my daughter?' Ursula asked.

'I'm a mate of Gus's.'

'A mate. How 'boyish," Audrey said, staring hard at Antonia.

'Let me introduce you to Malcolm,' Delia said, 'the bride's father. At least, he would have been the father of the bride if there had been a wedding.'

'Didn't it take place?' Antonia whispered.

'Yvette didn't turn up. She's run off with a woman.'

'Doesn't surprise me, Del. She's always fancied you,' Antonia continued in a whisper.

Delia was surprised. 'Has she? You're having me on.'

'No Del - she fancied you. She told me once. Girl to girl, in confidence.'

Malcolm stood up to welcome the newcomer. Julia remained seated on the sofa, appraising Antonia.

Delia did the introductions, as Malcolm saw the opportunity to go over and chat with the other males, Adam and Gus; kindred spirits. He almost bowed to Antonia as he excused himself, 'to leave the ladies to have a chat'.

Julia, who had whipped the occasional transvestite, and knew the give-away signs, smiled her sweet smile at Antonia, as Delia bounced onto the cushion just vacated by Malcolm.

'So, you're Delia's lodger. How delightful. Two females sharing. Especially convenient if one runs out of sanitary towels.'

Antonia glanced sideways at Delia as if to say, 'Could we go and talk to someone else'

But Delia was looking towards Adam, with a look of longing. 'I'll leave you two to get to know each other.'

Antonia started to stand up as Delia did so, but Julia put a restraining hand on his arm. 'I would love you to stay and talk to me, Antonia.' He slumped back into his seat and looked at Julia with the frightened-eyes of a caged-canary looking at the household cat. 'The cat' was about to scare him even more.

'So, Antonia, do you find these occasions a bit of a drag?'

'Drag?'

'As in 'not very interesting'. Although there are much more interesting definitions of 'drag'.'

'Are there,' Antonia said, nervously.

'Just between the two of us, there are. For example, a drag-queen.'

Antonia's Adam's apple moved as he swallowed hard.

'I can't help it.'

Julia patted his hand like a nurse consoling a patient with constipation.

'Don't worry, darling. Your secret is safe with me. I'm sure I'm much kinkier than you are.'

'You are?' he queried, as though not really believing her.

She moved her body much closer to his on the sofa. 'My biggest kink,' she whispered confidentially, 'is I adore males in female clothes.'

'Do you?'

'I cannot resist a beautiful male - like you - in a dress to die for. Could I borrow it?'

'The dress?'

'Of course. And you can borrow mine.'

Antonia's lipsticked-mouth broadened into a beaming smile. 'I bought it mail order.'

'Is that mail-order as in postman or male-order as in spanking.'

'Spanking,' he queried. 'No I meant, I order ladies clothes from a catalogue.'

'That is nowhere near as much fun as going into a dress shop and choosing something on display. You and I could go shopping together. If you like something I could try it on and model it for you.'

'That would be nice.'

Julia nudged up to him so that she was even closer. 'So, you are sharing with Delia.' She looked over to where Delia was in conversation with Adam. 'What is she like as a landlady?'

'Fine. As long as I pay my rent on time.'

'What does she do to you if you're late with the rent?'

'Gets cross.'

'How cross?' Antonia blushed. Julia looked across the room at Delia, who was guffawing at a joke; either hers or Adam's. 'Am I right in thinking that Delia is prone to be violent when she's cross.'

He nodded.

'So, when she's violent, does she punch?'

He shook his head.

'Does she beat you with anything?' He nodded to confirm that she did beat him. 'I thought so. What does she beat you with?' He remained silent.

She held his hand and squeezed it. 'Darling, if we are going to be friends we need to tell each other things in complete confidence.'

He hesitated for a long moment and then said, 'Whip.'

Julia reacted by staring in Delia's direction. She was almost pressed up against Adam in the corner of the room, and was in deep conversation with him. At least - she was doing a lot of talking and Adam was listening. 'When Adam stayed with her last night, did she beat him?'

'Yes. And then took pictures.'

'Have you got copies?'

'Delia has them all.'

'Why don't you and I go over and get some more champagne and nibbles,' Julia said, standing up and holding out her hand to help Antonia up from the low sofa. His pleated skirt rucked up as he stood revealing stocking-tops and pink panties with suspenders. 'I love your underwear, darling. We'll have to swop.'

As Julia and Antonia sat on the sofa, getting to know each other, Delia was making suggestive comments to Adam, who was beginning to look wild-eyed with anxiety, as a prelude to a panic attack.

'I've decided to let you move in with me.'

'I already have my houseboat.'

'It's damp and creaks.'

'That could describe your house.'

Delia's response was to move closer to him and push him back against the wall so that he was squashed into the corner. She glanced over her shoulder as she did this. Malcolm was in conversation with Gus. Audrey and Ursula were also deep in conversation. Julia and Antonia were filling their glasses and plates. No one appeared to be taking any notice of what Delia and Adam were doing. Delia's hand 'snaked' down to Adam's groin and she gripped him by his 'balls'. His shaft swelled. 'Like's being gripped by a fat girl doesn't it.'

'Please don't make me come. I hired this suit for the wedding. I don't want to take it back with stains.'

'You look nice in this suit. You can wear it when you marry me.'

'I'm not marrying anyone.'

'Apart from me. I think I have you by what is called the 'short and curlies'.'

SEVENTEEN

CONVERSATIONS

'You said you would give the photos back to me,' Adam said to Delia, pushed by her into a corner.

'I've changed my mind.' She raked her finger up the elongated bump in his fly, as she said this. 'I want this.'

'Well, you can't have it,' he said peevishly, as he started an uncontrollable spasm of pleasure.

'Hi, you two. We thought we'd join you.' Julia and Antonia were behind them.

'Lovely,' Delia said. 'Antonia, I fancy a sausage roll. Go and get me two.'

Meekly, Antonia retreated towards the buffet table.

Julia looked anything but pleased with Delia. 'Do you always order Antonia about like that?'

'I'm alway bossy with men,' Delia said.

Julia smiled. 'But isn't Antonia a girl?'

'We both know he isn't,' Delia said. 'So does Adam.'

'He does look very beautiful though,' Julia said.

'Do you fancy him, sweetie?' Delia asked.

'Possibly I do. I'm not sure.' She smiled at Adam. 'You look a bit red-faced. Are you alright?' She glanced down at his groin. 'You seemed to have spilled something in your lap. You have a damp patch. Why don't you go to the gents and sponge it.'

The two women watched Adam leave the room in search of the toilets.

'I'll get straight to the point,' Julia said. 'Are you involved with Antonia?'

'No. I whip him now and again; same as you and your mother whip Adam.'

'Why do you think we whip Adam?'

Just then Antonia returned with the sausage rolls.

'Go back to the sofa, darling,' Julia said, taking the plate from him and handing it to Delia. 'We'll join you in a few minutes.'

The two women watched Antonia turn and head towards the sofa with his drink.

'Now who is ordering Antonia about' Delia said with a smirk.

Julia ignored the comment. 'What did Adam tell you?'

'That you and your mother whip men for money. It's alright, I'm not going to tell anyone.' She paused. 'I was thinking that perhaps you might need an assistant.'

Julia thought about this proposition, and then smiled. 'We might - yes.' They smiled at each other. 'We'll discuss terms later. In the meantime, could we do a deal.'

'I'm all ears,' Delia said.

'In a very short space of time I have become rather fond of Antonia.'

'You move fast.' Then she moved closer to Julia with a conspiratorial look. 'I ought to warn you, Antonia's cock's a bit on the small side.'

'Have you slept with him?'

'No, but I've wanked him. It's a nice shape; just a bit small. Adam's is a fucking totem pole compared to Antonia's.'

'Going back to my proposition. I will take Antonia - or Tony - off your hands and you can have a free run at Adam. Is that a deal?'

'Yes. It's a deal. And your mother and Yvette's mother also seem to be reaching a deal.'

Julia and Delia looked towards the two mothers, who were now hugging each other.

'Mummy's probably agreed to Ursula having Gus if she can have Malcolm.'

'You're joking,' Delia said, her hand to her mouth in surprise. 'What if Gus doesn't agree to be Ursula's lover or Malcolm agree to be your mum's?'

'They will. Take it from me.'

'What have you got on them?'

Julia ignored the question. 'Let's go and keep Antonia company, shall we.'

As Delia and Julia went back to the sofa to join Antonia, Adam came back, having located the gents and sponged and attempted to 'towel' dry his trousers as best he could. He now had the three buttons of his jacket done up

to hide the damp patch. Delia beckoned him from her perch on the sofa.

'Feeling more comfy now, sweetie?' Delia asked, as Julia laughed.

'Perhaps I should do the same to Antonia,' Julia said.

'Why don't you. No one's looking,' Delia said.

Julia cuddled up to Antonia and placed her hand on Antonia's lap and her long fingers groped. Delia giggled and even Adam smiled as Antonia's cheeks flushed.

'It doesn't feel that small,' Julia said.

'It's a designer-frock,' Antonia said, as if hoping that she would not cause him to get it stained.

'Why don't you and I go to the ladies?' Julia said standing up.

Delia and Adam watched as Julia and Antonia made their way to the ladies toilet, arm in arm.

Delia smiled at Adam who was sipping his champagne like a patient sipping medicine. 'I thought you liked champagne. You're taking ages to finish.'

'Nerves.'

'What are you nervous about?'

'You're making me nervous.'

'Good. Because you're my slave now. Julia and her mother have given you to me in exchange for Tony.'

'I'm no-one's slave.' He said, gulping his glass dry.

'We'll see about that shall we.'

'I'm going to get a real drink.'

'What you are going to do is get me another glass of champagne, and a glass of champagne for yourself. I don't want you getting a beer-belly. I'm the only one in this relationship who is allowed to be fat.'

As Adam made his way to the drinks, as ordered, Julia and Antonia were in the toilet.

'Show it to me,' Julia said, as they both squashed into a small cubicle and locked the door. Antonia lifted his skirt and pushed down his pale pink panties to reveal an erect, pink penis.

'I'm not sure I should be doing this. I usually do things I shouldn't when I've had too much champers,' Julia muttered under her breath, 'but what the hell.'

Then she lifted up her own skirt and pushed down her panties and said, in a louder voice, 'Put it in.'

'I've never...,' his voice trailed off. 'Delia never let me. She told me she only liked men with a big penis.'

Tears smudged his mascara and a black line dribbled down each cheek.

'I think you're fucking gorgeous and so is your cock.' As she spoke, she grasped his erection and widened her feet and pushed his shoulder so that his back slid down the wall of the cubicle and she was in a position to insert. She took a deep breath and inserted it.

He took an even deeper breath and said, 'I'm going to come.'

'Could you hold on a bit, I'm not quite ready.'

She squashed her mouth against his in an effort to delay his threatened ejaculation. He responded passionately to her kiss, and ejaculated, jerking his groin repeatedly into her, as she started to come, both rocking and banging against the cubicle door.

'Oh, fuck, this is nice,' she said in a low, staccato-voice.

Any further comment was forestalled by a banging on the cubicle door. 'Julia, are you in there?' Audrey called.

'Won't be a minute,' Julia called, disengaging herself, as she and Antonia pulled up their panties and smoothed down their skirts.

'Your mascara's run,' Julia said, as she gave Antonia a brushed kiss on the lips. And unlocked the door.

Her mother was standing, hand on hip, with her back to the row of wash basins, looking anything but pleased. 'Darling, I am not impressed.'

'Antonia's male,' Julia said.'

'I realise that, darling. But I don't like the idea of a romantic liaison in a lavatory; most unbecoming.'

Antonia was behind Julia. She turned and pulled him forward so the he was in front of her mother. 'Show my mother your penis, Tony.'

With a swallow, Tony lifted his skirt again and pulled down his recently pulled-up panties and revealed his glistening penis.'

'Would you like to try it, Mummy?'

'Yes, but I would prefer a more comfortable venue; possibly a hotel bedroom.'

Malcolm and Gus were feeling merrier, and less inhibited in their

conversation, than the occasion demanded, after imbibing copiously.

'Probably I shouldn't say it but I think you had a lucky escape with Yvette. Don't quote me to Ursula.'

'Why do you say that, Malcolm?'

'She's never been interested in blokes, to my knowledge. But always had plenty of girlie-friends. So it didn't surprise me she's run off with a girl. I'm surprised it didn't surprise you. Can I top you up?', he asked, filling Gus's glass with more champagne. 'This stuff cost me enough, we might as well drink it all up, as my mother used to say when I didn't like my malted milk at bedtime.' He paused. 'If you don't mind me asking a personal question, didn't you ever...'

'No we never go round to it.'

Malcolm filled his own glass again. 'I thought everyone had sex before marriage these days, seeing as we've just come out of the 'swinging sixties'. I made sure I tested the water as far as her mother was concerned. The tide was right in at first, on a golden beach, but has ebbed away over the years to the point where you can see rocks all the way to the fucking horizon.'

'That's quite poetic,' Malcolm.

'I was quite good at literature at school.' His voice reduced to a whisper as he spoke in confidence man-to man. 'Ursula and I don't see eye to eye on certain aspects of our relations.'

'Relations? Do you mean relatives?'

'No. I mean shagging. If you had your choice, old boy, which female here would you like to shag? Malcolm asked.

'Do you want me to answer the question truthfully?'

Yes, of course. I won't tell anyone. Mum's the word.'

'I would like to shag your wife.'

'Ursula! I am surprised. You're a young bloke. I thought you would say Julia or the girl who's just arrived - what's her name?'

'Antonia.'

'Or even the fat girl, Delia. She's quite pretty. Mind you, I wouldn't fancy her on top of me.' He mulled. 'So, you would like to fuck my wife. You can take her off me if you like.'

'Can I. That's awfully decent of you, Malcolm.'

'Think nothing of it, old boy.'

Gus mulled, and then continued with the polite small-talk.

'Who would you like to shag, Malcolm?'

'Audrey first. Her daughter second. But it's an impossible dream.'

'Is it - why?'

'I think we both know why. They're business women.'

'Yes, they are. I forgot that.'

'Could I ask you another personal question,' Malcolm said, 'did you ever avail yourself...?'

Gus thought as carefully as the drink would allow before asking. 'Did you?'

Malcolm nodded. 'In the dungeon.'

'I went with Adam,' Gus said. 'Just the once. To keep him company.'

'Really. I thought that you might be that way inclined, being a bit soft and plump. But Adam always struck me as a man's man. A 'lumberjack' sort of bloke. All muscular arms and a 'six pack'; is that what you call a flat stomach these days?'

'He likes his arse caned by a female.'

'Don't we all,' Malcolm said, grinning.

'I don't,' Gus said.

'Ah. Possibly we ought to change the subject then.'

'What do you think they're talking about? Delia asked Adam as she eyed Malcolm and Gus in conversation. And then answered her own question. 'Probably sex or football.'

'Malcolm doesn't like football. He likes rugby,' Adam said.

'He's very debonair, isn't he,' Delia said.

'Who, Gus?'

'Malcolm. He's really attractive for his age.'

'Do you fancy him?'

'Actually, I've always fancied Malcolm. But not as much as I fancy you.' Delia snuggled close to Adam on the sofa. 'Where are we going to sleep tonight - your place or mine? Probably better sleep at my place. There isn't enough room on your boat to swing a cat o'nine tails. Julia has been gone a long time with Tony. They went to the ladies. One of the benefits of being a cross-dresser, Tony says, is that you get to hear women's gossip.'

'What other benefits are there?'

'Why, are you thinking of becoming a transvestite?'

'Would you fancy me if I do?'

'No.'

'In that case, I'm going to wear a dress from now on,' Adam said.

Delia's response was to punch him in the ribs. 'Why is it you don't fancy me.'

'Possibly because you punch,' he said, winded.

'But I am a lot of fun,' she said.

'No you're not.'

Delia pouted. 'Alright, what do you want me to do to be fun in your eyes?'

'Bend over a chair with your knickers down.'

'And then what would you do to me?'

His penis thought about it, and the still-damp patch in his trousers started to become a hump, which Delia noticed.

'You're getting a hard-on thinking about what you would do to me.'

'No I'm not because you wouldn't let me do it to you.'

Delia went into pensive mode, and then smiled coyly. 'I might.'

'You'd let me cane you?' Adam queried.

'I've never been caned since I was at school.'

'Which teacher caned you?'

'Miss Percival. She gave me six of the best with my skirt up and over my knickers.'

'I remember her. Matronly with her hair in a bun and horn-rimmed glasses.'

'I bet you have liked it if she had caned you,' Delia said.

'She did.'

Delia giggled. 'I bet you came when she caned you.' He didn't answer. 'Would you like me to dress as Miss Percival?' Again, he didn't answer. 'I bet you would. She had a big bust, like me. And a fat arse, like me. And was pretty, like me; even if she was middle-aged. I bet you fancied fucking her.' Delia looked pensive again. 'If we lived together we could come to an agreement. You could do what you like to me - no holds barred - on one day of the week. And I do what I want to you the rest of the week. Is that agreed?'

'No. It would be fairer if it was three days each and we toss for the seventh day every week. That would be fair.'

'Alright. Deal,' Delia said. 'Give me a whopping kiss to seal our deal.'

She gripped him around the body with the strength of a boa-constrictor

and pulled him into her and glued her mouth to us. Then disengaged, red-faced and triumphant. 'Right, we go.'

'Where to?' he asked, still getting his breath. 'My place. Our home.'

EIGHTEEN

AN UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL

'When did you get the key to the room?' Audrey asked Ursula. She was standing with Julia and Antonia behind Ursula in the first-floor corridor.

'I collected it from reception when I first arrived. I thought I would have to help my daughter get ready.'

She opened the door wide and her three companions entered.

'Nice room,' Audrey said. 'Big bed. I always like a four-poster.' She giggled, still slightly under the influence of an elegant over-sufficiency of champagne. 'You can always tie a man to one of the posts.'

Ursula sat on the bed and tested the mattress. She was even more under the influence of champagne. 'I'd prefer a man to tie me and have his wicked way. But don't tell Malcolm that.'

'Darling, you're letting the side down,' Audrey said. 'I much prefer to be the dominant one.'

'I could do with some light relief,' Ursula said, 'it's a pity there's no man here.'

Audrey smiled at Julia, who was standing with her arm around Antonia. 'Darling, why don't you take Antonia into the en suite.'

Julia held Antonia's arm and guided 'her' gently towards the ensuite. Inside, she closed the door behind them.

'Clothes off.'

'All of them?'

'You won't mind if I have a quick pee whilst you're undressing.'

She sat on the toilet and watched him undress quickly. He was naked, except for his wig and makeup, when she pulled the chain. He stood in front of the handbasin and she elbowed him out of the way in order to wash her

hands. She dried her hands and then took off his wig for him.

'Wash your face, darling. Let's see what you look like without makeup.'

He dowsed his face with hot water, as instructed, and did his best to remove the make up. Then straightened and stood in front of her as she inspected him.

'Now you're a pretty boy; nearly as pretty as when you're a girl.' She came close and held his limp penis which responded. 'You can fuck me again. And then my mother. And Ursula, if you're feeling bullish. Shall we go in.'

'Could I have a pee first?'

'Good idea. You might be in for a long session. I'll just go in and tell them you'll be out in a minute or two.'

'What's he doing,' Audrey asked as Julia emerged from the ensuite closing the door behind her.

'He?' Ursula, queried.

'Antonia's male,' Ursula said.

Ursula's hand went to her mouth in shock. 'Has he got...?'

'Yes. It fucked Julia, didn't it, darling.'

'Mummy, I do wish you wouldn't discuss my sex-life in public, even with someone as delightful as Ursula.'

'Ursula's broad-minded, aren't you Ursula.'

'He's too beautiful to be a boy,' Ursula said, still not believing what she had been told.

'You can see it when he comes out,' Julia said. 'Not the biggest I've seen, but it does do the job well enough.'

'I've only seen one; Malcolm's.'

'I wouldn't mind seeing Malcolm's,' Audrey said, deliberately forgetting that she had seen it in all its 'glory' on his several visits to her dungeon.

'I'm sure that can be arranged,' darling.

Just then the ensuite door opened and Tony emerged, naked, with his hands covering his crotch like a two-handed fig leaf.

'I haven't got any men's clothes with me,' he said blushing.

Audrey went close to him and put a comforting arm around his shoulder. 'It's alright, darling. You won't need any in here with us.'

'Why don't we all undress,' Julia suggested, 'so Tony won't feel he's the only nudist. By the way, did anyone think to bring up more champagne and nibbles?'

'No, darling. Why don't you nip down and get some before you undress?'

Audrey said, unbuttoning her blouse and unzipping her skirt.

Julia went to the bedroom door. 'Alright, but don't do anything to him until I get back.'

'No, darling,' Audrey said as her daughter left the room. She was now in her underwear; bra, girdle with suspenders, panties and stockings.

Ursula was now down to her underwear as well, and viewed Audrey. 'I thought I was the only one these day who still wore a girdle.'

'Some men like old-fashioned girdles.'

'Do they. I didn't realise.'

'What does Malcolm like?' Audrey asked.

'He used to like me in a bluebell-patterned bra and panties. But that was thirty years ago. I've not really enquired since.' Ursula looked almost wistful. And then she brightened at the sight of a naked Tony sitting patiently on the edge of the bed. 'What do you like a woman to wear, Anthony?'

'Lots of frills and flounces and white stockings and buttoned, strap-across, patent shoes,' he said.

'I don't think that would suit me, somehow,' Ursula said. 'I'd end up looking like Little Bo Peep.'

His penis flexed and swelled as Ursula said this.

'Are we going to start now?' Delia asked'

'No time like the present,' Adam said, swishing the cane. 'As I won the toss. The next three days are me being dominant.'

'Why don't we have one day you dominant and the next day me dominant?'

'No. That's not what we agreed. Which room are we going to use?'

'My bedroom, I suppose.'

'Lead the way.'

Adam, still flexing the cane, and with an almost evil grin, followed Delia up the narrow, rickety, stairs to her bedroom. He admired her enormous rump which swayed the pleats of her bridesmaid's dress as she mounted the stairs.

She paused at the door to her bedroom and faced him, her palms raised defensively to the height of his chest as if she was going to push him backwards and away from her.

'I'm not sure I want to go through with this. I don't want you whacking my bum.'

'We had an agreement.'

He dropped the cane onto the carpet, and took her by the shoulders, and swivelled her around so that she was facing the bedroom, and pushed her through the door. She turned to punch him as he followed her in, but he ducked the punch and grabbed her other arm and twisted it up her back. They both fell forward onto the end of the bed. Adam on her back. His rock-solid penis was enjoying the encounter, squashed, as it was, against her flower-patterned posterior. It needed air to avoid a premature ejaculation.

'Why don't you just fuck me?' she said breathlessly.

'I'm going to before I cane you, and then after I've caned you. Won't that be nice. Now, are you going to undress or do I have to rip your clothes off?'

He body slackened, and she seemed to slump as if defeated.

'Just get off me, I'll do as you want.'

He lessened his grip and stood up. Slowly, she sat up on the end of the bed and unbuttoned the top of her dress. Then stood and let it fall to her feet. Her underwear was a black corset fringed with scarlet frilly-lace, can-can knickers and fishnet stockings.

He surveyed the vision with a grin. 'You look like a French 'tart',' he said as he unzipped his fly, unbuckled his belt and released his penis. It resembled a cobra viewing the casbah from the snake-charmer's basket.

'Likes tarts, does it?'

'It likes you. Now bend.'

She remained unbent, facing him with her hands on her hips in a defiant pose.

'Make me.'

'Look, Delia. I don't want to fight you. Do as you're told.'

'No.'

'We had an agreement.'

'I've just cancelled it.'

'I'll have to use force.'

'You do and one night, when you're asleep, I'll castrate you and pickle your penis and keep it in a jam jar.'

He blanched.

'They'd put you in prison.'

'What if you just disappeared?'

He hesitated, made a movement towards her. Her facial expression was that of a cornered tigress. He stayed where he was, and tried another tactic.

'It's only a sex game,' Del.

'Which you have to play by my rules. Which are very simple. You do as I say and I do to you what I want. Those are the rules.'

He looked down at his penis. Surprisingly, despite her threat to pickle it, it was rampant and tingling. She stared at it as well, then smiled; the tigress had cornered her prey and was about to taunt it before it became a meal.

'Take your clothes off,' she demanded.

He stood, as though he had been turned to marble.

'I'm not over keen on the sound of my own voice.'

He remained, like David on his plinth - without the artistic pose - for a few seconds and then admitted defeat by sullenly pushing down his trousers and underpants over his shoes and stepping out of them. Then, almost in slow motion, he took off his shoes and socks and then his tie, shirt and vest. He stood naked in front of her; his penis resembling a ripe, flesh-coloured banana.

'Turn around.'

He turned and she pulled his arms roughly behind his back and he felt his wrists tied; he assumed with a scarf.

'I did not like having my arm twisted up my back. How many slashes of a whip do you think that deserves?'

Malcolm was sitting alone, morosely eating one of the last smoked salmon sandwiches and drinking a pale ale when Julia came in to the function room to collect champagne.

'Has everyone forgotten about you, Malcolm darling?'

'Story of my life.'

'Is there any cheesecake left?'

'Slice there.'

'Lovely. It won't do much for my figure, but who cares.' She picked up a half empty champagne bottle and took it with a glass and her cheesecake. 'Let's sit on the sofa and have a chat.'

Obediently, he followed her to the sofa. She patted the cushion next to her

as he hesitated before sitting. 'You're not scared of me, are you?'

'A bit.'

'Why's that? I'm the least scary person there is.'

'You're terrifying in your mother's dungeon.'

'Am I. What a lovely thing to say. Praise indeed. But as we're not in a dungeon, although this room is fairly depressing, you don't need to be scared of me. In fact, you can kiss me if you like.'

He stared at her as if he had misheard. 'Kiss you?' He leaned towards her and gave her a quick peck on the cheek.

She stared back. 'That's not what I call a kiss, Malcolm. Give me a proper kiss.'

They kissed; he with some degree of trepidation.

She disengaged and smiled at him. 'I rather fancy trying it with a much older man. How old are you, Malcolm?'

'Fifty.'

'My arithmetic is not good but I make it that you are thirty one years older than me. How decadent. I'll let you into a little secret, as we're old friends, I had my first fuck a little while ago, in the ladies toilets. I rather enjoyed it - surprisingly. It's a bit like someone realising that they quite like blancmange after all. I would like to do it again.'

He looked at her as though unsure what to say. She smiled pleasantly expecting his response.

'Which lucky man was that; Gus or Adam?'

'I'm not saying. But the cock in question is a bit on the small side. I feel the need to do it again with a bigger cock - like yours.'

Malcolm looked worried, like a person who just danced a quickstep into a quicksand. 'I don't think your mother would be very pleased.'

'You can fuck her afterwards. That will please her.'

She finished the last morsel of her cheesecake, drained her champagne glass, and put it and the plate on a side table, and took his nearly-empty glass of beer from him.

'Men do not perform well after they have had too much beer.'

'I'm sorry. I did not expect to have to perform, as you put it.'

'Don't you fuck your wife?'

'Not often. In fact, we haven't had relations for some time.' He reflected. 'Probably a good few years.'

'You must be gasping? Like a chain smoker who's not had a fag for years.'

He smiled. 'I've not had a fag since I was a prefect at my public school.' She looked bemused. 'Just my little joke.'

'I did understand the joke. Do you prefer boys?'

'No.'

'But you like women who threaten you.' He didn't answer. 'In fact, you like women who threaten to execute you.'

'You won't mention that to anyone?'

'Of course not. Your secret is safe with me and my mother. We are jointly the soul of discretion. Otherwise, it would not be good for business.'

He relaxed visibly.

'Now, would you like to kiss me again, and then fuck me.'

'What if somebody comes in?'

'If you're worried lock the door.'

'I don't think there is a key in the lock.'

'Use your initiative. Lean a chair against the door handle. It's not as though we're going to be long.'

Slowly, like a man who has just been hypnotised, he went over to the door and jammed the back of a chair under the door handle to stop it turning. He looked at his handiwork dubiously; uncertain that it would prevent someone outside opening the door. However, it was what she had told him to do. His depression began to lift. He, a fifty-year old, was about to fuck a nineteen-year old 'stunner'.

He glanced back towards the sofa. Julia was laying on it, full-length with her skirt hitched up. Slowly, and purposefully, he walked back to the sofa, his penis stiffening at every stride. He hesitated when he reached her, and stood as if frozen in time.

'Show me your cock,' she said; all flushed cheeks, lowered eye-lids and pouting lips.

'Are you sure...?'

'Fucking show it to me or I'll get cross.'

He fumbled for his belt and silently cursed that the fly of his trousers had buttons instead of a zip. She watched, with amusement, as his fingers were all thumbs, and then gulped as he pushed his trousers and underpants swiftly down to his knees. He was now as rampant as his penis.

'Get your knickers down, young lady.'

'You take them down for me.'

Without a further invite he bent to his task and her panties were around

her ankles. Speedily, in case she changed her mind, and decided to beat him instead, he lay full length over her, supporting his weight on his elbow, and and pushed in as hard as he could.

Her body tensed. 'Shit! It's too big.'

He ignored her and pumped with all his strength. Behind him, he heard rattling at the door and what sounded like a chair falling over and the door opening. He was too far gone to care.

'Daddy!'

'Shit!' was all he could say as his penis burst with pleasure at the moment his daughter burst into the room. Had he looked over his shoulder he would have seen her open-mouthed expression of sheer incredulity. Then she came at a 'rate of knots' to the sofa, and slapped her father hard across his face, and - rather unladylike - spat at a red-faced Julia.

'I thought you were a lesbian, you bitch! I'm telling my mother.'

Yvette turned and flounced out of the room. In her haste to be enfolded in her mother's welcoming arms, she turned the wrong way, and had to retrace her steps to the lift. The yellow light indicated it was on the top floor and showed no sign of heading downwards. She ran following the signs to the stairs, and would have taken them two at a time had her tight skirt permitted. She had to pause, and take deep gulps of air, when she reached the first floor. And then proceeded hastily along the corridor to room 101. She knocked once; the knock was more of a bang, and opened the door and entered.

Her mother was on her back on the bed, naked, with Gus, her abortive bridegroom, on top of her mother 'pumping away' in the missionary position. Yvette collapsed onto her knees sobbing.

NINETEEN

THE ORGY

'What a surprise, darling,' Ursula said, in a conversational tone, as her sobbing daughter rolled around on the bedroom carpet in distress and shock. 'We thought you weren't coming.'

'You were fucking coming,' Yvette screamed at her mother. 'With a cock in your cunt.'

'Darling, please do calm down and don't be vulgar. I thought you'd broken off your engagement to Gus.' She looked towards Gus, who was almost cowering on the far side of the bed. 'Isn't that so, Gus.'

Yvette sprang to her feet and stood trembling, like the wronged woman in a melodrama, and shouted to all and sundry, 'My mother is fucking my ex-fiancé.'

Gus was relieved to hear that he was now definitely an 'ex'.

Just then Audrey came out of the bathroom, naked, with a charming smile directed towards the newcomer. 'You must be Yvette, how delightful to meet you.'

'Who are you?'

'This is my friend, Audrey, darling?'

'Why is she naked? Is Gus fucking both of you?'

'No, darling,' her mother said calmly, 'Gus is having relations with me. It's Anthony who is having relations with Audrey. They were just in the bath. It's a big bath for two. As this is the bridal suite.'

Tony, fresh-faced and masculine, came into Yvette's view behind Audrey.

'Tony?' Yvette queried.

'Hello, Evie. Sorry you couldn't come to your wedding,' he stuttered. 'You missed a nice wedding reception. We've all had a lovely time.'

'Glad you fucking enjoyed it. Can you all put some fucking clothes on.'
No one moved.

'Darling, why don't you go down and see your father?' her mother suggested.

'I've just seen my father. He was busy fucking a lesbian. Her name's Julia.'

'That's my daughter,' Audrey said pleasantly.

'I thought she fancied me, not my father,' Yvette said, beginning to sob again.

Audrey turned to Ursula. 'I am so envious that Julia has had relations with Malcolm before I had the chance. I am infuriated. I will have to spank her bottom.'

Audrey assumed a consoling expression. 'Never mind, dear. He ought to have recharged his battery in a few hours. Why don't you take him home with you and see if there's any spark in the plug.'

Yvette looked bewildered, and stared at her mother. 'I don't believe I'm hearing this. You're inviting your friend here to fuck with my father.'

Ursula attempted a reassuring smile at her daughter. 'All that's happening is there is a small adjustment in relationships.'

'You're having an orgy, not a fucking adjustment in relationships. Why don't you get my father up here now so he can join in with his fucking lesbian?'

Just then there a light tap at the door. Yvette made a move towards it.

'Don't open the door, the four of us have on no clothes.'

Yvette ignored her mother. Her father stood in the corridor clutching an armful of unopened champagne bottles, with a simpleton's smile. 'Hello again, darling, I thought we could all have a drink. You probably need one.'

'Why have you brought your lesbian bitch with you?'

Julia was skulking behind Malcolm, holding stacked plates of food, like a newly-fledged waitress about to drop everything. 'We thought you might like some nibbles,' she said sweetly.

Yvette opened the door wide. Audrey, standing stark naked, was making no attempt to hide her nudity. But Ursula was holding a hotel dressing gown in front of her.

'I don't think the colour suits you, Mummy. Why don't you just let it drop.' Ursula surprised herself by doing so. Malcolm glanced at his wife, and then at Gus, but said nothing.

Julia pushed the door shut with her heel, and placed the food on the dressing table. 'Would anyone like a vol au vent?'

'Adam and Delia have gone,' Malcolm said, smiling as pleasantly as he could in the circumstances. 'They thanked me for a nice time but said they had things to do.'

'Probably doing each other,' Gus said, from the other side of the bed.

Audrey gave him a look like Alice might have given the Mad Hatter if he had just farted at their tea party.

Ursula smiled at Malcolm, like an indulgent Queen of Hearts. 'We ladies thought we would freshen up.'

'Shall I put these bottles in cold water in the bathroom to keep them chilled,' Malcolm suggested. 'And there's plenty more champers downstairs.'

'How lovely,' Audrey said. 'But I get ever so naughty when I've had too much champagne.'

Ursula laughed. 'Not as naughty as me.'

'Are you two just sex-mad, or what?' Yvette asked.

'Oh, do loosen up and join in the fun. It was supposed to be your 'big day', ' her mother said.

'And who am I supposed to be loose with?' she asked her mother.

Ursula looked around the room. 'Take your pick, darling. Audrey or Julia if you feel that way inclined, or Tony if you feel the other way inclined. I would suggest you had sex with Gus but I seem to have exhausted him; hopefully temporarily.'

'It's a fucking wonder you don't suggest I have sex with you or daddy - possibly both of you at the same time.'

Ursula looked suitably chastened at the last suggestion. 'That would be a line in the sand we could not cross.'

They all jumped as a cork popped and hit the ceiling. 'Sorry,' Julia said. 'Any one for more bubbles.'

'Me,' Ursula said.

'Is Malcolm going to take off his clothes,' Audrey asked.

'Malcolm take off your clothes, you look overdressed,' Ursula commanded.

Malcolm looked slightly embarrassed. 'I don't think I ought to...' he began. 'In front of my daughter.'

'No, you had better not,' Ursula agreed. Then looked at her daughter. 'Didn't your telegram say you were flying away to Spain, darling, with a

friend?'

'She's picking me up in her car from the hotel at seven to go to the airport.'

'Why don't you freshen up in the bathroom. You've got half an hour. Have a soak in the bath until five to seven.'

Yvette looked towards the bathroom as if she thought this might be a good idea. 'That's what I was intending to do when I came to the hotel,' she said, and went into the big bathroom closing the door behind her.

The others watched her leave the bedroom, almost with a collective sigh of relief.

Then Ursula looked at her husband. 'Take your clothes off, pronto.' He stared at his wife without moving, causing Ursula to look at Audrey. 'I think he obeys you more than he obeys me.'

Audrey sidled up to Malcolm and stage-whispered in his ear. 'Do as you're told. Otherwise your wife and I will take you to my dungeon.'

Audrey giggled. 'He'd like that. So would I.'

The three women sat side by side on the edge of the bed sipping champagne as they watched Malcolm undress. Gus and Tony watched from the far side of the bed, both penises grateful for a 'breather'.

'What if Yvette comes in suddenly?' Malcolm asked, now down to his socks and underpants.'

'She's running the bath,' his wife said, as he took off his socks, balancing unsteadily.

'I do so adore a man in crisp, white underpants,' Audrey said.

'Ironed by me,' Ursula said.

'You iron his underpants?' Audrey queried, in disbelief.

'Something I shall stop doing.'

'I've always made men do my ironing, with a whipping if they scorch anything.'

'You've always made men do all your housework,' Julia chipped in. 'And the cooking.'

'I confess I'm not the best cook in the world. They say the way to a man's heart is through his stomach, but I've always found it was through the use of my whip.'

The three women stopped their conversation and focused on Malcolm's uncovered penis. It was semi stiff.

'It's usually like a limp lettuce-leaf,' Ursula said. 'It must be you two

watching it. Although, as I now know, you have both seen it before. Shall we all return to the business in hand. I'm having Gus again.'

'And I'll have Malcolm, if you've no objections, darling,' Audrey said.

'Be my guest,' Ursula said.

'You won't mind if I whip him afterwards. I usually whip a man after they've had sex with me,' Audrey said.

'What a wonderful idea. I'll whip Gus after we've had sex again.'

'No you won't; I'll whip you,' Gus said, belligerently. But he blanched as Audrey stood up and came around to the side of the bed where he and Tony were standing, and stood in front of him with her hands on her hips. It was the pose she adopted on her gallows before looping a noose over a man's head. He remembered the pose, and took a step backwards to be behind Tony, who smiled amiably at Audrey.

'Darling, why don't you go over to Julia. She would like your company,' Audrey said to Tony.

'Yes, alright,' Tony said, and moved quickly towards the other side of the bed to stand naked next to a fully-clothed Julia, leaving Gus exposed to Audrey's wrath.

Her chin was down slightly towards her chest; her eyelids semi-hooded and nostrils slightly flared.

'What is your mother going to do to Gus?' Audrey asked, standing next to Julia.

'Whip his back and bum.'

'Does your mother have a whip with her?'

'In her handbag.'

The four other occupants of the room watched as Gus meekly allowed Audrey to take him by the arm and lead him to the foot of the bed.

'Face and hold the post with your hands in front of your face.'

She positioned him facing the left post of the four-poster bed and, as instructed, he gripped the post with two hands at face-height.

'Julia darling, could you pass me my whip.'

Julia went to her mother's handbag, which was on the seat of a chair, and took out a small whip, and handed it to her mother. Then stood next to Tony again, and their fingers entwined.

Audrey went close to Gus again and whispered in his ear, 'If you do anything rash, such as take your hands off the post without permission, I will get Henry - you remember Henry? - to find you, But he will take you to

Vanessa's dungeon, not mine. You remember Vanessa. She's far more vicious than I am. As is her daughter, Mandy.' Gus nodded slightly to indicate that he remembered and understood.

Audrey stood away from Gus's ear and smiled at Ursula. 'Darling, why don't you come over and I'll show you how to use a whip.'

Ursula gave a nervous giggle, as though she had just been invited on stage to take part in a magician's act. She came over and stood next to Audrey; both women now positioned behind Gus's back as he continued gripping the bedpost.

Then Audrey paused as if she had just had a brilliant idea. She looked towards Malcolm, who had his back against the wall, standing next to Julia and Tony.

'Malcolm, come here,' Audrey said.

His wife looked amused as, slowly, Malcolm went over to the two women.

'Grip the other post like Gus is doing,' Audrey ordered.

Malcolm did so, without looking his wife in the eye.

Audrey smiled at Ursula, as they stood behind the two males. 'Do you know how to tell a masochist from a sadist, darling?'

'I would make a wild guess that a sadist has a limp penis when about to be whipped and a masochist has a firm penis.'

'Exactly right, darling. Let's take a look, shall we,' Audrey said moving to the left side of Gus as Audrey moved to the right side of Malcolm.

'I would definitely call Gus a sadist,' Audrey said. 'But I knew that already after he tried to rape me.'

Ursula looked shocked. 'He didn't!'

'Mummy and her friend, Vanessa, were going to hang him with a noose from Mummy's gibbet, until my friend, Mandy, stopped them,' Julia said, laconically fondling Tony's penis which had been as rigid as a concrete dildo but had subsided on hearing this conversation.

Ursula pursed her lips disapprovingly. 'I don't think your friend, should have stopped the hanging.'

Audrey went close to Ursula and gave her a kiss full on the lips, as if to underline they were two of a kind and of the same view as far as men were concerned. Ursula responded. The two women almost collapsed on the bed, locked in a passionate embrace.

Julia looked concerned. 'Mummy, I'm just going to take Tony into the

bathroom as he's dribbling a bit. I think your conversation might have worried him.' As she said this, she took Tony by the arm towards the bathroom and opened the door without knocking.

Yvette was soaking in a bubble-bath looking more relaxed than she had been. 'It might be nice if you fucking knocked.'

'Sorry. Tony needs a pee.'

'Actually, I think I need to sit down as well,' Tony said.

'You're not having a fucking shit with me in the bath!'

Julia almost pushed Tony towards the toilet and made him sit.

'Fart - and I'll whip the arse of you.' Then she went over to the large bath and sat on the edge. Yvette glared up at her. 'Give me some fucking privacy if you don't mind.'

Julia smiled sweetly. 'Do you always use the 'F-word' at least once in every sentence.'

'I do when you're around.'

'What have I done to upset you, darling. I was all set for a convivial evening until your new friend, Dolly, interrupted. Shit! what's that smell?'

'Sorry,' Tony said, looking embarrassed. 'I just need to wipe...'

'Do, darling,' Julia said. 'And it might be nice if you flushed. Then she spotted the champagne bottles in the sink. 'Would you like some champers, darling?'

'Why not,' Yvette said, with a nod.

'There don't seem to be any glasses. Tony, nip into the bedroom and get two glasses,' Julia instructed.

Tony, having washed his hands, hovered with one hand on the doorknob.

'Is there something you wanted to say, Tony?' Yvette asked.

He came to the edge of the bath and stared down at Yvette, who put one hand, modestly, over her crotch and an arm across her breasts, and glared up at him.

He started to speak nervously with a stutter. 'I'm sorry Evie - I should have told you before.' He paused.

'Tell me what?'

'Gus never asked you to marry him. Adam and Delia made it up. Delia told me. I'll go and get the glasses.'

'Stay where you are,' Yvette said. She glanced at Julia as if for advice.

'If it was me I'd whip him senseless, but you're not into spanking.'

'I might be.'

Tony started to tremble. 'It wasn't me who made it up.'

'No, but you knew and you should have told me once you knew.'

'I couldn't. Delia said she would whip me if I told you.'

Tony started trembling even more.

'What I find funny,' Julia said to Yvette, 'is why you and Gus went along with it if you didn't want to get married to him and he didn't want to get married to you.'

Yvette paused and thought about her answer before saying, 'My mother wanted me to marry Gus.'

'That figures. But why did Gus go along with it?'

Both women looked at Tony as if he might know the answer. He did. 'He said Malcolm's got plenty of money.'

Yvette smiled at Julia. 'I don't suppose you have a whip handy?'

'My mother does. She and your mother were about to whip Gus and your father until they got 'sidetracked' onto the bed in each other's arms. I should think they've probably given each other an orgasm by now.'

'My mother isn't that way inclined,' Yvette said, rising from the bath covered in bubbles.

'Want a bet, darling. She's also keen on spanking even though she didn't know it until she met my mother,' Julia said, handing Yvette a luxurious towel.

One minute later, Yvette, smelling of roses, but still naked, emerged from the bathroom, followed by a clothed Julia and a naked Tony. Audrey and Ursula were still under the covers 'enjoying' each other, oblivious to the entrants. Gus and Malcolm were still standing, in the required position, clutching the bed posts. Malcolm averted his gaze from Yvette.

'Daddy, would you mind going into the bathroom.'

'Yes, darling,' Malcolm said, slinking past his daughter, with his eyes still averted, and into the bathroom closing the door behind him. Gus stared at Yvette, sensing that she was not pleased with him. Tony, trembling behind Yvette, gave Gus the clue that 'some beans had been spilled'.

'Hi,' he said, affably.

The heads of Audrey and Ursula raised from their pillow. 'Hello, darling,' Ursula said. 'Did you have a relaxing bath?'

'Yes, thank you, Mummy. Are you having a relaxing rest?'

'Ursula and I were just having forty winks,' Audrey said. 'What are you two girls going to do?'

Yvette did not respond to Audrey, but stared at Gus gripping the post, and turned to Julia. 'He's not tied.'

'Mummy, can Yvette borrow your handcuffs?'

'Of course, darling. They're in my handbag.'

Gus stared warily as Julia went to her mother's handbag and took out a pair of handcuffs. He let go of the bedpost as Julia came towards him. 'You're not handcuffing me.'

'Yes, I am.' She came close to Gus and whispered in his ear. 'You remember what my mother and I said to you; we'd send Henry after you if you disobeyed us and he would take you to Vanessa. And you remember Vanessa. She's more lethal than my mother. You'd be swinging in her playground. Now hold your wrists in front of you.'

Meekly, Gus held his wrists in front of him and she clicked the handcuffs in place. Audrey and Ursula were now sitting up in bed ready to watch the chastisement.

Audrey looked towards Tony who was cowering near the bathroom door. 'Tony, darling, would you like to get into bed with us.' He looked at her, not understanding, at first, what she wanted. 'Get into bed. In the middle.'

Slowly, he climbed over Audrey and slid down to be between the two women; his hips adjacent to theirs.

'I find it rather titillating to watch one man being whipped by a woman whilst I'm being fucked by another man,' Audrey said to Ursula, as they both fondled Tony's penis.

'That does sound rather exhilarating,' Ursula agreed.

'But as Tony can't keep both of us titillated at the same time, why don't I keep Malcolm company in the bathroom while Yvette whips Gus,' Audrey said.

'Be my guest. Although, if he fucked Julia a short time ago, he might not be up to it.'

'I have ways and means, darling.'

'Really, you must teach me sometime.'

As the two women conversed, Julia had made the handcuffed-Gus reach up and grasp the top frame of the four poster as he stood at the end of the bed. Yvette had picked up Audrey's whip and was standing behind Gus ready to begin.

'How hard do I whip him?' she asked Julia, standing next to her, as instructress.

'As hard as you can.'

Yvette drew back her arm and slashed with all her might. He screamed.

'Maybe not quite so hard, darling. I don't think this hotel room is soundproofed,' Julia said.

Yvette's mother, red-faced with Tony's penis inserted into her, raised her head from the pillow. 'Give him another three, and then call it quits. Do it quickly.' Her voice became falsetto at the end of her sentence as an orgasm began in response to a slight twitch of Tony's shaft.

Just then the bedside telephone rang. 'I'll answer it,' Julia said, going to the phone accompanied by another crack of the whip and a scream. She picked up the receiver, said 'hello' and 'yes, it's Julia - you remember me.' Then she listened and said 'Wait a moment, I'll tell her.'

Julia waited until Yvette had slashed Gus with the whip a third time and his shriek had subsided, and said, 'Your friend, Dolly, is downstairs in reception. Do you want me to invite her up?'

'No. Tell her, I'll be down in a minute.'

Julia went back to the receiver, and picked it up. 'Yvette will be down in a minute ...what noise?... oh that. Yvette's just whipping Gus, her ex-fiancé. You've heard of Gus. Yvette was supposed to marry him today....Yes, with a real whip. Bye.'

'Why did you say that to her?' Yvette asked, as Julia put the phone back on its rest.

'Did I say something wrong?'

Yvette dropped the whip on the floor next to Gus, who was on his knees, squirming in pain and sobbing. 'I'll just say goodbye to my father.'

She opened the bathroom door. Her father was on top of Audrey on the bathroom floor in the throes of a mutual orgasm. 'Bye, Dad. See you when I get back from Spain.' She closed the door. Went over to her mother, who was still in bed with Tony on top of her, both looking exhausted. 'Bye, Mum, see you when I get back from Spain.'

'Do bring your friend to tea when you get back, darling. Your father and I would love to meet her,' Audrey said in a husky voice.

Julia occupied herself by lightly slashing a curled up Gus with the whip as Yvette dressed, collected her things, and came over to Julia and gave her a big kiss full on the lips. 'See you when I get back, darling.'

Julia smiled. 'Want to take the whip with you? You might need it to keep Dolly in order.'

Yvette looked at it, thought for a moment, and then took it from Julia without a word and put it in her bag and left the room.

Julia looked down at Gus. 'Get our clothes on and disappear.'

Gus almost leapt to his feet, and dragged on his clothes as Julia sat on the dressing table chair watching him. Ursula had her head on the pillows with her eyes closed as if she was exhausted. But Tony was sitting up in bed with a worried expression. He watched as Gus finished dressing and left the room banging the door behind him.

'You've made a dangerous enemy,' Tony said to Julia.

Julia looked unimpressed. 'He knows what we would do to him if he tries anything.'

'I meant he's dangerous as far as I'm concerned. He will try and get his own back on me.' He started to weep. 'And I've got nowhere to stay. Delia will want me out of her house because she will make Adam move in with her.'

Julia went around to his side of the bed and put a consoling arm around him. 'It's alright, love. You can come and live with me and my mother.'

Tony smiled as Audrey and Malcolm emerged from the bathroom, looking 'well scrubbed'. 'We've just had a quick bath together,' Audrey said. 'Julia and I ought to be going. We have a client in the morning.'

'Tony's coming with us, Mum.'

'How lovely,' Audrey said. 'Perhaps we can turn him into 'a Henry' with a bit of body-building and karate training.'

Ursula smiled at Malcolm. The first time she had smiled at him since they had arrived in the town for the wedding. 'Malcolm and I might as well stay here tonight, as the room is booked and paid for.'

'Treat tonight as a second honeymoon, darlings,' Audrey said.

THE END

FEMDOM WHIPS THE WHITE SLAVERS

ONE

VANESSA CANES

Aunt Prudence was the headmistress of a boys school, and used to dealing with a rebellious schoolboy with her cane. However, she was unused to dealing with a rebellious young woman of eighteen. Vanessa, her niece, sat scowling at her. 'I won't.'

'I promised your mother I would ensure you completed your education by going to university.'

'Not going.'

'If you refuse to obey me I will cane you.'

Vanessa giggled. 'You're not serious, Aunt?'

'Indeed, I am serious, Vanessa.'

Vanessa continued to giggle, unfazed by her Aunt's threat to cane her. 'Can I watch next time you cane a boy?'

'You must certainly cannot. Now, I mean what I say, Vanessa. You will be going to Camford University in September, after the summer holidays.'

'My mother never went to university.'

'That was because of the war, Vanessa. We both know your mother was in France or Germany for most of the war, on clandestine and dangerous missions for Britain.'

'I wish I could have been a spy like my mother. And I wish I could be doing what she's doing now; sailing around the Med in a yacht with a bronzed, ex-naval officer.'

'I'm sure we would all like to live our lives the way your mother does, lacking any sense of responsibility, and believing that she was put on this Earth to enjoy herself.'

'And kill nazis.'

'Hopefully, she has stopped doing that, bearing in mind this is ninety fifty two, and we have to let bygones be bygones. Anyway, as always, Vanessa, you are distracting me from the purpose of our discussion, which is to arrange your admission into Camford University, this country's best university, to study the classics.'

'But I don't want to speak ancient Greek or fuddy-duddy Latin. I can speak French and German already, and a bit of Italian.'

'I'm sure, Vanessa, that foreign languages will serve you well, but not as well as a classics degree from Camford. So, this afternoon, you and I will go to my study in school and complete the admission application together.'

'But, Aunty Prudence...'

'No buts, that is what we are going to do.'

Vanessa adopted a sulky look with a degree of belligerence. 'My mother never said I had to go to university. She didn't.'

'Your mother did a term at Camford.'

'Really. I didn't know that. Why only a term?'

Her aunt considered whether to answer this question and decided to do so. 'She was sent down.'

'That means 'expelled' doesn't it. Why was Mummy expelled from university?'

'I've forgotten.' She paused. 'I'm sorry to say this, Vanessa, as she is my sister, but your mother is not someone you should try to emulate.'

'My mother taught me how to emulate a few tricks when she was home last summer; such as how to stop a man raping me.'

'I would prefer not to discuss enforced sexual activities. Your mother is not a good example to a well brought up young woman.'

'The Government said she was a good example to women when they gave her the George Cross. And so did the French when they gave her the Croix de Guerre. And so did Hitler when he pinned an Iron Cross on her.'

'Please do not mention that man; he was under the illusion that she was his spy. The war is over. Has been for seven years. Your mother needs to settle down. What other tricks did she teach you?'

'How to pick a lock.'

'Burglary?'

'I'm always forgetting my keys. And how to blow open a safe. In theory, of course. I've never actually blown open a safe for real. Although I would like to have a go. Could I practice on the safe in your bedroom? Do they sell

dynamite in Fortnums?'

'No to both questions. Is that all she taught you?'

'How to drive a car - a bit. She let me drive her Jaguar XK. If we're going to go to your school can I drive your car there?'

'You most certainly cannot. It would be illegal. You don't have a driving licence.'

'It's only a couple of miles. Mostly a country lane. I can drive forwards. Even if I'm not too good at going backwards.'

'No. Now please, get your hat and coat, Vanessa. We'll be leaving in ten minutes. I will drive.'

'You've never let me near your school before.'

'Your mother warned me to keep you away from boys.'

'Somebody should have warned her to keep away from men.'

'I have done; many times. But she takes no notice.'

'On second thoughts someone should advise men to keep away from my mother. Especially as she can kill a man with a flick of her little finger.'

'You are exaggerating, Vanessa.'

'Only a little; I should have said with a flick of her little flick-knife.'

Half an hour later, Vanessa was in the headmistress's study at the school sitting on a chair in front of her aunt's desk. She looked around, as visitors do when they are a bit bored and in a room they have not visited before. The headmistress was reading a form. 'I might need to pull a few strings to get you accepted into Camford. Fortunately I know the dean.'

'Is that Dean Martin?'

'The Dean of Mashams College at Camford.'

'Have you got something on him, Aunt?'

Her aunt paused, and looked almost bashful. 'He has a soft spot for me. Between you and I, he asked me to marry him in nineteen forty five. I am still thinking about it.'

'I think about it all the time,' Vanessa said.

'Becoming married?' her aunt asked in a surprised tone.

'Well, actually, only the bit where you have to lie on your back with your legs apart and think of England.'

Her aunt blushed. 'Vanessa, you really are impossible.' She resumed reading the form, then reached for the phone on her desk. Her hand hovered over the receiver, and then away from the phone, and she rose from her chair. 'I think I will go and see Mr Grant in person rather than phone. He went to Mashams. He can give me a few pointers as to how to complete the candidate's form. It's his break and he'll be in the staff room. You wait here, Vanessa. I might be a few minutes.'

'Yes Aunt. Where do you keep your cane as a matter of interest?'

'In the cupboard in the corner. And, as I've threatened before, I may use it on you unless you co-operate.'

Vanessa watched her aunt leave the room and then went to the cupboard and took out the cane. She swished it a few times. She was in mid-swish when there was a knock on the door.

'Enter,' she said imperiously. Her position near the corner cupboard meant that she was behind the door when it opened. A boy's voice said to the room, probably assuming the headmistress was at the cupboard, where the boys knew she kept her cane, 'Mr Rillings has sent me for six of the best, Headmistress.'

With an inward grin, Vanessa stepped from behind the door, looking stern. 'Close the door, boy, and go and stand in front of the desk.'

The boy, a sixth former, stared open-mouthed at the vision in front of him. Instead of the thin, birdlike headmistress, with iron-grey hair in a bun and a pince-nez, always dressed in a high necked blouse and long pleated skirt, he was staring at a tall, curvy brunette of about his own age, eighteen, in a tight sweater and even tighter slacks, with her hair in a pony tail. And she was holding the headmistress's cane, flexed into the shape of a dome between her two hands, and looking as if she meant to use it.

'I'm Miss Smith, the new French teacher. The headmistress has instructed me to cane you as she is occupied in the staff room.' He gulped. 'Now, shut the door and go and stand in front of the desk.' He closed the door and walked slowly to stand in front of the desk next to the visitor's chair. 'What's your name?'

'Jones Major, miss.'

She viewed the boy. Too plump and spotty for her taste, but caning him would be fun. 'I take it you've been caned before.'

'Yes, miss.'

'Well assume the position.' She watched him position the chair sideways

onto the front of the desk and bend over the back of the chair, and raise his blazer to uncover his trousers. 'What did you do to merit a caning?'

He didn't answer.

'I'm not the most patient of teachers, Jones Major. If I have to ask your form teacher why you have been sent to the headmistress for a caning I will double your punishment. In fact, I will triple it.'

His face, looking down at the seat, was red, and went even redder as he answered. 'I broke wind, miss. To make the others laugh.'

Vanessa could not stop herself giggling. Then resumed her stern persona. 'How disgusting. What a disgusting boy you are. Head down. Bottom further out. But please do not break wind or I will be ever so severe on you.'

He adjusted his position as ordered, so that his bottom jutted more and presented a better target. She measured the cane so that it would strike across the most rounded part of his rump, then paused, savouring a growing tingle in her clitoris. It obviously approved of what she was about to do. Then, she remembered her aunt could reappear at any moment, so she brought the cane down sharply.

'Ouch!'

'Please be quiet, boy. If you make a noise like that the stroke does not count. We'll begin again shall we.'

'That was very hard, miss,' he mumbled.

'Was it? In that case, take down your trousers and your underpants and let me see the mark.'

The boy straightened and looked at her over his shoulder, with an alarmed expression. 'The headmistress never makes us take down our trousers, miss.'

'New regime. From now on, I will be the teacher in charge of corporal punishment. And I order you to take down your trousers. Face me whilst you do it.'

Blushing furiously, the boy unbuckled his belt, undid the buttons of his fly, and pushed his trousers down to his knees. He hesitated, before pushing down his underpants. and exposing a flaccid penis. His eyes were screwed tightly shut. Vanessa's eyes were wide open. They stared at his crotch. She had never seen a male penis in the flesh before.

She had seen penises on statues on a visit to a Florentine museum with her mother, who had pointed to the marbles and said, 'Remind me to tell you about sex, darling. It's ever so much fun with the right man and sometimes even more fun with the wrong man. But do remember, darling, a woman

should always take the upper hand and be on top, in more senses than one.'

Vanessa was intrigued, but so were a nearby party of Dutch school girls who, judging from the giggles, were eavesdropping and understood English. This put an end to her mother's treatise on sex and men, and despite Vanessa's reminders that she would like her mother to return to the topic, her mother was always too busy - with Italian men - to do so.

Jones Major could not, by any chalk, be described as an Adonis or a David. But he did have a fully working penis - at least, Vanessa assumed it worked. She swallowed an excess of saliva and, on impulse, moved closer to the boy. She clamped the cane under her left armpit and held his penis, tentatively, with the fingers of both her hands. Immediately, it sprang to attention and bubbles frothed from its eye. His eyes were now open wide and staring into her face. Then he stared down at his penis, erect to bursting, and clutched it. He gripped and rubbed and shook as semen spurted towards her in goblets. She took a hasty pace backwards to avoid her slacks being spattered, just as the door opened and the headmistress stood framed in the doorway with her mouth agape.

Five minutes later, Jones Major had been dispatched to his dormitory for a cold shower. The headmistress was behind her desk, Vanessa on the hard-backed chair in front of the desk.

'What were you doing with my cane?'

'I thought you might need some help, Aunt. I was trying to be helpful. I told him to bend over the chair to be caned. And he complained I hit him too hard, so I thought I'd better examine the mark. And that seemed to excite him.'

'It most certainly did. And just how am I supposed to explain to his parents what occurred, if he mentions it.'

Vanessa grinned. 'He's not likely to mention it to anyone, Aunt.'

'How do you know?'

'No boy his age, eighteen, is going to tell anyone he was caned by a girl.'

The headmistress pursed her lips, and mulled. She stared at Vanessa who smiled back. 'You are just like your mother, Vanessa.'

'Does she cane males?'

'I've absolutely no idea. When I say that you are like your mother - my sister - I mean that you are impulsive and uncontrollable. You do not act as a well-brought up young lady should.'

'I wasn't brought up by my mother. I was brought up by Granny, and then by you and by governesses.'

'Too many women in your life and not a man.'

'I agree with you there, Aunt. I would like a few men in my life.'

'What I meant, Vanessa, is that you did not have a father to exercise some male-authority. In other words, a man to give you a good thrashing with his slipper when you misbehaved.'

'Did you know my father, Aunt?'

'Don't change the subject to divert me.'

'I wasn't changing the subject. You said I lacked a father figure and I simply asked if you knew my father.'

Her aunt's steely stare became less steely. Her eyes flickered down to the blotter on her desk. 'I do believe I met him once at a dinner party.'

'What was he like?'

'Does it matter?'

'It does to me, Aunt.'

'We'll discuss him another time. Or possibly, you could ask your mother. She knew him more intimately than I did.' The steely stare returned. 'So, Vanessa, I have decided that you must be thrashed by a man.'

'Thrashed by a man!' Vanessa's hand went to her mouth in shock-horror.

'Yes, Vanessa. As a punishment for caning and over exciting that boy without my authority. There are stains on my carpet. I do not know what the cleaner will think.' She reached for the phone on her desk and dialled an internal number. 'Send Mr Proudfoot to my room, please.' She replaced the receiver, and stared coldly at her niece. 'I have just asked my secretary to ask my deputy headmaster to come to this room. He will chastise you. You will receive twelve strokes of the cane administered by Mr Proudfoot.'

Vanessa stood up, glaring at her aunt. 'I will not be beaten by a man.'

Her aunt remained seated, unimpressed by her niece's threatening demeanour.

'I suggest you sit down, Vanessa, whilst we both await the arrival of Mr Proudfoot. You are unlikely to be able to sit down, without discomfort, for several hours after Mr Proudfoot has caned you.'

Vanessa remained standing and half-turned towards the door. 'I'm

eighteen. What's to stop me running away?'

'You are not an adult until you are twenty one. And if you go, you will be penniless. Remember, Vanessa, I am your legal guardian. I hold the purse strings to your trust fund. If you require me to furnish you with this month's allowance you must submit to my will. Now sit down and await Mr Proudfoot.'

Vanessa stared at her Aunt, thinking that she would like to own a flick-knife. But economics got the better of her. She had no money in her pocket apart from a couple of pence. She sat back in the chair in front of the headmistress's desk. 'Are you going to watch?'

'As it happens I have to take a history class in the sixth form. I will leave you in the firm hands of Mr Proudfoot. Once he has administered the caning you will await my return.'

A strong knock on the door signalled the arrival of Mr Proudfoot. He was invited to enter by the headmistress and came in looking purposeful. 'You summoned me, Headmistress.' He stood behind Vanessa's chair. She did not turn to look at him.

'This young lady, Mr Proudfoot, is my niece, Vanessa Stannard. My ward. I am responsible for ensuring her education and good behaviour. Say good morning to Mr Proudfoot, Vanessa.'

Vanessa turned towards the florid-faced, middle-aged, man in a scholastic gown and mortar board. She gave a weak smile and said, in a low voice which was almost a whisper. 'Good morning, Mr Proudfoot.'

Those who would come to fear Vanessa in her later years would have detected menace. Mr Proudfoot had not met Vanessa before, and assumed she was a docile young lady. 'How do you do, Miss Stannard,' he said affably enough.

The headmistress did not look affable. 'My niece, Mr Proudfoot, I am sorry to say, does not understand that she needs to bow to my authority. There has been a regrettable incident involving Jones Major and my niece.'

The headmistress did not see fit to elaborate, but Mr Proudfoot was intrigued. 'May I ask the nature of the incident, Headmistress? I assume it is one that merits the heavy hand of authority.'

'I prefer not to divulge details of the episode which I witnessed. But I will require you to administer six strokes of the cane on Jones Major.' She paused for effect. He listened, his penis hoping that he would be instructed to administer the cane to the other participant in the episode. His cheeks

reddened evened more. His hope was not dashed. 'And I must ask, if you would be so kind, to render me a service outside of your normal duties.'

'Most happy to oblige, Headmistress.'

The headmistress paused again, this time she hesitated because she was not sure if she was doing the right thing. She looked from Mr Proudfoot, who stood ready to be of service, to her niece who was expressionless with her hands in her lap and her chin down. 'Vanessa, look at me.' Vanessa raised her chin and opened her eyes to view her aunt. 'When I have left the room, you will bend over the back of the chair you are sitting on with your palms on the seat and Mr Proudfoot will administer twelve strokes of my cane across your posterior. Do you understand?'

'Yes, Aunt.'

'Then, when Mr Proudfoot leaves, you will stand in the corner facing the wall until I return. Do you understand?'

'Yes, Aunt.'

The headmistress rose from her seat. 'Very well. It is time for me to give the history lesson.' With that, the headmistress, collected a book and some papers from her desk and left the room, closing the door behind her.

Mr Proudfoot coughed as though to clear his throat, and said 'Very well.'

Vanessa was not sure what he meant by 'very well', but smiled politely and said, 'Yes thank you. Are you?'

Mr Proudfoot assumed she was being cheeky and bristled. 'Please do not be impertinent with me, young lady. Or I will be severe.'

Vanessa raised an eyebrow and raised a smirk to go with it. She had every intention of being impertinent, but first she needed to issue Mr Proudfoot with a warning. The smirk became a sweet smile. She remained seated, as he stood impatiently in front of her. 'Have you heard of my mother, Mr Proudfoot?'

'Your mother - yes. She is famed for her activities in occupied France and in Germany during the war. A real heroine.'

'Do you know how many nazis she killed - some with her bare hands - some with a knife - some with a gun?'

Mr Proudfoot swallowed hard, and stared harder. He was beginning to get the picture. 'The headmistress has ordered me to chastise you, Miss Stannard. I must do so.'

'That is what the nazis said at Nuremberg, Mr Proudfoot. They said they were only following orders.'

'I have already warned you not be impertinent, young lady. Please go to the corner and fetch the headmistress's cane.'

She surprised him by standing up and fetching the cane from the corner. It was the cane she had used on Jones Major and which had not been returned to the cabinet. She resumed her seat, demurely, with the cane across her lap.

'Please give me the cane. And bend over the chair.' He held out his hand to receive the cane.

She ignored his request. 'My mother, Mr Proudfoot, is a killer, for want of a better description. Men find her so. And, although my aunt is my guardian in the temporary absence of my mother, it is my mother who will do whatever I ask of her. She has a tendency to become enraged if somebody upsets me, or threatens to hurt me. Do you understand what I am saying, Mr Proudfoot?' She smiled at him. His florid complexion had gone pale.

'Are you threatening me with your mother, Miss Stannard?' he stuttered.

'Indeed I am, Mr Proudfoot. Make any attempt to cane me and I will ask my mother to kill you.' She smiled sweetly. He blanched even more. His normally ruddy complexion was ruddy-less.

'You cannot be serious.'

'I have never been more serious, Mr Proudfoot.' The smile was replaced by a stern expression.

'I am going to inform the headmistress of your recalcitrance. And she will cane you instead. I will suggest to her that she double - if not triple - the strokes.'

'You will do no such thing, Mr Proudfoot. You will do exactly as Jones Major did and take down your trousers.' She stood as she said this, one hand holding the cane, the other hand on her hip.

'I will do no such thing.'

'Yes you will, because if you do not, I will tell my mother that you attempted to assault me; to rape me.' She stared hard into his eyes waiting for his reaction. He was faltering, like a boxer who had received one blow too many and was about to hit the canvas.

'This is outrageous.'

'Do as I say.' Her hand went to her blouse, and her fingers paused on the top button. 'Or my blouse is likely to get ripped by you.'

'This is blackmail,' he blustered.

'Shocking,' she grinned. The smile was replaced by another stern look. 'Take them down or do you want me to take them down forcibly? And by the

way, my mother has taught me some of her more lethal tricks. She says I take after her. Would you like me to show you one of the tricks? How to disable a man by bruising his testicles.'

He began unbuttoning his fly.

'Take off your hat and your gown and your coat.'

He did as he was told and took off his teacher's gown and his jacket, revealing braces. He dropped the mortar board, gown and jacket onto the headmistress's desk and slipped his braces from his shoulders and pushed down his trousers.

'Only as far as your knees, please. Otherwise you won't be able to shuffle over to the caning chair.'

'You are going to cane me?'

'Of course. And then when you've had six strokes - no, twelve strokes - of the cane, I might do what I did to Jones Major and cause your penis to spurt like a fountain. Would you like me to do that to you?' He did not answer but occupied himself in shuffling over to stand behind the back of the chair, and then, slowly, he pushed his underpants down his thighs. An erect penis poked its head from between the unbuttoned lower part of his shirt.

'Please be quick,' he said in a panicky voice, 'the headmistress could come back at any minute.'

But Vanessa was happy to take her time. 'Lift your shirt so that I can see it.' She tapped his midriff with the end of the cane to emphasise what she wanted him to do. He raised his shirt to give her a full view. 'I don't think I would like that thing in me,' she said with disdain. 'Now bend over the back of the chair.' He bent; half grateful that his erect penis would not be on view. She stood to one side of him, measured the cane, and whacked. 'Lift your shirt tails well up so I can see the mark.' He lifted his shirt tails. A red streak ran diagonally across his buttocks. The sight gave her pleasurable twinges, similar to the one she had experienced when she gave Jones Major a single stroke of the cane. It was now clear to her, and to her clitoris, that caning a man was an enjoyable experience to be savoured as often as possible. She measured her aim and whacked again. She experienced a more intense tingle. She gave Mr Proudfoot four more in quick succession, and then, with the instruction 'keep your head down', she felt the need to massage her groin, hoping that he would keep his head down and not look. 'Six more, Mr Proudfoot.'

'Please, Miss Stannard, I don't think I can take six more. I am in great

pain.' His buttocks clenched as though movement would ease the pain.

'Very well, Mr Proudfoot, as I am a kind person, I will only give you three more. And you will say thank you Miss Stannard after each one.'

'Yes, Miss Stannard,' he said meekly.

She gave him three more strokes, and, after glancing at the nine red marks she had made across his buttocks. laid the cane on the desk on top of his gown and jacket. 'Stand up straight, Mr Proudfoot and face me. He did as he was told. His penis was the colour of a lobster just taken from boiling water. 'Do you have a linen handkerchief, Mr Proudfoot?'

'Yes, Miss Stannard.' His trousers were still at half-mast around his knees. He reached down into a trousers pocket and took out a large handkerchief which he handed to her.

Vanessa stared at the blood-gorged penis and then at the handkerchief, thinking how best to do it. The penis almost pointed to her hand and the handkerchief as if pleading for relief. Just then the door opened and the headmistress was framed in the doorway; for the second time that morning, her hand was to her mouth in shock at the scene; her niece about to grasp the erect penis of the deputy headmaster.

TWO

EDITH STROPS

Edith was a prisoner, locked in her bedroom. She lay on her bed and shivered with fear. She had reached the ripe old age of eighteen and her stepfather considered that it was high time she earned a bit of real cash; not just the crust she earned from working in a bakery. He intended to tutor her in the art of pleasing a man. So far, she had avoided his clumsy attempts to educate her. But her mother; her protector, was away visiting a sick relative, and would not be back for a few days.

A few minutes before, Edith had rebuffed her stepfather's advances once again, and he had locked her bedroom door and gone down stairs to the scullery looking for his razor strop; a leather strap on which he honed his razor on the infrequent occasions he shaved.

She heard his heavy tread coming back up the stairs, and made up her mind to kill him if she could. She looked around for a blunt instrument, but there was none to hand. The key turned in the lock. She pulled the blanket up around her throat and sat hunched up at the bedhead, her legs curled under her.

He staggered as he came into the room. In one hand he held the strop and in the other hand he held a half empty bottle of gin. With a stupid, alcohol-induced grin, he held up both the strop and the bottle. 'One for your arse and one for my throat.'

'Did you bring a razor with you?'

'Why do you want a razor, girl?'

She thought about mentioning she would like to use a rusty razor to core his Adam's apple, but thought better of it. 'Thought I'd shave my legs and armpits for you.'

Closing the door, he waddled over to the bed. The realisation that he must have consumed half a bottle of gin in the few minutes he was downstairs, fetching the strop, gave her hope. He had been fairly drunk when he went down the stairs, having been all afternoon in a pub. Now he was more drunk. But he would still be too strong for her, unless she could get the bottle off him and hit him with it.

'Shaving legs and arm is for tarts,' he said.

'I thought you were going to train me to be a tart.'

'I am - I am.' He sat on the end of the bed and took a swig of gin from the bottle. 'I'm going to fuck you first. Show you what a fuck is.'

'It's a swear word. Mum doesn't like you swearing.'

'Your mum doesn't like me doing a lot of things. She doesn't like me fucking her any more.'

'I wonder why,' she muttered.

'She used to like me fucking her when your father was working nights.'

A tear glistened as she thought of her sweet, gentle father who had died in a factory accident, to be replaced by this monster, whose only working time in a factory was to steal the lead from the roof.

'I've never been fucked,' she said truthfully.

His mouth extended into a yellow-toothed grin and his eyes opened wide. 'I'm the best there is. Ask your mum.' He slurped another swig of gin.

'Can I have a drop?'

He grinned like a gargoyle. 'You're too young to drink. Got to be twenty one.'

'But not too young to be fucked,' she said.

He leered again and took another swig. The bottle was now three-quarter's empty. And his eyes rolled, like a dummy's eyes operated by a ventriloquist. She had to get him to finish the bottle.

'My mum says you can't take your drink. She says you can't stand up when you've had more than a couple of tots.'

'Says that, does she.' He took a deep swig. 'She's wrong. I can take my drink.' He stood up to prove he could stand. 'I'll strap the arse off her for saying that. I'll strap your arse as well. Like strapping fat arses, I do.'

'Your hands are shaking,' she said.

'No,' he said, taking another swig.

'That stuff looks like water,' she said.

'It's gin. Dutch gin.'

'I bet you can't swallow what's left in one go.'

'Watch me.' He stood up, unsteadily, tipped his throat back and poured the gin down it, with dribbles spilling over the stubbles on his chin. Then he sat heavily on the bed causing the aged springs of the mattress to squeak loudly. The bottle was now empty. It rolled off the bed onto the floor. She could see that he was close to doing the same.

'Why don't you have a kip, and then fuck me.'

'That's a good idea, 'Dith' He slurred her name. She almost leapt off the bed as his torso rolled towards her and the bed head. He ended up with his head on the pillow and one foot on the floor and one foot on the bed. He started to snore almost as soon as his head hit the pillow.

Quietly, she opened the door and tiptoed downstairs and into the scullery where she knew there was an old length of washing line. She took the line and a sharp kitchen knife and tiptoed back upstairs. She did not have to move too quietly as his snoring shook her bedroom walls. He was on his side with limp arms across his chest. She stood staring down at his prone body wondering how best to achieve her aim. She could kill him. A blow to his head with a gin bottle would put paid to him. Or she could use the kitchen knife. But she was eighteen. Old enough to be hung for murder. She had other ideas. Firstly, she needed to have a easy escape route in case he woke up suddenly, like the ogre at the top of the beanstalk.

She tiptoed down the stairs again, and made sure the front door was unlocked and ajar in case she needed to rush out into the street. She was wearing a dress and a cardigan. Hastily, she returned to her bedroom and quietly packed a holdall with a change of clothes and underwear and put her purse in her pocket. She was now ready to flee at a moment's notice. She would be leaving home, never to return, but she would have some fun first.

She went back into her bedroom. He was sleeping on his side. Tentatively, she pushed his shoulder so that he slumped onto his front. His left arm was free but his right arm was half under his stomach. She tugged at this arm. He stirred and his snoring became intermittent, and she stopped tugging. The snoring returned to maximum volume. She gave a hard tug at the arm and released it. Quickly, she pulled his arms behind him and crossed his wrists in the small of his back, cut the washing line into lengths with the knife, and tied his wrists securely with a length of the line. Then she lifted his leg, which was trailing on the floor, onto the bed so that his ankles were together, and securely tied his ankles with another length of the washing line.

He was now trussed up and at her mercy. She relaxed. She felt she could do with a drink herself. She went back downstairs, and to the cupboard where she knew he stashed his numerous bottles of alcohol, and took a bottle of Scotch and a glass. She went back up to the landing and paused outside her bedroom door and listened. He was still snoring. She went into the bedroom her mother and stepfather shared, half filled the glass with whisky, took a few swigs, and then started searching through the chest of drawers and the wardrobe. She was looking for money. Sure enough, she found a tin box full of pound notes at the back of the wardrobe. It contained about twenty pounds; enough to get her to London and to stay in lodgings there for a few weeks until she could find a job. She took the tin onto the landing and stuffed it into her holdall, and then wondered if he had any other money stashed away. There was one way to find out; she would get him to tell her.

It was six o'clock in the evening. If she was going to head for London she needed to be on her way soon. Going back downstairs, she filled a large jug full of cold water and went back to her bedroom. His face was sideways onto the pillow, snot bubbling from his nose as he snored. She splashed the contents of the water jug over his face. He awoke with a curse. Bleary eyes stared up at her. 'What the fuck! I'll kill you.'

'No you won't. But I might kill you. After I've strapped you.'

He struggled to sit up and realised he was tied hand and foot. 'Fucking untie me.'

'No. I going to leave you here, like this, until my mum comes back. Although, I have a feeling she might not be coming back. All her clothes are missing from the wardrobe. I expect she's got a new bloke somewhere.'

He looked bemused. 'You're making it up. She'd never leave me. I'd kill her.'

'I'm going to leave you shortly. But we have a few things to do and discuss first.'

He stared at her. Her face, if not her words, caused him concern. 'When are you going to untie me?'

'I'm not. What I'm going to do is cut your clothes off, starting with your trousers. Roll onto your stomach.'

'No.'

She poked the point of the knife against his ribs. He rolled onto to his stomach, and looked alarmed as she took a handful of trouser-cloth covering his buttocks and slit the cloth. The slit resembled the backside-slit in

Victorian bloomers and exposed his rather unclean underpants. She slit the pants in the same way. Laying down the knife on the floor she used her two hands to rip the seat of the trousers and the pants well apart, completely exposing his buttocks.

He tried to make a joke. 'Why don't you uncover my cock?'

'I'm going to, after I've made your bum smart. Your bum will be the only smart bit of you.' She had been sitting on the edge of the bed as she ripped his clothes. She now stood and picked up the razor strop, and slapped it down as hard as she could across his naked buttocks.

He yelled 'Bitch! Fucking do that again and I'll...'

His sentence was truncated by another stropping whack. 'You'll what?'

He didn't reply, fearing that whatever he said would incite another razor-stropping. He needn't have worried; he received four more strops in quick succession. 'Roll over onto your back.' He made no move to turn over. The strop hit him hard, and encouraged him to turn his body and lay on his back. He looked alarmed when she picked up the knife and slit the front of his trousers from the top fly button to the groin, and did the same to the front of his underpants to expose his limp penis. She viewed it like a gardener viewing a slug on a cabbage leaf. 'No wonder my mum's gone off to another bloke.' She raised the tip of his penis with the point of the blade. 'I'm going to cut your cock off.'

He moaned in terror. 'No, please, anything.'

'I hadn't finished my sentence. I'm going to cut your cock off unless you tell me where you've stashed all your money.'

'I don't have any money.'

'If you lie to me I will cut it off.'

'I've told you, I don't have any money.'

'So I must have imagined that I just found a tin full of money in the back of the wardrobe.'

'I forgot it was there.' He was shivering with fear.

'I suggest you remember very quickly where the rest of your money is. Because if I do another search, and find some more money you've forgotten about, I will cut it off.' She waved the knife under his nose to emphasise what she would do. 'With this knife, which I shall sharpen on the strop you were going to whip my arse with. Before you raped me.'

'I was only joking. Honest. I wasn't going to touch you. I was having a joke.'

'Funnily enough, I didn't see the funny side. So tell me where the rest of your money is.' She slid the knife point from under his penis and then pricked the shaft a few times with the point of the knife.

'Floorboards,' he whimpered. 'Floorboard near the door is loose. The creaky one. In a box.' He closed his eyes as if relieved that he had confessed his ill-gotten gains.

She raised the floorboard he had indicated and found a dust covered tin box containing more money. 'Wow! There must be over a hundred pounds here. Were you saving up to go on honeymoon?'

'I was going to buy a car.'

'You never go anywhere apart from the pub and places you burgle.' She left the empty tin box on the floor and stuffed the wads of banknotes into her holdall. 'Roll on your front again.' He rolled, grateful that his penis would be out of harm's way. She picked up the strop again. 'Just going to give you another fifty and then finish packing my bag and say goodbye.'

Half an hour later, Edith was walking along a darkening street, having left her stepfather tied up on her bed, with very red and bruised buttocks, and complaining that he need to go to the lavatory. She had replied that she had no objection if he did what he needed to on her bed as she would not be sleeping in it again.

She halted outside the last house in the terrace. An open-back lorry was parked outside the house; the only vehicle in the street. She tossed her holdall into the back of the lorry, so that it was out of sight, and knocked on the door. It was opened a minute or so later by a sour-faced woman. 'Oh, it's you. What do you want?'

'Is Ernie in?'

'He's busy.'

'Who is it, Mum?' a male voice enquired from somewhere behind the half-opened door.

'It's her.'

'My name's Edith, actually, Mrs Reynolds. The woman stood aside as a grinning, burly youth appeared at the door. 'I knew you'd come.'

'Did you,' Edith said, looking suitably remorseful. 'I'm sorry I was a bit

tetchy with you yesterday. Can you forgive me?'

He came out onto the step. 'Corse, love. Want to go to the pub?'

'I though we could call in at the pub a bit later, after perhaps...' The woman's face appeared behind the youth's shoulder with a facial expression designed to frighten away crows, or in this case, her son's girlfriend. 'He's not had his tea.'

'I'll have it later, Mum. Just going for a walk with Edith.' He pushed past his mother, back into the hall, and came out again with his jacket and cap, and held out his hand for Edith to hold. She held it. 'Shall we go down to that bench on the canal?'

She stopped by the bonnet of the lorry. 'Can we go for a drive in your lorry?'

'It's not my lorry, love. You know that. It belongs to my dad.'

'But he's not using it at the moment.'

'He'll be out of the nick tomorrow.'

'Why don't you get some driving practice?'

'I don't need any practice. I know how to drive it.'

'I bet you're a good driver,' she said looking coy. 'And that lorry has got a nice, long seat in the driver's cab. Comfy seat it is. One could lay back on it. If one was to go all the way.'

'All the way?' he repeated. She looked coy again. 'Do you mean it?'

She nodded. 'All the way.'

'I'll get the keys.'

'I need to go to the pub first.'

'Why?'

'Need to use the lavatory.'

'You can go here.'

'Your lav's at the end of your garden. The one in the pub's indoors. I like a bit of comfort when I sit down with a proper chain to pull.'

A couple of minutes later the lorry came to a halt outside the Rose and Crown. 'You wait here,' she said as she opened her door.

'I thought we were both going in for a drink.'

'I don't want you drinking. You've got a long night ahead of you. I need to speak to a man about a dog that's tied up.'

'What dog's that? Where's it tied?'

'Tell you later,' she said, jumping out of the cab and slamming the door shut.

The pub was smoke-filled and crowded and she had to push her way over to a corner where an illegal card game was in progress. She tapped the dealer on the shoulder. 'Message from my stepdad. He says he's tied up; could you all go over to his place. He's got some whisky; fell off a lorry. Front door's open. If he's not downstairs he'll be up.'

The four cardsharps listened without comment. 'Fucking nice tits and arse,' one of them said, lifting his eyes from his hand of cards, as she pushed her way out of the pub.

'I bet he shags her,' another said.

'We'll all go and ask him, shall we,' the dealer said.

A minute or so later, Edith was back in the cab, having retrieved her bag from the back of the lorry.

'What's in the bag, doll?'

'It's my going-away bag.'

He looked puzzled. 'Where you going?'

'London.'

'I thought you said you were going to let me go all the way with you tonight?' He lent towards her and made a clumsy attempt to kiss her and fondle her breasts.

She pushed him away. 'I am going to let you take me. You can take me all the way to London now.'

'I can't go to London, doll. My dad comes out tomorrow. If I'm missing he'll kill me. He'll kill me even more if his lorry's missing.'

She opened her bag and took out the sharp knife she had used to cut the washing line, and poked the tip of the knife against his ribs. 'You can tell your dad you were kidnapped. Start the engine.'

THREE

VANESSA MEETS REGGIE

'Words fail me,' the headmistress said, as she swung her little Morris into her drive. This was an incorrect statement; words had not failed her during the whole of the car journey from her school to her home. Her niece had sat morosely in the passenger seat, taking an ear-battering. The deputy headmaster's ears had also been battered - if not to say, boxed - by the headmistress, before she left the school. However, he had narrowly escaped an instant dismissal attributable to the realisation, on the part of the headmistress, that everything would need to be swept under the carpet - if not the floorboards, in perpetuity, and this included the incident involving Jones Major.

What was her school coming to? The headmistress knew that she had to take drastic and immediate action to remove the source of the trouble otherwise it would only get worse. She could not expel her niece from her school as she was not a pupil; being a boy was a necessary qualification to be a pupil. However, the aunt could expel the niece from her home.

'You will go upstairs and pack your bags, young lady,' her aunt said, as Vanessa stomped into the hall, feeling hard done by. The males could have kept their trousers up. She was only a female. They didn't have to do what she wanted. But she didn't argue with her aunt. She would be glad to leave her aunt's restrictive regime. She was fond of her aunt but they were not on the same wavelength. Vanessa was on the same wavelength as her mother; trouble was, her mother was usually out of signal range. It took Vanessa half an hour to bath, pack and bump her suitcase down the stairs. It was heavy; she had a lot of clothes and shoes and make-up, although not much else. She did not fancy lugging the case into taxis and trains to get to wherever she was

being sent.

'Borstal; is that where you're sending me?' Vanessa said, grumpily, to her aunt, when she met her at the foot of the stairs.

'Even they would expel you. No, I am sending you back to your mother's flat in Park Lane.'

'Mummy's on a yacht in the Med as far as I know. She won't be back for aeons.'

'I believe her next port of call might be Capri. I will send a telegram to her favourite hotel there to suggest that she returns to England as soon as possible to look after you. It is about time that she took some responsibility for your upbringing, albeit at this late stage in your development. In the meantime, you will have to live on your own.'

Vanessa brightened. The thought of living on her own appealed to her. She had always been a solitary child; sent to boarding school and fostered by various relatives during school holidays, in the absence of her mother. She had learned to rely on her own resources and be pleased with her own company. 'Can I borrow your car to drive to London, Aunt?'

'You most certainly cannot. You will go by train. I will drive you to the station. There is a train for Euston at four forty five. From there you can get a taxi to Park Lane.'

An hour later, a solitary Vanessa was on the station platform awaiting the London-bound steam train, her heavy suitcase by her side. Her aunt had purchased a second-class ticket for her, almost as a parting shot, as Vanessa had requested a first-class ticket. They had had a whispered disagreement in the ticket office when Vanessa realised she would be travelling second class, and baulked at her aunt's suggestion that she should pay for her own ticket if she wanted to go first class.

Her aunt had not waited to wave her off. There were only a few other passengers on the platform. One passenger, a youngish man in a cashmere overcoat and trilby, with a furled umbrella and a small attache case, kept glancing in her direction. Vanessa preened when she realised that she was the focus of his attention.

He moved closer to her. 'Do allow me to help you with your case when the puffer arrives. There doesn't seem to be a porter in evidence.'

Vanessa smiled at him. 'How kind.' He seemed aged to a young Vanessa; probably forty - old enough to be her father, although she did not know how old her father was, as it was a matter of conjecture when it came to his

identity. This man exuded class and charm. He had the looks and smile of a matinee idol in the mould of Robert Donat or Ronald Colman. Vanessa was quite taken.

'Rather chilly, this evening,' he said.

'Yes.' She fluttered her eyelids.

'I hope you don't think I'm an eavesdropper but I was behind you in the queue for a ticket and heard you say to the lady with you that you would like to travel first-class.'

'My aunt's a bit on the stingy side.'

He chuckled. 'I have a maiden aunt who opens her purse but rarely.'

Vanessa chuckled lightly; not to leave him chuckling alone.

'Do allow me to pay any surcharge and then you will be able to travel in my carriage. I always go first class. On the Government,' he added with a wink.

'How kind.'

For once, the train was on time, and the man loaded Vanessa and her suitcase into a first class carriage and sat opposite her. They had the compartment to themselves. They smiled at each other again.

'As we are going to be travelling companions for the next couple of hours to London perhaps I ought to introduce myself. Reginald Carmichael, at your service.'

'Vanessa Stannard.'

'Charmed,' he said, obviously truthfully. 'May I call you Vanessa, or would that be a presumption and we've not been introduced formally.'

'Please do.'

'And I'm Reggie.'

'Lovely to met you, Reggie. You say you work for the Government?'

'I'm a civil servant in the Foreign Office. She looked blank. Vanessa was only knowledgeable about things which interested her, and the Government or politics did not interest her in the slightest, but Reggie Carmichael did.

'But enough of me. Tell me about you. Is it bad form to ask a young lady her age?'

'Eighteen,' she said. 'And one month. I've just finished at finishing school in Switzerland. And have been staying with my aunt who is a headmistress in a boys school.'

'And am I right in thinking that you can speak French or German, perhaps? Having been to a Swiss school.'

'Both.'

'How interesting. I'm looking for a researcher who can speak French and German, as well as impeccable English.'

'How much?' Vanessa asked, coming straight to the point that interested her most.'

'Well, the job is only for a couple of months and it would be five pounds a week.' He smiled at her as though this was a 'good earner', which it was in nineteen fifty two.

'What about board and lodging; does that come with the job?' She smiled her coy smile as she asked the question.

'Well, it was not in the original budget, but as you would appear to be absolutely ideal for the job perhaps I could find you a pied à terre, short term. As a matter of interest, where will you be staying in London tonight?'

'In my mother's flat. But she's abroad. I would be on my own. Everything's been covered with dust sheets for months. There's probably skeletons in the cupboard. And I prefer company.' She smiled again and endeavoured to look demure; although demure was not a look which Vanessa did well; she would have looked sexy in sackcloth and ashes.

'You could stay with me, I suppose.'

'Won't your wife mind?'

'My wife is staying with her mother.' His tone became serious. 'Bloody lawyer - excuse my French.'

'In French that would be avocat sanglante.'

He laughed. 'Needs her bottom spanked in any language.'

Vanessa looked quizzically at Reggie.

'My wife's solicitor is female. Hard-boiled. A prize bitch.'

Vanessa grinned. 'I'm good at spanking. But I've never spanked a female. I've only ever spanked a male.'

He gulped enough to swallow his Adam's apple. 'You're not serious?'

'Of course. That's why I'm on this train. My aunt is a headmistress, as I said. She's sending me back to London because I caned one of her pupils and then I caned her deputy.'

'Deputy?'

'Deputy headmaster.'

He burst out laughing. 'I'm going to have seconds thoughts about offering you a job in case you cane my bottom.'

It was Vanessa's turn to look serious. 'I will if you upset me.' His face

flushed. His eyebrows twitched. He wasn't sure how to take this. His penis did know how to react, however. It pushed until the fly covering and restricting it formed a mound. Vanessa was becoming quick at spotting such events. His eyes followed her line of sight. He flushed a deeper shade of embarrassment. Vanessa, as always, was getting the upper hand. It was time to squeeze. 'Have you heard of Lydia Stannard?

'Yes of course. She did sterling undercover work for SOE during the war, dispatching nazi high-ups; generals and the like.'

'She's my mother?'

'Your mother? Of course. You did say your surname was Stannard?' She nodded. He stared at her like a curator seeking to identify whether a work of art was genuine. 'There is a facial resemblance.' He sank back further in his train-seat. 'What a small world! I knew your mother during the blitz; Autumn forty. We were working in the same building. I saw a fair amount of her.' Then he added, almost to himself. 'She whipped me with a particularly vicious whip on our last evening together.'

'Why did she do that?'

'Said she was practising what she would do to a particularly nasty Gestapo chap when she was parachuted back into France. I still have the scars.'

'She probably killed him.'

'I believe she did.' He stared at her. 'You look just like her. No wonder I was attracted to you.'

'Weren't you attracted to her sister; my aunt?'

'The lady with you in the ticket office? Not quite so much as I am attracted to you, and to your mother before you.'

'Are you going to let me whip you?'

He let out a laugh, which was almost a guffaw. 'No, I am not going to let you whip me.'

The compartment door slid open as Reggie said this. 'Tickets please.'

There was no further mention of whips or spanking during the rest of the journey to Euston, although the subject was an undercurrent just below the waves. The conversation was mostly about Vanessa's mother; her famed exploits during the war, and also about Vanessa's career prospects. Reggie had contacts in the Diplomatic Service, and indeed in the Security Services, which might be of interest to Vanessa, giving her linguistic skills - and personality. However, Vanessa was not at all interested in working for the

Government in any capacity. What she was interested in were Reggie's tales of being a major in the Army during the liberation of Paris in nineteen forty five. And in particular, the 'night life'. Being a gentleman, Reggie was disinclined to discuss such sensitive matters with a properly-brought-up, young lady. However, Vanessa persisted; pointing out that she had not been 'properly-brought-up; not with a mother like hers. She virtually forced Reggie to relate tales of his encounters with the demi-monde; heavily edited, but Vanessa's vivid imagination filled in the missing bits; possibly, her imagination being more vivid than the reality.

'So how many did you fuck in Paris?'

Reggie's hand went to his mouth to express his shock at the boldness of the question; much like her aunt had expressed her shock at seeing Vanessa about to grab Mr Proudfoot's erect penis and the erect penis of Jones Major a few minutes before. 'A gentleman never mention his, eh, liaisons with a lady,' he reproved. 'And Anglo-Saxon terminology is for the rank and file.'

Vanessa ignored his scolding. 'Do prostitutes count as ladies?'

'Yes, of course.' His still-shocked expression relaxed. He seemed to be having fond memories. 'I really liked some of them. They were gorgeous in looks and in personality.'

'Am I gorgeous in looks and personality?'

'Yes, of course you are. As is your mother.'

'So we would both make good prostitutes?'

He laughed. 'I do think that is a career you should pursue.'

'Do they make a lot of money?'

'Some do. But it's like any profession; those at the top of the tree make a lot of money. But there are risks.'

'What sort of risks?'

'Violent men. Illnesses.'

'The clap?'

'I believe that it how it was referred to in olden times.'

Vanessa went into deep thought and it was a minute or so before she asked another searching and - for him - embarrassing question. 'So, am I right in thinking that the way to make money from being a prostitute is not to have men who are violent and not to have sex with the men?'

He thought and replied, 'There are ladies who entertain submissive men and don't actually have sex with them - yes.'

'You mean, they do what I did to Jones Major and the deputy headmaster?'

Spank their bottoms until they produce that milky-fluid. Mr Proudfoot didn't actually produce any but he was on the point of doing so.'

Reggie was bright red. 'Vanessa, I don't think your mother - who I used to know well - would approve of us discussing such things. I think I ought to read my newspaper until we get to Euston.'

'Before you do, I would like to know where there are ladies who spank men's bottoms for money.'

'There are some in Paris; I believe near the Moulin Rouge.'

'That means a red windmill.'

'I never visited, before you ask. Well, not since VE day and evening. Now I need to bring myself up to date with the news.'

'I'll read my book, then. If you don't mind getting my suitcase down for me.'

He stood to take the suitcase down from the overhead rack. 'What are you reading?'

'The Memoirs of Dolly Morton. My mother lent it to me to learn about American history.'

Reggie's house was a handsome pile in a crescent off Regents Park. Vanessa stood looking at the white stucco facade as Reggie paid the taxi fare, and then picked up her suitcase from the pavement.

'Has my mother been here?'

'No. Could we go in, please. My neighbours are watchful.'

'You mean they might tell your wife you have arrived back with a mystery woman?'

He didn't answer but shepherded her into the house and closed the front door behind them, almost with a sigh of relief.

Vanessa stood just inside the hall, looking around. 'Where's the bedroom?'

'The guest bedroom,' he said pointedly, 'is next to the main bedroom. Would you like some supper?'

'Can we go to a restaurant? I like the Ritz.'

'If you don't mind, I'd like to keep a lowish profile. I'll cook supper.' He placed her suitcase at the foot of the stairs and opened a door. 'This is the drawing room.' She ignored the invitation to enter, and picked up her suitcase

and started bumping it up the stairs. 'I need to freshen up. I feel a bit sweaty and dirty after that train.'

'Allow me,' he took the suitcase case from her hand, and carried it to the top of the stairs and into a bedroom with a single bed. She stood in the doorway. 'You can stay in here,' he said.

'It's a nice room.' She smiled sweetly, and went past him and bounced her posterior onto the bed. 'Bit springier than my aunt's guest bed. Is your bed as springy?'

'The bathroom is at the end of the landing.'

'Thank you,' she said demurely.

'I will be in the kitchen.'

She smiled and watched him go out of the room, closing the door behind himself. She waited until she heard the distant sound of pots and pans and cutlery from a room downstairs, which she assumed to be the kitchen. Quickly, she tiptoed into the main bedroom, and rummaged in the wardrobe and then the chest of drawers. She found nothing of interest, apart from expensive clothes. Disappointed, she tiptoed back into the guest room and looked in her suitcase. She took out a slim, leather belt; 'this will have to do,' she thought, and then went and had a bath.

'I'm not the best cook in the world,' he said, busy at the stove, as he heard her come into the kitchen. He did a double-take when he turned to face her, as if he could not believe his eyes. She was in her underwear; bra, nickers, suspender-belt, stockings and high-heels, carrying a leather belt.

'You said I should make myself at home. I usually walk around in my underwear at home. Or, sometimes, I walk around in the nude. Do you?'

'Yes - I mean - no. I don't, except with my wife.'

'Pretend I'm your wife.'

'I can't.'

'Why? She's not here. You said she's gone to stay with her mother. Where does her mother live?'

'Harrogate.'

'That's in Yorkshire, isn't it? That's hundreds of miles away.' She came close to him and smiled provocatively - a smile which she would perfect over the years to come - and which usually had the desired effect on a man - especially a weak-willed man like Reggie. 'Do you have any milky-fluid to spare?' He gulped. She stood back, and stared at him. The smile had disappeared. 'Take off your clothes,' she ordered, in a tone which Wanda used

towards Severin.

'I will not.'

She scowled. 'This is a terraced house. You have neighbours on either side. What if I started screaming that you had attacked me?' She gave him the same disdainful look she had given Jones Major and Mr Proudfoot.

'Look, I think you ought to go. It was a mistake my bringing you here.'

'And then, if I was to tell your wife's lawyer...'

This enraged him. He stepped forward and slapped her hard across the face. 'You little slut!'

She rubbed her cheek, but stood her ground. 'That, Reggie, means a whipping.'

He burst out laughing. 'It what!'

She stepped back another pace, out of slapping range, and smiled. 'Think about it, Reggie. I'm in your house, in my underwear and you've just hit me. I haven't looked in a mirror but I imagine I've got a bruised cheek to prove it. What would your wife, or your neighbours, or the police think? And most important of all, thinking of your physical wellbeing, what would my mother think? You know how violent she can be. And I am her only daughter - so far as I am aware.'

He gulped again. Swallowed hard. And admitted defeat. 'What is it you want of me?'

'I want you to take off all your clothes.'

'In the kitchen?'

'In your bedroom. I will follow you up.'

Turning off the gas, which he had lit in the vain hope that normality would prevail and he would be allowed to continue cooking, he led the way up to his bedroom and stood by the bed facing her. Then he took off all his clothes, including his socks; he was stark naked. His penis was long and thick and pointed upwards.

'I would like you to turn your back to me and put your wrists behind your back.'

'Please, this has gone far enough.'

'Do as you are told.' Slowly he turned and put his hands behind his back. She had remembered that there were headscarves in the wardrobe; she assumed they belonged to the wife. She went to the wardrobe, selected a scarf and went behind him and tied his wrists with the scarf. He made no attempt to struggle.

'Turn around and face me.' He turned. She looked at his groin. His penis was now rock-solid. 'Likes you being tied up by a girl, doesn't it.' He said nothing, but his penis twitched in the affirmative. 'I wonder if it will like it when I belt your bottom with my belt. I think I will use the buckle end.'

'I would prefer you not to do that to my husband.' A woman's voice was behind them.

Both Vanessa and Reggie spun their heads towards the bedroom door. A brunette woman stood in the doorway with an unhappy smile directed at Vanessa. 'I don't know who you are young lady, but I should be obliged if you would put on your outer-wear, collect your belongings and leave.'

Without saying a word, Vanessa brushed past Reggie's wife. As she ran towards the guest bedroom for her things, Vanessa heard her say, 'I have been staying with Angela next door, darling; not in Harrogate. We saw you arrive.'

In the guest bedroom, Vanessa threw on her clothes, closed her suitcase, bumped it down the stairs, and out into the street. As luck would have it a taxi came past as she stood on the pavement. A few minutes later she was in her mother's flat, off Park Lane, having obtained the key from the caretaker. As she expected, the flat was 'moth-balled'; the furniture covered with dust sheets, but no sheets on the bed. She looked around at the bareness of the flat with its cold parquet flooring.

A photograph on a side-table caught her eye; her mother with a jaunty-looking man in a beret drinking beers at a pavement-table. The sign in the cafe window read 'Les Deux Magots'. She had not seen or noticed this photograph before. Something made her look closely at the frame. It was stamped with a business name in gold-leaf; The Red Windmill, Studio de Photographie, Paris. On impulse, she unclipped the back of the frame and extracted the photograph. Her mother looked young; about Vanessa's age, or even younger. The man looked about thirty. She knew her mother had always preferred older men; she was still only thirty six. Vanessa turned the photo over and looked at the back. She recognised her mother's neat handwriting, almost italic in style. She had written 'with Charles - Paris - July thirty three'.

Vanessa stared at the photograph. She did not know the identity of her father. Her mother had always been very vague and evasive when it came to awkward questions; tricks she had been taught by SOE in case of capture by the nazis. Vanessa counted nine backwards from May, her birthday month. Then stayed in the flat just long enough to find her passport in a bureau, pack a smaller suitcase with essentials, return the key to the caretaker, and leave

for Victoria and the boat-train to France.

FOUR

EDITH MEETS CAROL

'We don't have enough fuel to get to London,' Ernie said, feeling a bit more argumentative, and inclined to put his point, as the point of Edith's knife was no longer pricking him in the ribs, although she was holding it in her lap.

'My stepdad just siphons fuel out of someone else's tank,' Edith said.

'That's theft.'

'Share and share alike. The world would be a better place if people gave what they've got. I'm a communist.'

'You don't give what you've got. You just promise.'

'I just gave you a mint.'

'You said you would.'

'Said I would what?'

'Go all the way. Communists believe in free love.'

'It's beatniks who believe in free love. I'm not a beatnik, so far as I know. Why don't you have a wank?'

'I'm driving.'

'You can drive with one hand.'

'I would like to marry you, Edith.'

'You're too young to get married.'

'I'm twenty two.' Without warning, he veered to the side of the road and the lorry came to an abrupt halt on a grass verge with the engine in neutral and still running. If he stopped the engine he would need to crank it into life again using a crank-handle. 'I'm not going any further unless you do,' he said, ignoring the knife pricking him in the ribs.

She paused and reflected and then said. 'Alright, but you'll need a piss first.'

'No, I don't need one.'

'Yes you do. It's not safe to fuck unless you've had a piss. I don't want to get flooded in my tum.'

'I don't think that's the way it works.'

'Yes it is. I've heard my mum tell my stepdad she wasn't going to bed with him when he was pissed. That's the reason. You just nip behind a tree. There's plenty by the side of the road. We're practically in a forest.'

'And then you promise?' he checked.

'If you promise to take me to London.'

'I told you, we don't have enough fuel to get to London.'

'We'll nick some somewhere. Now out, before I change my mind.'

Without a further word, he opened the door and jumped down from the cab. She watched him go around the front of the lorry and into the trees. Then she slid quickly into the driver's seat; juggled her feet on the clutch and the accelerator pedals, crashed the gear lever into first and the lorry moved forward, slowly at first and then gathered speed. She gripped the steering wheel, with white knuckles, as he came rushing out from behind a tree, urine still steaming in the cold night air.

As she was now alone in the cab, she spoke to herself. 'Question is, Edith, how do you stop this thing when you need to? Brake pedal's the one on the left. Tentatively, she touched the brake pedal, the lorry slowed. 'This is easy,' she thought to herself. 'Nothing to it. Be in London in no time.' She looked at the gauge on the dashboard which she guessed showed how much fuel was in the tank; it was hovering just above red. 'We go until it stops on its own. That way I won't have to use the brakes. But I need to change up a gear or two.' She juggled her feet on the pedals and jiggled the gear lever and it went up a notch and then another notch. The speedometer reached thirty. 'Easy-peasy,' she said to herself.

Traffic was light on the A5 heading for London; it was a straight road. She made good progress until the engine coughed and spluttered, complaining that it needed something to drink, and after another mile or two the lorry ground to a halt, and the engine gave a final cough and went quiet.

'Haven't got a clue where I am,' she said to herself. She looked into the darkness by the side of the road; more trees. 'Nothing for it but to use my thumb.' She lumped her bag down from the cab onto the ground by the side of the lorry. It was heavy. 'Don't fancy walking far with this,' she said to

herself, as she began to trudge along the side of the road.

She stuck her thumb out hopefully at each passing car, but they all seemed to have a full complement of passengers. What she needed was a gent on his own, preferably one going all the way to Piccadilly Circus. She wondered if there was actually a circus in Piccadilly with clowns and lion-tamers. And what sort of job was she going to get for herself? She fancied a dress shop; that would be her best bet. You needed to dress well working in a dress shop; one of the perks. Or possibly a job in an office, but she couldn't type.

As she walked she mulled over what skills she had; she could cook - a bit. She could sew - a bit. She could do a bit of gardening, although probably there weren't many gardens in London. These thoughts were going through her mind, along with the thought that the bag really was heavy, she might have to 'ditch' a few things to make it lighter, when a car stopped. She had not even raised her thumb.

Slowly the car reversed back towards her. There was street lighting on this stretch of road and she could see the car clearly. It was a lovely sports car; she did not know the make, but the posh people who owned the big house on the outskirts of her town had one.

The car drew level with her and the driver leaned across and opened the passenger door. 'Want a lift, darling?' It was a woman. 'Not safe walking along a road like this. You could get knocked over or picked up by someone unsavoury.' The interior light illuminated the woman's face. Edith guessed she was about thirty; 'dolled-up' with heavy make-up and wearing a silk headscarf and a posh dress. The woman also wafted across very nice-smelling perfume. 'Where are you heading for, darling?'

'London.'

'Hop in. That's where I'm going. Stick your bag in the boot.'

Edith quickly opened the boot, lumped her case into the small space which contained an overnight bag, slammed the boot lid shut and got in the front passenger seat. The leather was soft and luxurious; chalk and cheese compared to the lorry. She sank back in the seat. The engine purred and accelerated. The suspension was so good you could be riding on air. Edith viewed the walnut dash. 'What sort of car is this?'

'An Alvis.'

'Nice. Is it yours?'

The woman laughed. 'It used to belong to a gentleman friend of mine. He

gave it to me.'

Edith was astounded. 'Gave it to you!'

'For services rendered.'

'Was he your husband?'

The woman laughed. 'No, I'm pleased to say not. But enough about me. What's your name?'

'Edith. What's your name?'

'My name is Scarlet.'

'That's a nice name.'

'Scarlet Birch.'

'Is that Miss or Mrs?'

'Definitely miss. London is a big place, Edith. Which bit are you heading for?'

'Piccadilly Circus.'

'Do you know anybody in London?'

'No. I'm hoping to get a job in a shop. And find a place to stay.'

'I have a flat in the West End, not far from Piccadilly Circus. You can stay with me tonight, if you like.'

During the rest of the journey, Scarlet listened to dance-band music, and asked Edith lots of question about her home life and friends, especially men-friends. Edith gave her a 'potted' version of her life, including how she had tied up and whipped her stepfather. Scarlet burst out laughing at this. 'Darling, you are a woman after my own heart!'

'Is this yours?' Edith enquired standing outside a small mews house in Shepherds Market off Park Lane in the West End of London.

'Yes.'

'The name on your bell says Carol Smith.'

'I like to have more than one name,' Scarlet said, inserting her key into the lock.

Even Edith's untrained eye realised that the interior was tastefully and expensively furnished. 'Wow! This place is nice.'

'Glad you like it. Make yourself at home. I'm afraid there's only one bedroom.'

'I'll sleep on the floor in here,' Edith said.

'You can sleep in my bed,' Scarlet said. 'Have a bath, wash your hair and change your clothes, and then we'll get a bite to eat.'

'I don't have a change of clothes.'

'That's alright, darling. I'll kit you out.'

An hour later, Edith stared into a full-length wardrobe mirror and did not recognise herself. She was 'dolled-up to the nines' in a slinky dress, which was a bit too tight, and emphasised her over-abundant curves. She would need to sit carefully and stately in case her behind split the seams.

Scarlet viewed her with approval. 'My! You do look different and stunning, darling.' She paused, looked pensive and smiled again. 'Darling, you won't mind will you, but I have a gentleman friend coming to see me later this evening.'

'Will I be in the way? I don't mind going for a walk until he's gone. I could go to a pub.'

'No. Darling, you won't be in the way. In fact you might be able to help me with him.' She paused, working out how best to continue. 'You remember what you told me about beating your stepfather.'

'Yes. He was drunk. And he threatened to rape me.'

Scarlet smiled. 'This gentleman will not be drunk and he won't try and rape you. But, he has been naughty and he needs his bottom beaten.' She paused and stared hard at Edith to gauge her reaction.

Edith started giggling. 'Can I watch?'

'Yes, darling, of course you can watch. In fact, you can help me beat his bottom, if you want to.'

Edith nodded vigorously to show she would very much like to help with the beating. 'What do you beat him with? I beat my stepdad with a razor strap. I think they're called strops rather than straps but I was in a strop, which is why I beat him with it.'

Scarlet laughed at Edith's joke. 'Darling, that is interesting. I don't have a razor strop, but perhaps I should get one. We'll get one tomorrow. I assume a barber would oblige.'

'What are you going to beat the gentleman with?'

'Let me show you, darling.' She opened the wardrobe, pushed hanging clothes to one side and withdrew a large suitcase, laid it on the carpet and opened the lid. Edith's eyes opened as wide as the lid of the suitcase. It contained an assortment of canes, whips, paddles and other spanking

implements. There were also chains and ropes and handcuffs.

'Have you ever been caned or whipped, Edith?' Edith shook her head to indicate that no such fate had befallen her. 'Have you ever beaten anyone apart from your stepfather before you ran away from home?' Again, Edith shook her head to indicate that she had not. 'Do you think that you would prefer to beat a man or be beaten by a man?'

Edith thought this a strange question, but gave her answer. 'Prefer beating a man.'

'Good, darling. You and I are a pair. If you play your cards right you'll end up with a flat like this.'

'What about a car as well?'

'Of course. You will end up with a nice car; probably a Rolls Royce.' Edith started to laugh as though someone had told her a very funny joke. 'I'm being serious, darling. Some men will pay a lot of money to have their bottom spanked.' Edith stopped laughing and just grinned, as though the idea appealed to her very much.

Edith watched Scarlet take a whip and a cane and a pair of handcuffs from the suitcase and then push it back into the wardrobe. 'My gentleman-friend will be arriving in about an hour. We'll have something to eat shall we, and I'll explain your role while we're eating.'

Over a meal of cold meats, cheese and French bread and chablis, Scarlet explained to Edith what she required of her. Edith grinned throughout in anticipation of a good time to be had by all. Then Scarlet took Edith back into her bedroom and showed her the contents of the wardrobe. Hung up in this wardrobe were all sorts of dresses, uniforms, and - what appeared to Edith - to be 'fancy dress' clothes. Scarlet took out a long gown from the hanger and laid it on the bed, and then took out a black dress which Edith recognised as being for an old-fashioned maid. Edith assumed the maid's dress was for her. She was wrong. Fifteen minutes later, Edith was dressed as an 'Edwardian' society hostess in a velvet gown, elbow-length gloves and with a fan. Scarlet was dressed as her maid in long black dress, white pinafore and maid's frilly cap.

Scarlet then led Edith back downstairs and into a basement room. Edith had seen a picture of a dungeon in her history book at school; a dungeon with a whipping post, chains, racks, whips and other instruments of torture; this room could have featured in the school book. 'What do you think?' Scarlet asked. Edith's answer was to dissolve into a fit of giggling.

They returned to the sitting room. A knock on the door, exactly as the carriage clock on the mantelpiece struck eight, indicated that the gentleman had arrived. 'The maid' went to the door as Edith sat in the fireside armchair, as she had been instructed to do by Scarlet. Edith viewed her visitor with haughty disdain as he was ushered in by the maid. Edith saw an obviously prosperous and well-fed, middle-aged gentleman. Normally, she would have felt like a serving wench in his presence, but no longer. She was the lady of the manor; he was in her presence to be whipped.

'Shall I whip the master now, milady?', the maid asked. Edith did not speak. She had been instructed by Scarlet not to say anything as her accent would not be in keeping with her new persona. Scarlet had already commented that Edith's vowels would need to be worked on, like Eliza Doolittle's, and in the meantime she should not say anything. She nodded in a haughty manner to indicate that a severe beating was in order.

'Follow me, Master' the maid said to the man, in a mock, cockney accent, and left the room with the man following her. Five minutes later, as she had been instructed to do, Edith rose from her chair and walked into the dungeon. The man was naked and chained to the whipping post, which was in the centre of the room; his penis poking out just above the intersection of the two upward arms of the post.

The plot required Edith to stand into front of the man, and raise his chin with her gloved fingers. She stared into his eyes, then gave a disdainful nod to her maid to indicate that the whipping should begin. The maid went to the variety of whips hanging from the wall-rack and chose a multi-tailed flogger, then went behind the man. As she had been instructed to do, Edith stared sternly into the man's eyes, and then turned her head lightly towards the maid and gave the slightest of nods. The maid lashed the man's back. Edith smiled at him. A second lash. Another smile. This went on for another eighteen strokes, each stroke progressively downwards, so that the last stroke slashed the back of his legs, and his buttocks were well striped. Edith was keeping count as she had been instructed to do. On the twentieth lash she raised her hand, regally, to indicate to the maid that she should cease the whipping.

The maid came and stood next to Edith and they both looked down at his penis. It was waving horizontally, like an elephant's trunk looking for something or someone to splash. The man was taking deep breaths and was obviously suffering the effects of a severe whipping. Then, slowly the maid took off her pinafore, and then her maid's cap and shook her hair loose. Then

she unbuttoned her dress and let it slide down to her calves. She stepped out of the dress revealing her under-garments; an Edwardian corset and pantaloons and stockings and laced-up boots.

'Shall I give the master twenty more, milady?' Edith nodded. The maid repeated the twenty strokes, this time starting at the back of the legs and working her way up to the shoulder-blades. Edith had never seen a man whipped before. She liked what she saw; so did her clitoris. She would have liked to join in the whipping, but Scarlet had not written this into the script. The man took a deep breath after each slash of the whip. Edith noticed that Scarlet was taking longer between each slash, presumably to give the man progressively longer to recover and prepare for the next blow. Edith was making mental notes; one should always learn from an expert, and Scarlet was obviously an expert.

The fortieth blow had struck. The maid came back around and stood next to her mistress. The man's head was lolling. He seemed to be about to faint. His breathing was shallow. His penis, which had been more or less rigid during the forty slashes, was now drooping. Scarlet, in her guise as a maid, seemed amused. Edith was also very amused. This was nearly as much fun as razor-stropping her stepfather; although that had been personal. This was impersonal, and there was money to be made doing this sort of thing. You only had to learn the ropes. And her new friend, Scarlet, was obviously someone who could show her the ropes for real.

The two women exchanged glances. Edith knew what was going to happen next; Scarlet had told her the order of events. Once again, Edith stepped forward and raised the man's sagging chin with her gloved hand and stared into his eyes, and then angled his face so that he was face-on to the maid. As Edith did this, the maid, with the provocative movements of a strip-tease artist, began to unlace her corset, letting her breasts spill out. Then she wiggled her hips out of the pantaloons and stepped out of them, and unlaced the corset leaving herself nude apart from stockings held up by ribboned garters and her maid's boots.

Edith stepped back as the maid stepped in front of the man and held his penis lightly with the fingers of her left hand. Then she stooped and picked up the whip which she had dropped to the floor. The maid then held up the whip with her right hand so that the snake-tongue ends of the whip-tails gently brushed over the penis. It ceased drooping and elongated to its full extent. Taking her hand away from the penis the maid went back to her

whipping-position and commenced to give the man another ten slashes. After the tenth slash she eyed his penis. It was rock hard. Then, she repositioned herself so that she could whip his front instead of his back, and flicked the whip across the underneath of his shaft. It jerked and twitched. She did this another three times. Bubble frothed from its eye. Then the froth became spurting dollops. The maid stopped whipping and waited for the penis to exhaust itself. The penis looked red-raw, as did the man's face. Edith wondered if he was going to self-combust. The maid gave Edith an almost imperceptible nod, and Edith took this as her cue to leave the dungeon. As she left, she thought that she liked being in a dungeon with a whip; it was fun. She would like to do it more often.

FIVE

SCARLET PIMP

'Here's a guinea,' Scarlet said, offering the coin to Edith, as they both undressed from their Edwardian clothes in Scarlet's bedroom.

Edith took it and bit it. 'Never seen a guinea before.'

'It's what gentlemen use to pay their bills. Professionals like us charge them fees in guineas.'

'Am I a professional?' Edith asked, with a glowing expression. She liked the idea that she was a professional. Only doctors and lawyers and midwives were professionals.

'Of course, darling. We're in the oldest profession there is. There's a lot on money to be made in this game, if you play your cards right.'

'I've never played cards.'

'Don't worry, I'll teach you.' They were both naked. Scarlet was staring at Edith with approval. 'Do a couple of twirls,' she said, twirling her finger in the air to emphasise what she wanted Edith to do. Edith twirled, feeling a bit self-conscious. 'You've got a very shapely body, darling. Full-figured, but very shapely.' Scarlet had sat on the edge of the bed as Edith twirled again. Scarlet now stood and came close in front of Edith and placed both hands on either side of Edith's hips. Her face was close to Edith's. Both women, in bare feet, were more or less the same height; possibly Edith was half an inch shorter. 'Do you like women, Edith?' Scarlet asked in a husky voice.

'I like my mum and my sister.'

'Where are they?'

'My mum's with her new man friend, I think. And my sister's older than me. She lives with her young man.'

'What about other women or girls?' Scarlet's lips were brushing Edith's

cheek.

'I don't have a lot to do with other women. I prefer blokes.'

Scarlet's lips moved away from Edith's cheek, slightly. 'Have you ever been in the same bed as another woman?'

'When my dad died we had to move lodgings and only had one room and one bed, so the three of us used to have to squeeze up. I didn't have my own bed till my mum went to live with my stepdad. And then he used to try and sleep in it with me. But he was usually too drunk.'

Edith's trip down memory lane had briefly stilled Scarlet's amorous advances; but only briefly. Edith was a bit taken aback. She realised that Scarlet was being over-friendly, but was unaware that women had sex without a man involved.

'I always need a rest after a session like the one we've just had with the gentleman.'

'Does the gentleman have a name?' Edith asked.

'I assume he does. Probably Lord Muck. I think I've seen his face in the papers; might be a politician or a judge - can't remember. But, I prefer not to know who they are, as long as they pay me.'

Edith thought about the point Scarlet had just made. 'But they'd probably pay more if you did know their name to make sure you didn't say anything about them to anybody.'

'That would not be good for business, darling.' She brushed Edith's cheek with the tip of her tongue, and whispered in her ear, 'Could we forget about men, darling, and get down to a little business of our own.'

'What did you have in mind?' Edith asked, becoming a little perturbed.

'Well, I'm feeling a bit whacked after that whacking so I need a rest, in my bed, and so do you.'

'No, I'm feeling quite lively. I don't feel like going to bed.'

But Scarlet was pulling back the covers on her bed. She jumped into bed, and snuggled down on the far side under the covers. She patted the pillow next to her. 'In, darling.' This was said in the tone of a command.

Reluctantly and dubiously, Edith climbed into bed and lay prone on her back as Scarlet pulled the bedclothes back up and over Edith and then snuggled up to her, her right arm around Edith's waist. 'I do like men - apart from my stepdad,' Edith almost whispered. 'I like Ernest very much.'

'Who is Ernest, darling?'

'My boyfriend.'

'Has he ever gone all the way with you?'

'He brought me halfway to London. Then you gave me a lift the rest of the way.'

'I'm ever so glad that I did,' Scarlet said. 'You and me will make a great team.'

'Doing what?'

'Spanking men, of course. And women.'

'Spank women?'

'Yes, of course. Some women like being spanked by another woman. I know I do.'

Edith giggled. 'You like being spanked by a woman?'

'My little secret. And now it's our little secret. Would you like to spank me?'

'Not really. I like you. You've been good to me. You gave me a guinea.'

'Would you like me to give you another guinea?'

'To do what?'

'Spank me.'

All her life Edith had been impecunious, not that she knew what the word meant, and never refused a chance to make an easy penny - or guinea. 'What do you want me to do?'

'We both get out of bed and then have some role play.' Edith was already half out of the bed. Somehow, she did not feel at ease being in bed with Scarlet; much as she liked her. She stood away from the bed as Scarlet rolled out of the bed and went to the wardrobe. She took out a pair of very high heels. 'These should fit you.' And a single-tailed whip. She handed Edith the shoes. 'Put them on.'

Edith, sat on the edge of the bed and put on the high heels. And stood and pirouetted in front of the glass-fronted wardrobe. 'These are nice.'

'Do they fit?'

'Like gloves.'

'You can have them. Here's the whip.'

She handed Edith the coiled whip. Edith took it and uncoiled it. 'You want me to hit you with this? It looks vicious.'

'It's made for fun in the bedroom. It doesn't hurt that much.' As she said this, Scarlet lay on the bed again, face down, her hands underneath her. 'From my shoulder blades to the backs of my thighs,' she said, her voice muffled as her face was buried in the eiderdown.

Edith flicked the whip towards the middle of Scarlet's back. It landed lightly. She flicked the whip again; this time a bit harder, causing movement in Scarlet's shoulders and arms. Edith masturbated at least once a day, unless she was feeling unwell; which was rarely, she was a big strapping girl. She realised what Scarlet was doing, especially as her breathing was short and sharp as the whip struck. Edith kept whipping, each slash was progressively harder and fell below the last. Edith was getting into the swing of things. Scarlet's head began to turn from side to side; at first slowly and then more quickly. Edith knew that Scarlet was on the point of an orgasm and that the strokes of the whip were causing the orgasm as much as Scarlet's fingers. She came with a shriek as Edith was poised to give another whiplash to the centre of Scarlet's buttocks. She stopped, waiting for some indication of what she should do to prolong the enjoyment. But Scarlet was finished and sat up quickly. 'Want me to do it to you?'

'No thanks,' Edith said, holding the whip by her side.

Scarlet stood in front of her and kissed her full on the mouth, Scarlet's tongue trying to push inwards but stopped by Edith's clenched teeth. Realising that Edith was not reciprocating the kiss, Scarlet disengaged and stood away. 'Did you like whipping me?'

'Yes,' Edith said truthfully. 'But I prefer whipping a man.'

Scarlet stared at her for a long moment with a slight smile, and then her shoulders gave a slight shrug. 'Would you like to go to a restaurant now? You're probably hungry.'

'Yes, please. I'm starving.'

Scarlet asked Edith what sort of food she liked and Edith said 'fish and chips'. Scarlet was more used to dining at the Ritz, or a similar establishment, with a client, but also loved fish and chips, so she said they would go to a little fish and chip parlour she knew in Hoxton, a rough district just north of Broad Street railway station.

'I was born in Hoxton. Know it like the back of my hand.' She held up her right hand to show a scar near her thumb. 'Got this scar when someone pulled a knife on me. You will need to be careful.'

Edith grinned. 'I come from a rough district myself. And I know how to handle a knife. I would like to buy a flick-knife.'

'Not the most lady-like of accessories, but you won't need to buy one; you can have this.' She opened a draw and handed Edith a tube of lipstick. 'Be careful of it, it's really a sharp knife. To make the knife come out, all you

have to do is take off the lipstick cap and twist it.' She demonstrated, and a razor-sharp blade sprang from the tube.

'Lovely,' Edith said, as though she had just been given a pearl necklace. Scarlet looked at her, as if she was viewing her in a new light. She saw the glint in Edith's eye which mirrored the glint on the blade. 'Somehow, I don't think I would want to get on the wrong side of you, my darling. There's also this you might like.' She handed Edith a small, black-leather purse.

Edith took it. 'It's heavy.'

'It is a real purse but it's also a cosh.'

'For hitting someone over the head and knocking them out cold?'

'Yes.'

'Do they have mushy peas with the fish and chips?' Edith asked, practising swinging the purse and slapping it against her hand. 'Ouch!' Then closing and opening and closing the lipstick tube. 'And I like lots of salt and vinegar.'

The Codpiece was a small, fish-and-chip cafe adjoining a 'take away'. They sat at a linoleum-clothed table with the obligatory bottles of tomato ketchup and vinegar and salt cellars. A motherly waitress arrived at their table and smiled at Scarlet. 'I nearly didn't recognise you, Carol love, in those posh clothes and that posh hairstyle.'

Scarlet's head shot up from the cardboard menu, as if it was not good news for her to be recognised. She stared at the waitress. 'Meg. What are you doing working here?'

'Tommy owns this place now.'

'I thought he was having a holiday.'

'Holiday's over. Wasn't as long as we all thought it would be. At the moment, he's playing poker somewhere. He'll be sorry he missed you. I can recommend the plaice if you don't fancy the cod.'

'Cod will do, thanks Meg, and a pot of tea. My friend, Edith will have the same as me.'

As Scarlet watched the waitress go back behind the counter, Edith watched Scarlet. She gave Edith a rueful smile. 'My ex-boyfriend's mum.'

'Your boyfriend being someone called Tommy?' Edith asked. 'And now

he owns this place?'

'It's a cover. He's a pimp. And he's rough.'

'What's a pimp?'

Scarlet stared at Edith. 'You don't know what a pimp is?' Edith shook her head to confirm that she did not know. 'Someone who controls girls, and make them work for them, and then takes most of their money.'

'I don't like the sound of that. You don't have a pimp, do you, Scarlet?'

Scarlet didn't answer as the waitress came back with two plates of fish and chips, and bounced the plates on the table. 'Be careful, chips are sizzling. I'll bring you your tea.'

Scarlet lent across the table and almost whispered to Edith. 'We need to eat up quick and be out of here. We'll go to a club I know in the West End.'

Edith followed Scarlet's example and tucked in, as the waitress returned with a teapot. 'Speak of the devil, Carol love, but Tommy's back from his poker game early; just parked outside. Must have lost all his chips and won't be in a good mood.' These words prompted Scarlet to half-rise from her seat. 'You're not going to leave without saying hello to Tommy. He'll be ever so sore if he misses you. And I always say let bygones be bygones.'

Scarlet sank back into her seat. She looked nervy. Her hands, holding her knife and fork, shook. In contrast Edith's hands were rock-steady. She pressed her leg against her handbag under the table with its tube of 'lipstick' and purse. She had sorted her stepfather; she would sort this Tommy, if the need arose.

Edith was facing the door to the cafe. It opened and she saw a large, but tubby, bald man, dressed in a grubby shirt and pullover and corduroy trousers. He came in, looking angry. Edith heard the waitress say, 'Hello, love. Didn't expect you back so soon. An old friend of yours is here.' Edith saw her point at Scarlet's back, and mouth 'Carol.' The man paused in his anger, and looked to where his mother was pointing.

The only other customer distracted the waitress by asking to pay their bill. Once this customer left the only people in the cafe would be the waitress, Tommy and a greasy-looking woman frying the fish and chips. Tommy was still near the door and opened it wide to allow the customer to exit, then bolted the door and turned the notice in the window to 'closed'. Then Edith hear him say to the fryer, 'We're closing early tonight, Doris. You go home.' The woman wiped her hands on her apron switched off some equipment, and went out of the back, as Tommy's mother went behind the counter and busied

herself putting away foodstuffs.

Scarlet did not look up from her plate, but kept eating, as Tommy stood behind her chair. He grinned an evil grin at Edith. She looked down at her knife; it was an ordinary cutlery knife, nowhere near sharp enough. She would need to use her lipstick if push came to shove. She eyed his beer-belly; too much fat for her little knife. It would need to be the throat.

Having felt the tap on her shoulder Scarlet looked around at him, as he pulled a chair from another table and sat at their table. 'Carol, love. What a surprise. How are you?'

'Hello, Tommy.'

'Wouldn't have recognised you looking so posh. And who is this posh young lady?' He looked at Edith again. 'You two in the same line of work? Business partners, are you?'

'Edith's just a friend,' Scarlet said, finishing her last mouthful of food.

Edith was eating more slowly and was still only three-quarters finished. His attention was now on Edith. He stared at her as she ate. His stare was that of a glutton viewing a simmering lamb stew. 'Nice clothes,' he said to Edith. He looked down at her legs underneath the table. 'Silk stockings, if I am not mistaken. They your clothes or Carol's?'

Edith glowered at him. 'My business.'

The corners of his mouth flickered and his amused smile became thin. It was a look Edith knew well from regularly upsetting her stepfather. 'How old are you, young lady?'

'Again, my business.' She finished her food and laid her knife and fork on the empty plate, and swigged a mouthful of tea and put her cup back in the saucer so heavily that the china rattled. 'We ready to go, Scarlet?'

Tommy burst out laughing, 'Scarlet, is it?' Then he shouted, 'You hear that, Mum. Carol's changed her name to Scarlet.'

'Been to see Gone With the Wind,' his mother called back from behind the counter.

Tommy laughed again at his mother's comment. 'Maybe I should be Red Butler,' he said laughing at his own joke.

'I think you mean Rhett,' Edith said without looking at Tommy. 'We going then?' she said to Scarlet who seemed frozen to her seat.

'No, you can't go,' Tommy said, with a leer at Edith. 'The night's still young.'

'I'd like to go,' Edith said, standing up.

'Sit down,' Tommy said, losing his smile.

Edith stared at him and then at Scarlet. 'Maybe we can stay a bit,' Scarlet said nervously.

Tommy smiled in triumph. 'Why don't I show Edith my itchings?'

Edith adopted a bored look. 'I think you mean etchings.'

Tommy looked cross. 'Went to school, did you?'

'Not really. Most of what I know I taught myself.' Then she surprised him by smiling. 'Is this a private viewing - to see your etchings? If so, I'll come with you and bring my purse.'

'Why your purse?' he asked.

'Maybe I would like to buy some of your art, but more probably, I need to redo my lipstick.'

'This way,' he said standing up. 'Ma, you entertain Carol.'

His mother sat down opposite Carol, who was as white as a piece of cod. They both watched as Tommy stood to one side to allow Edith to walk ahead, and through a door at the back. 'What's he going to do to her?' Carol asked.

His mother grinned. 'Use your imagination, Carol luv. Tommy's not had a girl for a couple of weeks, so far as I know. He'll probably give her a good time.'

Scarlet pushed back her chair and stood. 'I need to be with her.'

'Sit down, luv. He won't like it if you interfere.' Slowly, Scarlet sat down. The mother smiled. 'She's a nice-looking girl. Tommy's not as hot tempered as he once was. He won't knock her about. Fancy another cuppa?'

'No thanks.'

'So, we hear you've been doing well for yourself, Carol. Friends in high places. Posh friends.'

'Have I.'

'Rent a posh flat, we hear. In the West End. And drive a posh car. But you're living on your own. Not safe being on your own in your line. You need someone like Tommy to be around. Look after you.'

'I prefer being on my own, thanks.'

'I think Tommy's going to insist on looking after you. For old times sake. And he'll probably want to look after your friend.'

Unexpectedly, Edith reappeared as the mother spoke. Scarlet smiled as Edith came back to the table - alone. The mother looked startled. 'I'm afraid Tommy's got a bit of a headache,' Edith announced. 'Could you take him a painkiller and some cold water. I'll go back up and wait for you.'

The mother was wordless. Scarlet rose from the table and followed Edith up to Tommy's bedroom as the mother diverted to get a glass of water and look for aspirin tablets.

Tommy was stretched out on his bed on his back, unconscious. His wrists were tied to the brass-railed headboard, above his head, with torn strips of sheet. His trousers and underpants were down to his knees and his shirt and pullover up to his midriff thereby exposing a large expanse of stomach, thighs and groin.

He began to groan. His mother's heavy footsteps could be heard as she mounted the stairs. Edith sat on the edge of the bed and took out her lipstick, as Tommy's mother bustled into the room.

'What the fuck have you done to him? Tommy'll kill you. I'll kill you!'

Edith looked unperturbed as she unscrewed the cap of the lipstick to reveal the blade which she hovered over his resting penis. 'Unless you're a bit politer to me I will cut your son's cock off.' She smiled sweetly at Meg as she said this. Then rested the blade just where the shaft sprouted from the base of the stomach. Meg turned to Scarlet for support. 'Tell her she's being fucking stupid. Tommy will kill her.'

Scarlet was standing with her back to the window, as if unsure what to do or say. Edith was in control. 'Actually, I might not cut off his cock. I might cut his throat instead.'

Meg tried a different approach, as Edith was immune to her threats. 'Why don't you two fuck off before I call some of Tommy's mates.'

'No, I would like to have a polite conversation with your son, when he wakes up. As I think he is about to. Scarlet, why don't you hand me the glass of water his mother is holding.'

Scarlet went behind Meg, took the glass of water from Meg's hand and handed it to Edith, who promptly splashed the contents of the glass over Tommy's face. He spluttered and groaned.

The three women watched his face show signs of consciousness. He opened his eyes and stared up at them, his eyes struggling to focus. Edith remained seated adjacent to his groin with the blade of her lipstick-knife idly cutting his pubic hairs.

'What's going on, Ma?' His vision was clearing. His mother made a movement towards him, but she froze as Edith pointedly adjusted her blade so that, once again, it was threatening to cut his penis. He felt the blade prick him and lifted his head groggily and looked down towards his groin. 'Ma, do

something.' His mother stayed silent and unmoved. He stared at Edith, as if he was seeing her for the first time. 'What are you doing?'

Edith smiled her sweet smile. 'Well, Tommy, in case you hadn't noticed, what I am going to do is cut your balls off one by one. As I'm a kind person, I might decide to leave your cock as you're probably attached to it. And so you can piss yourself.'

'Why?'

'Because you were going to rape me.'

'I wasn't, was I, Ma?'

'No, Tommy.'

'Yes he was,' Scarlet said, feeling more secure, as her new friend was clearly quite capable of doing what she threatened. 'He's got whips in the drawer.' She pointed to a chest of drawers.

'Ask your mother to go to the drawer and fetch a whip,' Edith requested, as the point of the blade pricked one of his testicles.

'Do as she says, Ma.'

Slowly, looking daggers at Edith, but saying nothing, Meg went to the drawer, and took out a small whip. Edith viewed it from her seat on the bed. 'Bring all of the whips to me. I'll chose one.' Meg hesitated, then took out an armful of whips and paddles and a school cane. Edith grinned. 'Teacher as well are you, Tommy?' Meg dropped the flagellation instruments in a pile on the carpet near Edith's feet. 'Now, Meg. Take your dress off.'

Meg look aghast. 'Fuck off! There's noway I'm undressing in front of my son.'

Edith pricked his testicle again. 'Ma, do as she says.'

His mother closed her eyes and unzipped her dress and stepped out of it, and threw it onto a chair in the corner. She was in her underwear; large knickers, open-bottomed girdle, suspenders and stockings. Meg was somewhat dumpy and rotund, with heavy breasts, and only the girdle gave her any waist.

Edith used her knife to tear off another length of sheet which she handed to Scarlet. 'Tie her wrists in front of her and leave a length to tie her arms to the bed head.' Scarlet did as she was told. Meg made no attempt to resist. 'Lay on the bed next to your son, face down. Shift over a bit, Tommy, to make room for your mother.' He shifted. His mother lay face down next to him. 'Turn over, Tommy. Face down,' Edith ordered. He turned. The back of his head had a large bruised bump the size of an egg. Scarlet tied Meg's hands to

the bed head in the same way as her son's were tied. With mother and son face down, and ready to be whipped, Edith got off the bed and viewed the whips on the floor. 'Which one do you think, Scarlet?'

Scarlet came over to Edith and pointed to a vicious looking single-tailed whip. 'I think that's the one he used on me once whilst she watched.'

'We'll use that one then. You can pay him back. And her. How many slashes did he give you?'

'I lost count. Way over fifty. I've still got a couple of scars on my back. His mother held me down whilst he whipped me.' A tear rolled down Scarlet's cheek as she remembered the whipping.

Edith went back to Tommy's side of the bed and pulled his trousers and underpants down so that his buttocks were exposed. Then she went to his mother's side of the bed, pulled her knickers down to her knees and unhooked the girdle-suspenders from the tops of her stockings and rolled the girdle up over her rump exposing a vast amount of white flesh. 'Which side of the bed to you want?' Edith asked Scarlet.

Scarlet picked up the whip which she had identified as having been used on her, and said, 'His mum's.'

'How many do you think we should give them? I suggest fifty,' Edith said, answering her own question. 'And then we swop targets and give another fifty each.' She chose a multi-tailed flogger from the floor as she said this.

Scarlet smiled and nodded. The two women positioned themselves on the agreed side of the bed, and Edith struck the first blow - or slash - across Tommy's buttock. Scarlet then whistled her whip down across Meg's buttocks. Both victims screamed. Their screams became longer and louder as the blows rained down.

Edith paused and grinned at Scarlet who also paused. 'You don't think we'll annoy the neighbours with all the yelling.'

'No one seemed to hear or bother the times I got whipped here,' Scarlet said, as she gave Meg a particularly vicious blow.

After several more slashes, Edith paused again. 'Have you been counting, Scarlet?'

'No. I thought you were.'

'Shit! No. We'll have to start again.'

'It's over fifty,' Meg mumbled, her voice muffled as her face was buried into the bedclothes.

Edith looked at Scarlet. 'Do you believe her?'

'No.'

'We'll start again then.'

'Listen, Carol, can we do a deal?' Tommy's voice came from the bedclothes.

'What sort of deal did you have in mind, Tommy?' Carol alias Scarlet asked.

'We don't ever see each other again.'

Scarlet smiled; a smile of triumph. She nodded at Edith to signal that she was pleased to agree.

Edith was not all that pleased. 'What's to stop him sending someone else after you?'

'I wouldn't, I promise,' he said.

Scarlet dropped her whip on the carpet. 'I really would like us to go, Edith.'

Edith scowled, thought for a moment, and then sat on the edge of the bed next to the bump on Tommy's head. She leaned down and almost whispered in his ear, 'Tommy luv, I've got six brothers that are more vicious than me. Hulking great brutes they are. Although they're all scared of me. So scared, they will do anything I want them to. And what I would want them to do, Tommy, is kill you, very painfully, if you ever so much as mention Scarlet's name - Carol's name - or go anywhere near her or get someone else to. Do you hear me?'

'Yes.'

'Roll so that you're on your side facing your mother. Meg, roll so your on your side facing Tommy.' They rolled at instructed. 'Now, Tommy, press up against your mother, tummy to tummy.' He did so. A moment of so later, Edith started giggling. 'Scarlet, come over and see this.' Scarlet came over and stood next to Edith. They both stared down at Tommy's penis. It was rock solid, squashed against his mother's stomach. 'I think he fancies his mum,' Edith said. 'Do you think we should be nice and put it in for him as his hands are tied?'

'No,' Scarlet said. 'Looks as though he'd enjoy it too much.' She untied Meg's wrists from the bed head. 'We'll leave Meg to put it in herself.'

'Has he got a camera?' Edith asked.

'A Brownie. He used it to take some not very nice pictures of me to show to his mates. It's in that drawer I think.'

Edith fetched the camera. 'Never used one of these.'

Scarlet took it from her and examined it. 'Its got film in it, and a flash.'

They went back to the bed with the camera. In anticipation of the picture to come, Tommy's penis was now keeping a low profile. Edith bent forward and gripped and massaged it. It leapt to attention and was rock-solid once again. Scarlet flashed the camera. 'Take a couple of their faces, then we can get them printed and pinned up on walls like wanted posters for their friends to see.'

Scarlet giggled and took two more pictures. Edith then gave Tommy a parting slash of the whip across his buttocks and threw it onto the bed. After which, the two women sauntered down the stairs, unbolted the door, and walked into the street.

'The fish and chips were nice, I'll say that for them,' Edith said in the back of a taxi.

'As a matter of interest, have you got six brothers?' Scarlet asked.

'Could have. Don't know.'

'I didn't think you had. How do you know about etchings?'

'Went to a play once. Heard an actor say to the actress come and see my etchings. People laughed so I asked someone what the joke was. I also saw Gone With the Wind.'

'Have you got a passport?'

'What's a passport?'

'Document you need to go to France. I think it might be wise for you to have a holiday in Paris for a month or two. I'll give you the money. You can borrow my passport. We look fairly similar. You'll just have to act twenty eight instead of eighteen.'

'Won't you need it?'

'I'm going to Scotland for a bit I have a friend called Henry who lives in a castle in the Highlands. Don't need a passport to go there.'

'I'm not sure I want to go to Paris.'

'You'll love it. You can stay with a friend of mine called Claude near the Moulin Rouge. He's a photographer. You'll love him. And then you come back to London when I'm back from seeing Henry, and we'll go into business together and be partners.'

'What's the Moolie thing?'

'A club. The Moulin Rouge. Name means the Red Windmill. Which is actually the name of Claude's photo studio.'

SIX

THE RED WINDMILL

It was eight in the morning. Vanessa had arrived at the Gare du Nord by the overnight boat-train from Victoria. Before leaving, she had acquired a street map of Paris and exchanged pounds for a generous supply of Francs. After a couple of croissants with jam and butter and a large café au lait at the terminus, she had walked about a mile to the Moulin Rouge in the Boulevard de Clichy. Walking was not such a good idea; she was in high heels and smart clothes and looked every inch a Mayfair socialite.

She was beginning to develop a blister by the time she located the Red Windmill Studio de Photographie in a dingy backstreet off the Rue Lepic in Montmartre, a short distance from the Moulin Rouge. She peered at the names on a list of the occupants on the perpendicular row of doorbells. The Red Windmill studio was on the top floor.

Behind her a water-cart was spraying water to clean the narrow, cobbled street, and splashed the back of her legs. 'Shit!'

'Are you English?' a voice behind her enquired, obviously having heard the Anglo-Saxon expletive.

Vanessa turned to look at a very pretty, curvy girl, standing behind her with a small suitcase. The noise of the cleaning-cart had muffled the clicking of high heels as she approached. 'Yes.'

'At last, I've found someone who speaks English. This place is full of foreigners who only speak French - at, least, I think it's French. I'm looking for somewhere called The Red Windmill.'

As the girls were speaking a very curvaceous girl approached, hips swinging, over-large breasts swaying. She wore a bright red skirt which was too tight, especially for her bottom, and her striped blouse was cut too low for

her bosom. 'Déplacer hors de la voie,' she said, physically pushing them out of the way as she brushed past. She pressed the top bell and entered the door slamming it behind her.

'What did she say?' Edith asked Vanessa.

'Move out of the way.'

'Bit rude,' Edith said. 'You speak their language?'

'Fluently. She was a bit rude in more senses than one.'

'She pressed the bell that says 'Red Windmill'. That's the place I'm looking for,' Edith said.

Vanessa looked over her shoulder at a small cafe on the opposite side of the narrow street. 'Shall we go and have a coffee, and watch the door and see who else rings the top bell?'

'I've only got English money. They don't seem to want to take it here.'

'I'll lend you some Francs.'

Seated at a small table in the window, with two cups of milky coffee and two croissants for Edith, who hadn't eaten since the boat, they watched through the half-curtained window. Another girl pressed the top bell and went in to the building. She was similar in shape and dress to the rude girl.

'Seems to attract curvy girls,' Edith said.

'Like bees around the proverbial honeypot,' Vanessa agreed.

Edith delved into her bag and produced a card. 'My friend, Scarlet, gave me this. I've come to see the bloke whose name's on the card.' Vanessa looked at the card. 'Scarlet told me he runs the Red Windmill and I could learn a few things from him and the ladies he knows.'

'What sort of things?' Vanessa asked.

'How to deal with men.'

'How do you mean deal?'

'Get the whip hand - as a female.'

Vanessa was not someone who was slow on the uptake. 'Do you mean whip - literally.'

'Literally; does that mean for real?' Edith asked.

'Yes.'

'That's what I mean then.'

'You want to learn how to whip a man for real?' Vanessa double checked.

'Yes.'

'I've only ever caned a man,' Vanessa said. 'I was going to beat a man with my belt, as I didn't have a cane with me, but I was rudely interrupted by

his wife.'

They both dissolved into giggles. And then introduced themselves. More giggling, as Vanessa told Edith about Jones Major, Mr Proudfoot and Reggie Carmichael. And Edith told Vanessa about her stepfather, the man in Scarlet's house and Tommy and his mother.

'It sounds as if we could both be good at getting whip hands. All we need is a man to practise on,' Vanessa said.

Just then, a man came out of the Red Windmill building. From their vantage point at the table in the cafe window, they watched him cross the narrow street, looking furtively left and right as he crossed, and enter the cafe. 'What do you think?' Vanessa whispered as he ordered a coffee from the proprietor behind his counter.

'I wouldn't mind whipping him,' Edith whispered back.

Vanessa had her back to the counter and turned her head towards it as the man paid for his coffee and was about to sit at another table. 'Monsieur, un instant s'il vous plaît'. He smiled and came over to their table. He was plump, and slightly balding, and looked in his late-twenties or early-thirties. Edith was enchanted.

'You're English,' he said, to Vanessa, speaking English. 'I know by your speak. And you both look like roses.'

Edith smiled at him. He smiled at Edith, his eyes lingering on her.

'Her name is Edith.'

'Ah, like Piaf.'

Edith looked blank.

'Edith doesn't speak French.'

'My English is not so good,' he said, 'but I will be pleased to try.'

Edith looked very pleased.

'My name's Vanessa.'

'Pépé.'

'Is that as in Pépé le Moko?' Vanessa asked.

Pépé looked alarmed for a second and then smiled.

Vanessa smiled. Edith looked blank. 'Gangster in a French film,' Vanessa explained to Edith.

Pépé nodded in agreement.

'Are you a gangster, Pépé?' Vanessa asked in French. He looked more alarmed and shook his head vehemently.

Pépé's head stopped shaking, but the rest of his body shook, as he glanced

out of the cafe window at a caped Gendarme who was crossing the street towards the cafe. 'Pardon.' He excused himself and headed for a door at the back of the cafe marked 'toilettes', and disappeared through it.

'Do you think he was caught short?' Edith whispered.

Vanessa didn't answer but watched the gendarme enter the cafe, go to the cafe counter, order a small glass of frothy beer, gulp it down in a couple of long swigs, and leave. Then she leaned across the table towards Edith and whispered, 'Do you like him?'

Edith leaned forward as well so that the tips of their noses were almost touching. 'Yes. And he's mine.'

'He could be married or have a girlfriend.'

'I can usually get rid of a rival one way or another.' Edith's whisper had sinister undertones.

Vanessa leaned back in her chair and stared at her new-found friend. On the face of it, Edith was pretty, pretty plump, and, Vanessa sensed, pretty dangerous. Vanessa decided to float a buoy to warn Edith's ship of rocks under the water. 'My mother taught me karate and jujitsu.'

'What's that?'

'How to fight.'

'I just use my knife in a fight. And my cosh. I keep them in my bag. And sometimes up my sleeve. Always keep something up your sleeve in life,' Edith said, philosophically. 'That way you come out on top; especially where men are concerned.'

Vanessa stared at Edith for another long moment, as if pondering whether to ask a question. She decided to do so. 'Have you ever with a man...?'

'Ever what?'

'You know - with a man? Got on top - literally. Or he get on top of you?'

'No, but there's always a first time.' Then she looked into Vanessa's eyes as if expecting an untruth. 'Have you ever?'

'No. But there's always a first time.'

Their giggling stopped abruptly when the girls realised that P  p   was standing over them. 'Pardon.' He resumed his seat.

Vanessa smiled at P  p  , like a tourist awaiting the potted history of the Louvre from a tour guide. 'And do you stay in that building, P  p  ?' Vanessa asked, pointing to the door opposite.

'Oui. I have an appartement.'

'On the top floor?'

'Non.'

'The Red Windmill is on the top floor?' Vanessa queried.

He hesitated before answering. 'Oui.'

'Do you know what happens in the Red Windmill?' Vanessa asked. He hesitated, before giving a Gallic shrug of the shoulders to indicate, that really, he knew nothing of the Red Windmill. Vanessa didn't believe him. She smiled. 'Edith and I were thinking of visiting the Red Windmill.'

He looked - if not aghast - concerned, and glanced at Edith, who was still smiling sweetly at him. 'It is not so good for nice English girls to be there.'

Vanessa finished her coffee and looked at Edith who had also finished, and then looked at P  p  . 'Is it alright for nice English girls to go up to your apartment, P  p  ? So Edith can practice her French for the first time.' The girls giggled. P  p   beamed, not quite understanding what he was letting himself - and the nice English girls - in for.

The girls followed P  p   up the rickety stairs to the third floor and into his apartment. It bore every sign of being occupied by an untidy male with no sign of female input. Empty beer bottles and food-stained plates and unwashed cups littered the living room. And it was even worse in the kitchen.

P  p   threw up his hands in an apologetic gesture. 'I am not so clean.'

Immediately, Edith busied herself collecting the used crockery and glasses and taking them to the sink in the kitchen. 'I'm just going to boil a kettle to get some hot water to do the washing-up. Do you want to tidy this room,' she said to Vanessa, who looked at her in amazement. Tidying up a male-habitation had never been in Vanessa's repertoire. In fact, tidying up anywhere was not in her repertoire; that's what domestics were employed to do.

P  p   saw the look on Vanessa's face, and jumped up from the sofa. 'I will help Edith.'

Vanessa made herself at home in the living room as Edith and P  p   were in the kitchen making pots and pans clatter. She switched on a bakelite radio and Edith Piaf sang 'Padam, padam'. She sat on a cleanish bit of the sofa and leaned back against a cushion. Something hard pressed into the small of her back. A revolver was residing behind the cushion. Vanessa put it back where

she had found it, wondering why P  p   needed a gun. P  p   looked harmless enough. In fact, he looked a bit of a sissy. He probably needed the gun for self-protection. Maybe all men in Paris had a gun. She knew that the gendarmes always carried guns.

She heard Edith's raunchy laugh. 'Trois est une foule, ch  rie', Vanessa thought to herself in French and spoke to herself in English, 'three's a crowd, sweetie.' She would explore the building, and in particular, visit the apartment upstairs.

'Just going for a wander. If I'm not back in thirty minutes send out a search party in case I've been kidnapped by white slavers.' She poked her head into the kitchen as she said this in jest. Edith was at the sink, immersed up the her elbows in soap suds, P  p  's arm around her waist. As Vanessa watched, his fingers 'spidered' over Edith's very rotund rump.

Edith half-turned towards Vanessa. 'You shouldn't make jokes about white slavers. You might get kidnapped.'

'The only white slave around her appears to be you.'

Leaving the 'love-birds' pecking each other, Vanessa went out of the apartment and climbed the flight of stairs to the top floor. The landing was in shadow, the only light coming from a broken-glassed skylight which appeared not to have been cleaned since Napoleon was promoted to corporal.

A hand-scrawled sign on a piece of wood nailed to the paint-chipped door displayed 'Red Windmile'. 'A mile is as good as a mill,' she thought, as she listened at the door. At first, she heard only silence. And then she heard footsteps thudding up the bare, wooden stairs behind her. A large man, with a blond Viking-style beard, appeared on the landing. Only an artisan smock, and gabardine trousers, as worn by Impressionists, stopped her thinking he had just disembarked from his longboat and was intent on a bit of rape and pillage.

'Puis-je vous aider?' he said. Surprisingly, his vocal chords were more soprano than bass. Vanessa was about to giggle at his voice but thought better of it. The blond took her failure to respond as not understanding French. He tried his luck in English. 'May I help you?' The accent was Scandinavian.

'How did you guess I was English?'

'I have a vision of a beautiful English rose before me.'

Vanessa grinned. 'Whenever people talk about English roses I have a vision of horse-droppings.'

He looked quizzical. 'You see a dead horse?'

'This conversation is getting a bit surreal. I'm looking for someone called Claude? I'm wondering if you might be him.'

'Henrik. I am from Sweden.' He held out his hand to be shaken. She shook it lightly. His wrist was limp, but he held her hand and stared into her eyes, much as Rudolfo always does to Mimi in Paris, although he did not suggest that her tiny hand was frozen. Possibly, because she was not Bohemian and her fingers were long and slim and her hand was not that small. 'Claude is inside.'

He opened the door into a narrow passage. 'Claude will be snapping. Snapping is an English word for taking pictures with a camera, is it not?'

'Yes. And it also means someone who loses their temper. My name's Vanessa, by the way.'

Politely, Henrik stepped to one side to let Vanessa walk ahead of him. The door at the end of the passage opened and another man was framed in the doorway, backlit by the light from inside the room. Without speaking, he came forward and took her hand in his and kissed it, like Casanova kissing the hand of a courtesan. She saw dark, almost satanic, gypsy features, with ebony-black hair pulled back into a pony-tail.

'This is Vanessa. She is looking for you, Claude,' Henrik said in English

'You have found me, mademoiselle?' Claude said in English, with a heavy Parisian accent.

'Someone recommended that I visit you in your photographic studio to have my portrait taken.'

Henrik laughed.

Claude did not laugh. 'Who?'

Vanessa thought quickly and remembered the name Edith had mentioned. 'Her name is Scarlet. I forget her surname.'

Claude furrowed thick, black eyebrows, 'Je ne sais pas le nom.' He came closer and looked deeply into her eyes, like Svengali mesmerising Trilby. Then, without another word, he stood to one side to allow Vanessa to enter the room.

The first thing she noticed - it was impossible not to notice it - was a whipping post in the form of a cross positioned in the centre of the room. Cameras on tripods were in front and back and to the side of the whipping post. The room was warmed by a flaring gas fire in a hearth. Two girls and a youth were lounging in squashy, leather armchairs. One was the 'rude' girl who had pushed past Vanessa and Edith when they were on the pavement.

She was dressed in a black leather corset and leather boots. A coiled whip lay on her lap. One leg was dangling over the arm, exposing her vagina. She drank from a small glass containing a milky-fluid. Vanessa was to learn that the girl was drinking absinthe.

The other girl was plumpish, with abundant curves. Although she sat in a more 'ladylike' way and without exposing herself. She was also naked apart from leather boots and a black mask, and swigged beer from a bottle and smoked a small cigar.

The youth sat stiffly on a hard-backed chair sipping what looked like brandy. He was thin, pale and wan and Adonis would have taken second place to him in a 'male-beauty' contest. Vanessa was entranced, especially as the youth was naked, his penis reclining like an odalisque in a harem. Red marks streaked across his stomach, upper thighs and groin. The marks looked fake to Vanessa. She had not yet whipped a man, but had caned two males and knew what real flagellation marks should look like. She suspected the marks were made by lipstick; a tube was on the floor, like a spent bullet case.

The room was a large loft area, and in contrast to the dimly lit passage and stairs, the room was well-lit as light flooded through a skylight. There were three different types of whipping posts pushed into the corner and whipping benches stacked on top of each other. And the room was littered with whipping or spanking implements; some on racks on the wall; some on shelves or on the floor. Several large cameras and lighting equipment were also on display on the shelves. The two men seemed amused as Vanessa looked around in amazement.

'I think Vanessa is a little surprised at what is here, Claude,' Henrik said, laughing.

Claude was eyeing Vanessa like a dress-designer viewing a potential model for her suitability on his catwalk. She in turn was viewing the various costumes hanging up on a clothing rail. 'You like? Here we have all sorts of fantastic dress costumes.'

'Fancy dress,' Henrik corrected.

Vanessa fingered a military jacket with a swastika armband on the sleeve. Claude saw her look at it. 'Gestapo. It is a real uniform for a lady officer. Would you like to wear it?'

Vanessa had always liked dressing up, and was tempted to say 'yes' but thought better of it, bearing in mind her mother's clandestine and violent dealings with the nazis. She shook her head. It was entirely possible that her

mother had put paid to the original owner of the uniform.

'This is Emilia and Francine and Pierre,' Claude said pointing at the three loungers. 'Say bonjour to Vanessa.'

She was greeted with a grunted and unwelcoming chorus of 'bonjours'. None of the three looked pleased to see her; each viewed her with the countenance of a Parisienne waiter, who has been informed by an English tourist that the croissant was too flakey and the coffee tasted of chicory.

Vanessa smiled and said 'hello.'

'My studio,' Claude said, gesturing expansively with his arm. 'This is where we work.'

'And what sort of pictures do you take, Claude?' Vanessa asked.

Henrik gave a girlish giggle. Vanessa was beginning to think him a bit effeminate. He reminded her of the head girl at her boarding school, who was handsome rather than beautiful, and who Vanessa had repulsed in the showers by a strategically placed knee in the other girl's groin. 'Artistic,' Henrik said.

'Avant garde,' Claude said. 'How do you say that in English?'

'Experimental?' Vanessa suggested. 'Or perhaps - innovative. Up in the front.'

'Or up in the behind,' Henrik said, giggling to himself. 'The English call a posterior a behind,' he said to Claude.

'It's also called an arse,' Vanessa said, smiling sweetly at Henrik. She was beginning to prefer Claude, and the word just sprang into her mind as she viewed Henrik.

'Would you like me to take your picture, Vanessa?' Claude asked, with a wide grin. His teeth were pearly-white, despite - no doubt - uncountable packets of Gauloises.

'What would I be doing in the picture?' Vanessa asked, eyeing a whip.

'Posing,' Henrik said. His English was unbroken.

'What's in the glass?' she enquired, looking at the drink Emilia was drinking.

'Absinthe,' Claude said, picking up a green bottle and pouring her a glass and handing it to her. 'It is very strong.'

'And illegal in France,' Henrik said.

Vanessa took a sip and her head began to swim a little, like a toddler in a paddling pool. 'Nice,' she pronounced. 'But mind if I sit down.' She sat on a vacant chair with her back to the wall, and smiled happily. Paris seemed to be

fun. The Red Windmill seemed to be fun.

After washing up and tidying the apartment, with P  p   scurrying around trying to be helpful in the manner of a male with an L-plate when it comes to cleaning, but getting in the way, Edith put the broom, which looked new and underused, into the cupboard in the narrow hall. She smiled at P  p  . 'I could do with a nice cup of tea.'

'May we go across the road to the cafe,' he said.

'I know what 'mais oui',' means,' she said brightly, 'it means but yes.'

P  p   grinned. 'I will learn Anglais, and you will learn French.'

'I'm a slow learner. It means I would have to live with you for at least a month.'

P  p  's grin widened. 'For me to learn Anglais I will need you to stay for one year.'

She grinned back. 'Fine.' Then she looked worried. 'But I'll need to get a job. I have some money but it's English.'

'I have money.'

Edith looked quizzically at P  p  . 'What do you do to get money, P  p  ? What is your job?'

He understood the question, and looked evasive, and acquired a nervous twitch under his left eye. It was the sort of twitchiness that her stepfather acquired when her mother had asked him whether he had just been to the church as there was a sack of lead in the yard. 'We go for tea - yes.'

'No. Not yet.' She came close in front of him and stared into his eyes. 'I need to see that my friend, Vanessa is alright and hasn't been kidnapped.'

He repeated 'kid' and then 'nap'. 'That is when girls and boys go to sleep, yes?'

'An interesting translation, P  p  . I need Vanessa to come and help me with what I say to you. And help me with what you say to me.' She paused. 'The people upstairs ...' She pointed her finger at the ceiling. 'Who are they?'

He flared his nostrils as though smelling a bad smell. 'They are not nice men.'

'Why do you say that?'

P  p   blushed as though he was embarrassed, hunched his shoulders to say

'Je ne sais pas'.

'Why do you have a gun?'

He effected to look as blank as a blank; as if he did not understand the word 'gun'. Edith composed her hand into the shape of a gun, like a child pretending to be a cowboy - or a cowgirl; pointed at him and said 'bang'.

'Gun?'

'The one you have stuffed behind your cushion. I saw it when I was tidying.'

'Non.'

Edith wasn't sure whether he was trying to say he had no gun or that she shouldn't touch it. She lifted the cushion and picked up the gun. P  p   looked horrified. He came towards her with his hand outstretched to take the gun from her. He stopped dead and blinked when she pointed the gun at his forehead. 'Unbuckle your belt and push your trousers down to your knees.' She lowered the gun to point at his waist as she said this. She clinked the barrel against the buckle to emphasise what she was ordering him to do, and took a step back as he began to obey her instructions, with his eyes closed.

He pushed his trousers to his knees to reveal the shaft of his penis trying to escape through the fly in his underpants. He opened his eyes to see if she had further instructions. She did; she waved the gun at his underpants in a downward movement. Closing his eyes, he lowered his underpants and his penis shot into view as erect as the Eiffel Tower, although slanting from the vertical like the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

She looked around the room for something suitable with which to tie P  p   and spotted a large spotted handkerchief. He half opened his eyes and she made a twirling movement with the gun to indicate that she wanted him to turn his back to her. He turned. She picked up the handkerchief, went close behind him, pressed the gun to the nape of his neck, and pulled his arms behind his back and crossed his wrists ready to be tied. She then had a problem; she needed to use two hands to tie him and one hand to hold the gun. 'You stand still, P  p  , or I will shoot you.' He trembled. Clamping the gun under her left armpit she tied his wrists quickly. 'Now we're both going to have a lie down on your bed, P  p  . And you will tell me how you earn your money.'

With his trousers around his knees and slipping down his shins, he shuffled into his small bedroom with the gun-toting Edith behind him. 'On your back on the bed.' He laid on his back.

His penis had softened; probably worried about what she intended to do to it or him. She put the gun on a the bedside table, next to the lamp, and sat on the edge of the bed, as she had done when she sat on Tommy's bed prior to pricking his prick with her lipstick-knife. Tommy's penis had shrivelled with fear, with good reason. But P  p  's was more of a hard man than Tommy's.

'Why have you got a gun, P  p  ?' She asked, gently stroking the shaft of his penis with her extended index finger. He was swallowing hard; saliva-buds working overtime. 'Is it because you do naughty things, like rob a bank?' He shook his head vigorously to deny that he had a gun to rob a bank. She looked unconvinced at the truthfulness of the shaking. So she shook his stiff penis as if it were a miniature tree and she wanted to shake down some apples. This was to encourage him to 'spill the beans'. But all he spilled was semen. It spurted at the ceiling light, like the Old Faithful geyser spurting at the sun in Yellowstone. The dollops landed on his rotund stomach.

Edith was entranced at the spectacle. 'Wow, that was a lot more than Carol's gent,' she said to herself, and added to herself 'but then he had been whipped'. She looked down at P  p  , whose wide - almost wild - eyes stared up at her. 'Have you ever been whipped, P  p  ?' He appeared not to understand the question. She used her right palm to slap her left palm to demonstrate that she was referring to his having been beaten. 'Beaten by a woman?'

His eyes opened wider. His head shook from side to side like a boxer trying to clear his vision after being hit with a near-knockout uppercut. Edith was sceptical. 'I don't think you're telling me the truth, P  p  . I'm going to pretend I'm a policeman and search your flat.' And added, almost to herself, 'Like the police always searched our house after my stepfather moved in and when there was a robbery in our town.'

He watched her, without saying anything, as she started to search the drawers. 'Not very tidy are you, P  p  . This place needs a woman to keep order. What's in this?' She took out a small leather satchel which had been stuffed at the back of a draw. P  p   made a guttural sound, which might have been a word or phrase in French or English, but conveyed the message in any language as 'please don't touch.'

She unfastened the satchel and took out a sheaf of newspaper cuttings, and looked at them one by one. She looked at the pictures and then took her time reading. 'What does this word 'vol' mean, P  p  . He endeavoured to look blank and uncomprehending. She spelt the word in case he was

misunderstanding her English pronunciation of the word. He swallowed hard and it was obvious that, had he been in an Anglo-Saxon court of law, he would have pleaded his right not to answer the question in case he incriminated himself.

'I think I understand the word 'le brigandage', P  p  . We have the word brigand in English. So, are these newspaper cuttings about a brigand, namely you?' He did not answer. 'I will assume, for the purposes of this interrogation - I think interrogation is the right word - that you are a brigand. In other words, a very naughty man.'

She stood up and put the newspaper cuttings on the seat of the chair and looked around the room. 'Do you have a razor stop, P  p  ?' He stared up at her with a quizzical expression. She rubbed her hand around her chin as if shaving with an imaginary razor. He got the message. He raised his neck off the pillow and glanced down at his crutch with a look of extreme concern. Edith giggled. 'Don't worry, P  p  , I'm not going to cut your balls off with a razor.' He did not understand her English slang-word for testicles, and looked even more worried when she giggled to herself, and said quietly, 'I'll use my lipstick.' Then more loudly, 'I'll use your belt.'

He raised his neck again to watch her take the leather belt from his trousers. A twirl of her hand explained and emphasised her instruction to him to turn onto his stomach. He did not move. She slapped the belt across his penis. He yelped, even though it was a relatively light slap. 'I'm going to belt you, P  p  .' He did not understand what she was saying. 'Unless you turn over, I will belt your cock instead of your arse. Do you understand the word 'arse'?' He shook his head to indicate that he did not understand the word. She turned her back into his line of sight and lightly self-flagellated her pear-shaped posterior with the belt. 'This is an arse, P  p  . My Ernest used to say one could hardly miss it - although, he will be doing.'

Despite being tied up and helpless he almost grinned in evident admiration. 'Ah, le cul.'

'Is that the French for arse? He nodded to confirm that it was. She looked pleased. 'I'm learning French. Although I assume it is not a word you should use very often in polite French society. Anyway, now that we understand each other, turn over onto your tum so I can belt your cul.'

His penis stiffened as he turned. Her clitoris tingled as she raised the belt above her head and swished the end with the notch-holes across his bum. He yelped. She bent to examine the redness of the mark left by the belt, then

straightened. 'Do you know how to count in English, P  p  ?'

'Non.'

'Alright, you can count in French. What's French for one hundred.'

'Non!' His face raised from the bed in alarm.

'Seems to me, P  p  , that you understand more English than you're letting on. That alone deserves a hundred for trying to pull the wool over my eyes. Although I won't ask you to translate that.' She slapped the belt down again. He gave his now trademark yelp; a small dog trying to scare away a rottweiler. 'Say thank you, madam, every time I whack you.' She slapped the belt again.

'Merci, madam,' he yelled.

'I said say thank you, not scream for mercy. But as I am a merciful person I will stop beating you for the moment. Turn over again.' He turned. His penis was rock-solid. She stared down at it. 'Like being beaten by a woman do you, P  p  . If you like a female beating you then I'm your girl.'

His penis appeared to be trying to draw level with his belly button. She dropped the belt to the floor and began to undress. Edith had never stripped in front of a man, but she was a natural when it came to teasing. She undressed with the slow, deliberate, provocative movements of a strip tease dancer. P  p  's eyes were out on stalks as was the bulbous head of his penis. 'Fancy me, does it,' Edith said, rolling her knickers down to her knees and stepping out of them. She was now completely naked.

Her next move was to kneel on the bed, one knee on either side of his hips. She was not entirely sure what to do. She had had no formal sex education; she would have to teach herself. He was staring up at her. This disconcerted her. She got off the bed and picked up her headscarf and sat of the edge of the bed near his head. 'Head up.' She gave a hand-signal to indicate that her should raise his head. He did so, and she blindfolded him with the scarf knotting it at the back of his head. 'Sorry, to have to do this, P  p  , but I prefer to do what I'm going to do without eyes watching me.' She resumed her position with one knee either side of his hips facing him and reached behind her back for the shaft of his penis. 'Might be easier if I pretend it's a banana,' she said to herself as she positioned to impale herself. P  p   was breathing in short sharp bursts. Then a worrying thought struck her. 'Fuck! I could get a bun in the oven doing this.'

With sense of frustration and anti-climax, she rolled off the bed and stood up. 'Have you got a rubber Johnny, P  p  ?' She received no response from her

blindfolded captive. She looked in drawers but did not find what she was looking for. 'Shit! Stay there and don't go away, P    . I need to get some advice from my friend, Vanessa.' She dressed quickly, his penis still erect and waving in her direction as if to plead 'don't let it be long before we make contact'.

Picking up P    's gun and slipping it into her handbag, which also contained her 'blackjack' purse and lipstick-knife. She closed the apartment door behind her, and climbed the stairs to the top floor. The door to 'The Red Windmill' was ajar. She listened and heard a whistling sound, and then what sounded like a hard slap on flesh and a scream. White slavers were whipping her new friend, Vanessa!

She delved into her handbag and whipped out P    's gun, thinking that she would find out if it was loaded when she pulled the trigger. She made a mental note to check next time that a gun she was about to shoot had bullets in the chamber, and that she was not about to have a piss without a chamber pot.

Another slapping sound and scream came from behind the door ahead of her. She wrenched the door open and burst into the room, waving her gun in an encompassing arc. 'Everybody freeze, even if it is bloody warm in here.'

SEVEN

A WHIPPING

Vanessa had drunk her absinthe too quickly. She now felt light-headed, and needed to screw her eyes to try and focus on the scene in front of her. The youth, Pierre, was strapped to the whipping post and Emilia and Francine, both naked except for fetish masks and boots, stood behind him with whips. Vanessa was disappointed that they did not whip him for real but posed like statues, whips poised. As Claude flashed his camera, Henrik stood leaning against one of the other whipping posts, smoking a cigarette and looking bored.

'May I have a go?' Vanessa asked, in a slightly slurred voice. 'I would like to whip him.'

Claude beamed at her. 'But of course.'

'You'll have to take all your clothes off,' Henrik, said, straightening up from the post and looking less bored.

'Can't I wear one of the costumes?' Vanessa said, not entirely sure that she wanted to pose naked, just yet.

'Which one would you like to wear?' Claude asked, going to the clothes rail. Vanessa put down her empty glass and stood next to Claude. 'What's this one made of?' she asked, fingering a leotard with front lacing.

'Rubber,' Henrik said.

'I've never heard of rubber clothes. I've heard of gumboots. Smells lovely.'

'Try it on,' Henrik said.

'You will look wonderful,' Claude said.

Vanessa smiled at Claude and took the leotard from the rail. 'Where can I change?'

Henrik smirked. 'Here. We will be gentleman, Claude and I, and close our

eyes, and will not peep until you are ready.'

Vanessa gave a weak smile at the two men and went behind the clothes rail which provided some cover and divested herself completely. She held up the rubber-garment and looked at it dubiously. 'Will this fit me?'

'Like a rubber glove,' Henrik said. 'Allow me to lace it for you when you have peeled it on.'

Like a bather donning a tight fitting bathing suit, Vanessa wiggled into it. 'How do I look?' she said coming from behind the clothes rail.

'I think I need a fuck,' Henrik said. 'The sight of you in that costume is making me randy.'

'You're not fucking me,' Vanessa said quickly. And for a reason, she could not put her latexed-finger on, she decided that Henrik was playing a part. His comments were not for real.

Henrik assumed the staged-look of a spoiled child told it could not have an ice cream. 'Francine, come here.' Francine put down her whip and obediently went over to Henrik, and without being told to, knelt in front of him, unzipped his fly, released his limp penis from his trousers. He was not wearing underpants. His penis stiffened when Francine licked it, although there was room for expansion, her tongue slurping from the root to the tip. Vanessa goggled, then glanced at Claude. He raised one eyebrow and winked at her.

Vanessa's clitoris thought that it might be nice to do to Claude what Francine was doing to Henrik. But before she thought further on the subject, an unsmiling Emilia, the girl who had rudely hustled Vanessa and Edith out of the way at the street door, knelt in front of Claude, and did to Claude what Francine was doing to Henrik.

Vanessa looked from one to the other; Henrik's cock was stubby and pinkish and at half-mast, Claude's cock was dark and long, and as stiff as a flagpole proudly flying the tricolore in a force-ten. She knew which one she preferred.

Suddenly, Emilia stopped sucking Claude's cock, leaving it resembling a wobbling, mahogany caber about to be tossed at the Highland games. She stood up and fetched two chairs which she placed in the centre of the room, back to back and a torso's length apart. Then she bent over one the chairs with her hands on the seat.

Francine stopped sucking Henrik, picked up a false moustache from a bench, stuck the moustache below her nose, and bent over the second seat in

the same way. The faces of the two girls were close enough to kiss each other, which they proceeded to do.

Henrik went behind Francine holding a floppy, leather paddle. He slapped Francine's buttocks hard with the paddle. Claude was now behind Emilia with another paddle and proceeded to slap her buttocks; each slap being harder than the last.

The mouths of the two girls remained glued together as blows fell on their respective buttocks. Vanessa was not keeping count, but estimated that each girl received about twenty slaps before Henrik threw his paddle to the floor, went close to Francine and inserted his penis into her anus. Vanessa had never seen anyone have sex before and was not entirely sure what was happening. Henrik enlightened her, mid-thrust. 'I only ever fuck a girl in the arse.' Claude was now inserted into Emilia. 'Claude also prefers arses, don't you Claude,' Henrik said. Claude was too busy, gripping Emilia's waist and pumping her vigorously, to respond.

The joyous expressions on the face of the four participants indicated to Vanessa that the fun was reaching a climax. It came with grunts and cries of appreciation from the foursome, more or less timed in unison. Vanessa was wide-eyed with interest, and formed the view, that was to remain with her for the rest of her life, that sex was a spectator-sport to a certain extent but that it was much more fun to be a player in the game.

'Why didn't you let me take pictures?' Vanessa asked.

'Maybe later,' Henrik said, as he disengaged himself from Francine. He smiled at Vanessa. 'I think you were going to whip, Pierre. But we were diverted.'

Immediately, the naked Emilia went over to the whipping post and stood between it and Vanessa. 'She is not whipping Pierre,' Emilia said belligerently.

Vanessa looked towards the slender, milk-white frame of Pierre, still strapped to the whipping post. He was like a beautiful wax-work; Marie Tussaud would have liked the vision. Vanessa went closer to the whipping post. Emilia barred her way, feet apart, like a wrestler about to grip an opponent.

Looking over Emilia's shoulder, Vanessa viewed the streaks across Pierre's back. 'Those are not real whip marks,' she opined, like a bank-cashier spotting fake currency.

'Lipstick streaks,' Henrik said. 'Pierre is never whipped for real. Emilia

doesn't let us. She just likes him to pose as if he was being whipped when Claude takes his pictures.'

'I don't see the fun in pretending,' Vanessa said. 'Can I whip him properly?'

'Non,' Emilia said, and then added in English, 'I kill you.'

Pierre remained silent. Vanessa ignored Emilia, and went to the other side of the whipping post and looked into Pierre's face. Close up, his visage was too beautiful to be male. She looked down at his penis; it had been limp, but was stiffening and became more stiff the closer Vanessa came.

Tentatively, as she had done with Jones Major in the headmistress's study, and had been about to do with Mr Proudfoot when her aunt arrived back, Vanessa held the erect penis in her fingers. It bubbled from its eye-slit.

Henrik and Claude came and stood on either side of her to see what she was doing. Emilia was also beside them, looking 'daggers' at Vanessa, who made a mental note to watch her back when Emilia was around. Vanessa assumed Emilia regarded Pierre as her private property and did not appreciate her gripping him by the 'privates'.

'You can hold my cock,' Claude said. It was still hanging out of his trousers like an elephant's trunk. The trunk thickened and wavered upwards as he said this. She looked from Claude's penis to Henrik's penis, which was also still in evidence. But she spotted that Henrik's licentious eyes focused on Pierre and not on her.

'I will if you let me whip you afterwards,' she said to Claude.

'No female has ever done that to me,' Claude said.

'First time for everything,' Vanessa said.

'Let her whip you, Claude,' Henrik said, it will make a nice photograph.

'No. The magazine is sold everywhere, I will be recognised.'

'You produce a magazine here?' Vanessa asked.

'Of course,' Henrik said. 'That is how we make money. Why we take the pictures. They are for the magazine.'

'Can I see some of these magazines?' Vanessa asked.

'Claude give Vanessa a copy of our last edition,' Henrik said.

A pile of magazine were on the floor in the corner. Claude picked a magazine from the top of the pile and handed it to Vanessa. She flicked through it. 'Very interesting. But as my teachers used to say at school, promising but could do better.'

'How could it be made better?' Henrik asked.

'The figures are too posed. They need to be real action shots. The whips need to be whistling through the air.'

Henrik translated what Vanessa had just said in English into French for Claude's benefit. The translation was unnecessary. Claude had understood Vanessa. 'Emilia does not like Pierre to be really whipped,' Claude said.

Vanessa glanced towards the silent Pierre. 'He's strapped to a whipping post; hardly in a position to object. Why does Emilia object?'

Emilia suddenly barged past Vanessa, knocking her sideways, and went over to a corner and poured herself a large glass of absinthe. Francine was sitting nearby on the floor, with her back propped against the wall swigging beer and reading a book, and taking no interest in proceedings.

'This is how Emilia behaves normally', Henrik said. And his and Claude's expressions could have added, 'she is a very rude and possessive when it comes to Pierre'.

Henrik, with a mischievous look towards Emilia and a nod in Vanessa's direction, said, 'Vanessa is right, Claude. I think you need to photograph Pierre being whipped properly.'

'Non,' Emilia yelled from her seat in the corner. Henrik, Claude and Vanessa, ignored her protestation.

'Can I do it,' Vanessa asked quickly, her clitoris warming to the task. 'As I'm dressed for the part.'

'You are going to whip him for real?' Henrik queried.

'Of course. Your readers will like pictures of me whipping Pierre. You will sell more magazines.' She beckoned to Henrik and Claude to come close to her and lowered her voice. 'I don't think either Francine or Emilia are that interested in whipping men, whereas I am.' Henrik and Claude laughed. Then a thought struck Vanessa. 'I will expect to be paid. I assume you pay these two ladies to perform.'

'How much do you want?' Henrik asked.

'A share of the profit from the magazine. A third.'

Claude assumed the look of a stall holder in a flea market meeting his match in a hard-nosed bargain hunter. 'Non.'

Henrik nodded in agreement with Claude. 'Too much.'

'Alright. Fifty francs for this set of pictures. Money in advance.'

Henrik took on the role of chief negotiator for the magazine. 'Still too much. Ten francs.'

'I have plenty of ideas as to how your magazine could be better. You give

me a job as the editor, as well as chief whipper. Fifty francs a week. I will double your sales. This magazine is rubbish, if you don't mind me mentioning it; only my opinion of course.'

Henrik laughed at her cheek. Claude joined in the merriment.

'That's a deal, then,' Vanessa said, taking their laughter as confirmation that they agreed to her proposals. 'Oh, and I will need an assistant as sub-editor; my friend, Edith. She can also act as another whippe-snapper.'

'Who is Edith?' Henrik asked.

'My English friend downstairs.'

Henrik looked dubious. 'There is only the fat man downstairs, called P  p  . He is not nice to know.' Henrik pulled a face like he had tasted a sour apple.

'I think he's quite sweet. So does Edith. What is wrong with him?'

Henrik looked at Claude who gave a non-committal shrug as an answer. Henrik continued. 'He is not nice for young girls to know.'

Vanessa giggled. 'Neither are you two.'

'We are not dangerous people,' Henrik said.

'Why do you infer he's dangerous?'

Henrik did not answer the question. 'Why do you not ask your friend, Edith, to come up here and stay with us?'

'Are you inviting me to stay with you?'

'Yes, of course. Claude and I share a bed in the next room.'

Vanessa dissolved into a fit of the giggles. 'The two of you in the same bed?'

Henrik almost blushed. 'We take it in turns to share the bed. There is also a mattress on the floor.'

'I'm not sleeping on a mattress on a floor,' Vanessa said, with the haughty disdain of a visiting Duchess who has been offered temporary accommodation in the village inn and not the manor house.

'You can sleep in the bed. We have another mattress. Claude and I will sleep on the floor on either side of the bed.'

Vanessa smiled. 'Like two guard dogs in their kennels.'

While this conversation was taking place, Pierre, strapped to the whipping post, remained mute. Shortly, he would become vocal when Vanessa whipped him.

'I'll ask Edith what she wants to do. In the meantime, you can take photos of me whipping Pierre. They can go in the first edition of our magazine with

me as the editor.'

Henrik looked at Claude, who nodded to affirm that he was in agreement; Vanessa could whip Pierre for real and he, Claude, would take the pictures. Claude positioned himself to one side with a camera on a tripod. Vanessa assumed a stern expression, modelled on the facial expression her aunt adopted when she was threatening her niece with the cane. Pierre's penis seemed aware that its owner was about to be whipped by Vanessa, it stiffened. Claude nodded at Vanessa as if to say 'action'. She did not hesitate. She raised her hand, holding the braided leather whip, above her head and slashed the whip across Pierre's buttocks.

Emilia screamed 'non' as if she had been lashed and not Pierre, but she made no movement to intervene, and emptied the dregs of the absinthe into her glass, with her eyes focusing malevolently on Vanessa.

The camera clicked and flashed. Pierre screamed like a scalded cat and slumped, held up only by the straps around his wrists. Francine laughed; Emilia looked pained.

'Thought that would happen,' Henrik said, laconically. 'Pierre's fainted.'

'Talk about wimpy,' Vanessa said. 'He should have his arse caned by my aunt.'

'This was a good picture,' Claude said. 'But I think one picture is enough. Pierre may go.'

'He's going?' Vanessa asked.

Henrik looked at Claude. They nodded to each other in agreement. 'Pierre is paid by the hour to pose like an artist's model,' Henrik said. 'He has been here over an hour, so has Emilia.'

Pierre was whimpering and sobbing. Standing on either side of the whipping post, Henrik and Claude unstrapped Pierre's wrists, and then both held him to stop him slumping to the floor. They manhandled him to a chair and sat him down. Henrik picked up a fresh bottle of the absinthe and poured some down Pierre's throat. This seemed to revive Pierre. He mumbled something in French to Claude who put his hands in his pocket and withdrew some money which he counted and gave to the still-naked Pierre. Sobbing, Pierre then dressed quickly, helped by Emilia, who also dressed quickly. Then she held out her hand to be paid, and both she and Pierre left together, her arm protectively around his shoulder.

'Now we have no one to whip for a picture,' Henrik said.

'Yes we do,' Vanessa said brightly. 'Francine is still here. She arrived a

couple of minutes later. I saw her arrive. Vanessa adopted her most stern expression, again modelled on her aunt's look when threatening chastisement. But Vanessa was not just threatening; she meant business.

Francine kept giving nervous glances at Vanessa, and eventually said something in a low voice to Claude. He shook his head to say 'no'. Vanessa made out enough of the conversation to understand that she was asking to leave. Francine made a movement towards a pile of clothes on the floor in the corner. Henrik stepped in front of her without speaking.

Feeling that she was now in control, Vanessa went over to Francine and tugged her by the arms. She tried to pull away from Vanessa, but Claude gripped her other arm and he and Vanessa led her to the whipping post, recently vacated by Pierre, and she gave no resistance as Claude strapped her to the post.

All the while, Henrik was looking dubious and scratched his Viking beard. 'I am not sure that this will make photographs that our customers will like. The magazine is for men who liked to be whipped by women.'

Vanessa grinned at him, 'In that case, Henrik, let me whip you after I have whipped her. That will make a nice picture.'

Henrik scowled. Claude grinned at Henrik's discomfort. 'I like.'

'What do you like, Claude?' Vanessa asked.

'I like a woman whipping a woman. It is a nice picture.'

Vanessa gave Henrik a triumphant smile. 'There, see. I was right, the magazine needs pictures of women whipping a woman as well as a woman whipping a man. Set up your camera please, Claude.'

Francine had her head turned, watching Vanessa and her whip, apprehensively. Noticing the apprehension, and to increase it, Vanessa flicked the whip in the air causing a cracking sound and then coiled it in her hand, and smiled menacingly at Francine, who gulped, and looked pleadingly at Claude. He was busy setting up his camera and checking the viewing angle. Satisfied, he straightened, and then, with a lascivious grin, unbuttoned his fly and pulled out his penis, semi-stiff as if in anticipation of an erection to come. Vanessa stared at it, transfixed. Francine stared at it but was less transfixed. Recently, she had given it a tongue-wash before it had been bottom-up. In keeping with Claude, Henrik also released his snake from its basket.

'I do not think I have ever seen a woman whip another woman,' Henrik said.

'When I was at school, we girls used to beat each other all the time.'

Claude's penis twitched as if at the thought. 'Are you ready to flash your camera, Claude?' Henrik asked, as Vanessa flexed and massaged her whipping arm, looking impatient. Claude bent to the camera viewer. His penis stiffened, and he said 'action'.

'Same word in French and English,' Henrik said.

Vanessa stood away from the whipping post, raised her whipping arm way above her head and slashed the whip midway across Francine's back. The girl screamed, as in came a girl with a gun.

Startled faces turned towards the door as Edith stood, framed in the doorway, waving the gun in a threatening arc encompassing the two males who were standing close to each other. 'Go on, reach for the sky,' she requested, like Calamity Jane apprehending two rustlers. The two males reached for the ceiling. Vanessa was grinning a welcome, still holding the whip.

'Who are these two?' Edith asked. Claude's arms were rigidly up, but Henrik's arms were at half-mast. Edith focused the gun on him. 'Up.'

Henrik's arms went straight up.

'This is Claude and Henrik. Claude with the pony-tail, Henrik with the beard. My friend, Edith,' Vanessa said, as if introducing them to her Aunt Prudence.

Henrik bowed to Edith, keeping his hands in the air as he did so. 'Charmed.'

Claude followed suit. 'Enchanté, mademoiselle.'

'Vanessa, could you ask your friend to stop pointing her gun at us,' Henrik requested.

Edith didn't smile at them, but looked towards the girl at the whipping post. 'Can I whip her?'

'Yes, of course, Vanessa said, 'but Claude will want to take a picture of you doing it.'

'Only time I've had my picture taken was on a donkey when we went to the seaside once.' She focused on Vanessa and looked her up and down. 'What are you wearing?'

'It's rubber,' Vanessa said, 'feels lovely. Claude and Henrik have got rubber clothes and leather clothes in all shapes and sizes. Could you put Pépé's gun down, Sweetie. You're making them nervous. They're harmless. They own the magazine in which I now have a share. Would you like a share

in the magazine?'

'What do I have to do?' Edith enquired, dubiously.

'You can be one of the whippers, like me. And sub-editor.'

'Do I get paid?'

'A fifth of the profits. My arithmetic is not too good but I think if you get a fifth and I get a fifth that leaves three fifths for Claude and Henrik.'

Henrik lowered his hands to shoulder level. 'Too much.'

Vanessa smiled at him. 'Never argue with women who means business, Henrik. Especially when one of them has got a gun.'

Henrik looked at Claude, who had brought his hands down to be level with his shoulders. Claude nodded to indicate to Henrik that he acquiesced. 'We agree. Welcome to Edith. Can we lower our hands now?' Henrik asked.

Vanessa nodded to confirm that they could lower their hands. 'Providing you behave yourselves. And also ask her to leave.' She looked towards Francine to indicate whom she meant. 'Her whimpering's getting to me.'

Vanessa and Edith, still holding her gun, watched as Henrik and Claude unstrapped Francine from the whipping post and, with a tear-stained face, she dressed. Claude doled out some money which she snatched from his grasp, and with a parting glare at Vanessa and Edith, exited banging the door behind her.

Henrik looked worried. 'Francine is not a person you should make an enemy of.'

Vanessa looked unimpressed at the warning. Edith was also unimpressed. 'I didn't get to whip her. Who do I get to whip? She looked meaningfully from Henrik to Claude and then back again.

Vanessa focussed on Henrik. 'You could whip Henrik.'

Henrik looked more than mildly discomfited as both girls stared at him in an appraising sort of way. 'I whip women - they don't whip me,' Henrik said, with menace. He took a step towards the two girls, standing side by side, as if to underline his point.

He took a step back when Edith pointed her gun at his groin. She lowered as Henrik retreated apace, and glanced at her friend. 'I came up to see if you were alright. And...' She hesitated before continuing in a whisper. 'And to ask if there were any French letters up here I could borrow.'

'You mean, as in... With P  p  ?'

Edith nodded.

Vanessa beamed at Henrik. 'Do you have any French letters?' He looked

vacant. 'As in rubber Johnnies? Vanessa elaborated.

Despite his excellent English, Henrik was failing to understand. Vanessa spelled it out for him. 'For when you make love to a girl properly, as opposed to in the bottom.'

'Ah! You mean a condom.' He grinned. 'Claude and I will fuck you and your friend properly with condoms if you like.'

Vanessa adopted her stern expression. 'We just need to borrow a couple.'

It was clear that Claude had understood as he opened a drawer and took out a packet and handed it to Vanessa, with a slight bow like a shop assistant handing madam her expensive purchase wrapped with taffeta and pink ribbon.

'Merci,' Vanessa said.

'Are you leaving us?' Henrik enquired.

'Be back later,' Vanessa said.

Edith halted half way down the stairs to P  p  's floor, and looked at her friend. 'I've never.'

'Never what?'

'Used one.'

'Neither have I. Shall we open one and have a look?' Edith watched Vanessa extract a foil-covered oily latex, condom. 'Feels slippery and smells funny and is oily. Puts one off a bit.'

'Looks a bit like a birthday-ballon,' Edith said.

P  p   looked wild-eyed and desperate when Edith entered his bedroom with Vanessa behind her. 'Pisse. Pisse.'

'Is he telling up to piss off?' Edith queried, in a tone which said I don't like being told to go away quite so rudely.

'Faire pipi,' P  p   gurgled desperately.

'I think he needs to go to the lavatory,' Vanessa said.

'It's probably at the bottom of the garden, like my home,' Edith said

Vanessa looked at her friend with some degree of pity. 'Really, at the end of the garden? How inconvenient. What do you do if you need to go in the middle of the night?'

'Use a potty under the bed. Anyway, now I live with my friend, Scarlet, in London. She has a posh lavatory and a big bath; both indoors. On the first floor.'

'Has he got a potty under his bed?'

'No. I looked earlier. When I was cleaning. There's only another gun

under his bed.'

'What sort of gun?'

'Like a cowboy gun.'

'Why does P  p   need all these guns?' Vanessa whispered, with P  p  's neck off his pillow, straining to hear and understand.

'I think he's a robber,' Edith whispered.

Vanessa looked at her friend and said, 'Doesn't surprise me - I'd guessed he was on the wrong side of the law, like P  p   le Moko. Maybe he's a jewel thief. I could do with some nice earrings.'

'I think he robs banks.'

'We do seem to have landed in a den of iniquity. Actually, two dens.

P  p   was gurgling like a bathtub needing to drain water.

'We need to let him pee,' Edith said, 'before he wets himself.'

'What about letting him do it into an empty wine bottle,' Vanessa suggested.

'I've got a better idea.' Edith disappeared into the kitchen as Vanessa smiled down at P  p   in a comforting sort of way, like a nurse telling a patient in hospital that a bedpan would arrive shortly.

Edith returned with a large saucepan. 'Smells of stale cabbage,' she said as her fingers dangled his penis into the saucepan. With relief, P  p   flooded it as Vanessa stood well back to avoid the splashing.

Edith seemed unperturbed that the velocity of the stream was causing a bit of a spray over the side of the pan. 'Could you ask him in French if he needs to do anything else,' Edith asked Vanessa.

'Such as what?'

'If he needs a crap.'

'I'm not asking him that. It's not a ladylike question. The word is merde.'

P  p   understood that word and nodded to confirm that he did need to sit. He looked pleadingly at Edith. 'He needs a merde,' Edith confirmed.

P  p   spoke to Vanessa in French

'He says the lavatory's on the landing. Better take him quickly, darling. And I would untie his hands unless you're going to wipe his bottom for him.'

With a grimace at her friend, Edith went behind P  p   and untied his wrists, and then took him by the arm and led him out of his bedroom. He was docile and did not resist. But he did glance at his trousers and underpants in a heap on the bedroom floor as if wishing he could put them on.

Vanessa watched them leave and said in a low voice to herself, 'I do so

like it when a man is a wimp.' Edith returned ten or so minutes later with P  p   in her wake. Vanessa was cuddling the gun which she had found under the bed. She gave P  p   a menacing stare and he stayed behind Edith as if for protection. 'Any trouble, was he?'

'No. Seems everyone uses the lav on the landing. It could do with a clean,' Edith said.

'Upstairs share the toilet,' P  p   said, understanding this part of the English conversation, and feeling that he ought to make clear that janitorial duties should be shared between the occupants of the building.

'We'll make them clean it in turns. If we ladies are going to stay here we need the males to spruce up this dump,' Vanessa said.

P  p   was standing by his bed, trouser-less. Edith eyed him. 'Don't just stand there. Take off the rest off your clothes and lie on your back.'

Vanessa translated Edith's instruction.

'Sounds sexier in French,' Edith said.

'Most things do,' Vanessa said. They watched P  p   divest himself of his shirt and vest and stand completely naked before them.

'Bit plump,' Vanessa said.

'Like me,' Edith said. 'I prefer him to the dark-looking bloke upstairs with his blond-bearded mate. I reckon they're more than just business mates. They remind me of Eric.'

'Who's Eric?'

'Bloke in my hometown, in the pub; always molesting my boyfriend, Ernest. Putting his hand on his knee; that sort of thing. I reckon those two are like Eric.'

Vanessa shrugged, as if to say, doesn't bother me. 'It's illegal isn't it?'

'Two blokes being over-friendly?' Edith queried.

'No. Bank robbery. Are you going to fornicate with your bank robber or not.'

'Don't get tetchy with me. I'll thump you,' Edith said, squaring up to Vanessa.

'My mum would kill you.'

'She'd have to find me first. I'd be on the run with my bank-robber boyfriend after we've robbed a bank.'

Vanessa was shocked. 'You're going to rob a bank?'

'Might do.'

P  p   coughed politely, as if to remind the girls of his naked presence.

Vanessa stared at him coldly and then said to Edith. 'Are you going to do it then?'

'Do what?'

'Use one of the things in the packet?'

'With you watching?'

'You might need my help translating. And I probably know what's supposed to happen better than you do. I've had some sex-education at my aunt's school. I told you. With a pupil and then with her deputy. And I saw Claude and Henrik do it upstairs earlier.'

Edith was now more interested, and less pugilistic. 'Did they use the things in the packet?'

'No. They didn't need to. They did it to the girls in their bottoms.'

'Isn't that what men do to each other?'

Vanessa looked unsure. 'No idea.' And then brightened. 'It's what girls do to men that matter to me. What are we going to do to your friend, P  p  , then?'

'I've decided I don't want you watching.'

'Don't be such a prude. You can watch when I do it.'

Edith stared sullenly at Vanessa, and then made her decision. 'Alright. You can watch.'

Vanessa giggled. 'This will be fun. Can I beat his bum first?'

'No. I'm the only one who beats his bum. He's mine.'

All the while, P  p  , lying on his back on his bed, was staring up at the two girls, trying to understand their conversation, and not making head or tail of it, and looking worried. Edith had already belted his backside and he sensed there was a possibility the other girl would do the same to him. The other girl looked the more vicious of the two. Edith was warm and cuddly in comparison to the other girl. P  p   associated with criminals; hard men. And he knew a hard woman when he saw one.

Always observant, and on the ball, Vanessa spotted that he was looking fearful at her. She smiled at him. Her smile held menace. 'I tell you what, darling, can I beat him if I let you beat Claude and Henrik?'

Edith laughed, as if Vanessa was making a worthless offer. 'How are you going to tie up two blokes?'

'Wait and see. Are you going to get started on P  p   or not?'

'You get undressed first.'

'Does that mean I get to do it first?'

'No,' Edith said, as she started stripping. P  p  's arms were rigid by his

sides, his legs also rigid, as was his penis.

Edith, paused having stripped to her bra and panties, suspender belt and stockings. Vanessa had not started to take off her rubber-leotard, but was examining the convenient-flap in the groin. 'I don't need to take off this costume. It's got buttons you can undo.'

Still glowering at her friend, Edith took off her knickers and bra, and then concentrated on the job in hand. She straddled P  p  's midriff with her knees so that her back was to his penis. 'You can put it on him,' she said to Vanessa.

Vanessa took the condom from the already opened packet. 'Lean forward so you're out of its way and I can see what I'm doing.' She knelt on the bed behind Edith. 'It's a bit like putting an oily, slippery bonnet on a baby's head.'

'Make sure you do it properly. I don't want to end up having to buy a baby's bonnet.'

But Vanessa's fingers were too much for P  p  's penis; it gushed forth. Vanessa pulled her hand away.

Edith looked over her shoulder and down at the 'dolloping' stem. 'I didn't say you could wank him.'

'Accident.'

'Now what do I do,' Edith asked rolling off the bed, and eyeing the semi-stiff penis dripping semen.

'Wait until it refills,' Vanessa suggested.

'How long does that take?' Edith asked.

'Minute or so, at a guess,' Vanessa suggested.

They stood on either side of the bed, staring down at the penis, waiting for it to stiffen. P  p   looked from one girl to the other, like a spectator at a tennis match.

'I think it will help if he massages it,' Vanessa said.

'Tell him to massage it then, in French.'

'I'll do it for him. I did it to Jones Major.' She gripped the shaft between her thumb and first finger. It had the desired effect, and, in the blink of a penis-eye was as tall as a redwood pine, scaled-down to penis size. 'There', Vanessa said, with satisfaction. 'Now you can get on it.'

Edith was still straddling P  p  's upper chest. 'I think I might need a warm up first. It is chilly in here with no clothes on.'

Vanessa came to the head of the bed and looked down at P  p  . 'Why don't you sit on his mouth and get him to waggle his tongue on your spot?'

'What spot?'

Vanessa looked at her friend as though she has just asked whether one and one made two. 'You know. Where your fingers go when you're feeling.'

'Feeling what?'

Vanessa looked exasperated with her friend. 'Stand up and lean with your back against the wall. Slowly, Edith did as she was told, her arms by her side and palms flat against the wallpaper. Vanessa came close in front of Edith, the points of her rubber bra touching Edith's naked breasts.

'Bigger girls used to do this to me in the dorm, and in the showers at school.' Her fingers groped into Edith's naked crutch and massaged. Edith closed her eyes. 'Put your arms behind your back.' Edith obeyed.

'One of the bigger girls, a real bully, used to do this to me nearly every day, and then she'd make me do it to her. Do you like it?' Edith's flushed cheeks and blood-filled lips indicated that she did, despite her natural inclination not to like it. She gave a slight nod.

'Do you want me to make you come?' Edith gave a more vigorous nod to indicate that she would like to come. Expertly, Vanessa brought Edith to a sticky boiling point. Edith's eyes were closed tight knees semi-buckled and she pushed her groin against Vanessa's stiffened fingers. 'Nice,' Vanessa enquired. 'No you can do it to me.'

'No, Claude and I will do it to you.' Vanessa's head spun around. Edith's eyes opened in shock. P  p  , prone on the bed, gawped towards the doorway. Henrik's muscular-bulk filled most of the doorway with Claude behind him. Henrik was holding a gun.

'Shall we all go back upstairs, except P  p  ,' Henrik said.

EIGHT

COMPROMISING PICTURES

Pépé was in tears. He lay tied up on his bed. He had watched as his newly-beloved Edith's hands were tied behind her back by Henrik as Claude pointed a gun at her. Curiously, she had picked up and held onto her handbag before putting her hands behind her back to be tied. Henrik then tied her wrists whilst she was still holding the bag. He did not take the bag from her.

Her friend, Vanessa, had been forced to strip naked at the point of the gun, and was then tied, by Claude. Pépé suspected that Henrik and Claude were white slavers, men who kidnapped young women and sold them to brothel owners in Marseille and Tangiers. He should have warned Edith to stay away from them. Then a more worrying thought struck him. Probably they knew that he knew what they were. They were ruthless people. Once they had sold the two English women they would come down and kill him. Perhaps they would kill him before they sold the women.

He was peeing on his bed when the door opened and Edith, with a broad smile, came to the bed and untied his wrists from the bedhead. 'Come', she said with a beckoning gesture. Diverting only to put on some dry clothes, Pépé followed Edith up the stairs. Vanessa, free as a bird, greeted them in the passage with a big smile.

'Tell Pépé what happened,' Edith said.

Vanessa spoke in French as an intrigued Pépé listened intently. Vanessa explained that Henrik had ordered Edith to sit in a chair whilst he and Claude took her, Vanessa, into their bedroom. Edith was still holding her handbag. Although her wrists were tied behind her back, she managed to open the clasp of the bag, take out a tube of lipstick which contained a knife, with which she cut her bonds. She then took out her purse from the handbag; the

purse was actually a cosh. Edith then silently came up behind Henrik, as he was taking off his trousers, and knocked him out with the cosh, and then did the same to Claude, who was in the act of taking off his pullover and had the wool pulled over his eyes. P  p  's head was reeling by the time Vanessa had finished. He was in two minds as to whether Edith would be a safe person to have as a girlfriend.

'Edith is very resourceful,' Vanessa concluded in French. P  p   nodded in agreement.

Groans could be heard coming from the room in which Henrik and Claude slept. 'I think they're waking up,' Vanessa said to Edith in English.

P  p   viewed the furnishings in the apartment with concern. He did not like the thought of Edith in this environment. It was not moral. He followed the two women into a small room next to the big room. Henrik and Claude were tied, back to back, on the bed. Both had large lumps forming on the top of their heads. And both looked blurry eyed. And concerned when they saw the two women.

'Why did you hit us?' Henrik asked, in a croaky voice. The question was directed at Edith.

'Because you were about to have your wicked way with my friend, Vanessa. And then you would probably have had your wicked way with me.'

'Wicked way is a euphemism,' Vanessa said to Edith.

Edith looked blank as if to ask 'is that an English word.'

'It's a nice way of saying rape,' Vanessa explained.

'Rape means a very severe punishment,' Edith said.

'Very severe,' Vanessa agreed. 'Worse than death.'

'We weren't serious,' Henrik said.

'I am,' Vanessa said.

'We are,' Edith emphasised. She glanced at P  p   who was looking very worried, he was getting the gist of the conversation from facial expressions even though he did not understand fully. 'Perhaps it would be better if P  p   goes back downstairs. He won't want to watch.'

'We need him to take pictures,' Vanessa said.

'Do we?'

'Of course. These are going to be some of the best pictures ever of women beating men. They can go in our magazine.'

'Our magazine,' Edith asked.

'Yes. Ours. Henrik and Claude have just given it to us, isn't that right

Henrik.' He opened his mouth as if to object, and then thought better of it. 'Nod, Henrik, to confirm what I just said.' Henrik nodded. And so did Claude without being asked to.

Seeing the two white slavers trussed and submissive, P  p   was emboldened to mention the fact that he thought they were white slavers. He said this in French in a low voice, almost whispering it in Vanessa's ear.

Vanessa's reaction was to giggle. 'P  p   says he thinks Henrik and Claude are white slavers,' she said to Edith.

'What's does a white slaver look like?'

'I'm not entirely sure, but I read a 'Sexton Blake' book once about a gang who kidnaped innocent young women and sold them to rich men in the Far East. It had a very lurid cover with a beautiful girl; could have been me. The man on the cover looked a lot like Claude; vaguely satanic.' She stared at Claude's features, remembering the cover.

'Bloody hell. They're worse than my stepdad.'

'We're not white slavers,' Henrik said. P  p  's making it up.'

Edith stared at Henrik for a long moment, and then went over to her handbag which was on the floor by the door. She crouched down, clicked open the clasp and took out the tube of lipstick. She sat on the edge of the small bed adjacent to Henrik's midriff. He had taken off his trousers and underpants ready to couple with Vanessa. The bed was small and Edith bumped Henrik's hip with her right buttock to make him shuffle over a bit, tied as he was next to Claude.

'Do you think this shade of lipstick suits me, Henrik?' She held up the tube. He nodded his beard.

Slowly, she took off the top of the tube and clicked the hidden button and the knife shot out. Henrik gave a sharp intake of breath. 'This is what I used to cut the rope you tied me with. My friend Carol gave it to me in London. I think Claude knows Carol, although he probably knows her as Scarlet. She gave me your card.' Edith's tone was conversational; friendly. 'I use the knife to peel apples sometimes.'

Henrik was now swallowing hard. The two men were tied back to back and Claude looked over his shoulder in alarm at the lipstick-knife. 'Do you have any apples, Henrik? Apart from your Adam's apple.'

He shook his head to say 'no'.

Edith glanced meaningfully down at his groin. 'What about those two objects?'

Her facial expression became less friendly. She placed the tip of the knife against a testicle, as she had done to Tommy in the fish and chip shop. 'Sometimes I use it to prick balloons; make them go pop. But if I was to do that to your balloons you wouldn't be a pop, ever.'

Vanessa giggled. 'Pop goes the weasel. It's a nursery rhyme.'

Edith grinned at Henrik. 'Are you a weasel, Henrik?'

'What is that?' he asked.

'A slimy rodent,' Vanessa said. 'A bit like a big rat.'

'We had rats in our basement once. I had to kill them,' Edith said.

'Best thing to do with rats,' Vanessa said.

'We are not rats,' Henrik said. 'We are not white slavers. We are pornographers. Publishers.'

Edith smiled at her friend. 'Do you think we should believe them, Vanessa?'

'Why don't we have a good search of the apartment. If we find anything that says they're white slavers then we kill them. String them up.'

'Good idea,' Edith agreed. 'Pépé better not be here though.'

Pépé was still in the bedroom doorway, reluctant to enter the room. Vanessa smiled at him and said in French, 'Pépé, darling, why don't you go out and get some wine and cheese and bread, and maybe a few patisserie. I particularly like the ones with glacé cherries on the top. Take your time.'

With evident relief, Pépé nodded and left. Both Henrik and Claude looked more worried now that Pépé had left; they were at the mercy of the two girls.

'Where do you think we should start looking?' Vanessa said to Edith.

'When my stepdad hid anything he always hid it in his bedroom.'

'There is nothing to find,' Henrik said.

Vanessa ignored him. 'You search the chest of drawers and I'll search the wardrobe.'

'We also need to look for loose floorboards,' Edith said.

The two men watched as the two women searched methodically. 'There's piles of kinky magazines stuffed in the back of the wardrobe,' Vanessa said. 'Some of these magazines have men doing naughty things to each other with no women.'

Edith came over to her friend who handed her a magazine. Edith was shocked. 'I didn't know blokes did this sort of thing to each other.'

Vanessa was looking over Edith's shoulder at the page. 'I didn't either. But I can't say it surprises me. Some girls at school used to pretend they were

men, if you get my meaning.'

'Disgusting,' Edith said. 'I'm glad I never went to school for long.'

Vanessa straightened, and looked at Henrik. 'Who do these belong to, Henrik?'

Claude was looking as though he had never seen these particular magazines before. 'Non,' he said.

Vanessa addressed a question in French to Claude. 'Does 'non' mean they are not yours, Claude?' He shook his head to confirm that they were not his. 'So they're yours, Henrik,' Vanessa said in English.

Edith was behind her, giggling, 'Henrik likes blokes.'

'To be fair, I think he likes women as well, because I saw what he did to Francine in her bottom.'

'But he was probably pretending she was a man if he did her in her bottom.'

'I never thought of that. She was wearing a stick-on moustache when he stuck his thing into her bottom. Are you queer, Henrik?'

He shook his head vigorously as Claude looked dubiously towards him as if seeing his business partner in a new light.

Ten minutes more intensive searching of the bedroom, and then the big room with the cameras and furnishings, by the two women did not reveal anything to indicate that Henrik and Claude were actually white slavers.

'So, what do we think?' Vanessa asked Edith.

'I suppose we've got to give them the benefit of the doubt. We also need to give them a good hiding because they were going to rape us.'

'We're going to give them more than a good hiding,' Vanessa said.

When P  p   returned with food and wine, Henrik was strapped to the whipping post with his stomach against the post. Claude was sitting on a chair, blindfolded with his hands tied behind his back. P  p   wondered how the two women had managed to subdue two powerful men in this way, and then he remembered they had two guns; his gun and Claude and Henrik's gun. P  p   made a mental note to obey any instructions from these girls otherwise he knew that he would be looking down the barrel of a gun; possibly two barrels. He stood just inside the door with two bottles of wine and copious amounts of bread and cheese and sugary cakes in a bag.

Edith looked up from the camera she was fiddling with and smiled at him. 'Ask P  p   if he knows how to work a camera like this,' Edith said to Vanessa. Vanessa repeated the question to P  p   in French. He gave his Gallic shrug to

indicate he had no idea how to work a camera.

'Not exactly a Jack of all trades is he,' Vanessa whispered to Edith.

'He just needs a bit of guidance,' Edith said, at last finding the correct sequence of buttons and getting the camera to whir. She stopped the whirring, not wishing to waste film. Both girls looked triumphant.

'Looks like we're in business,' Vanessa said. 'Now you need to chose a costume. Which do you fancy?' Edith followed Vanessa over to clothes rack. 'Take your pick.'

Edith giggled as she examined the costumes. 'Maybe something similar to yours with those boots.' She pointed to over-the-knee, black latex, stiletto boots with front lacing from top to ankle. 'I like these. They'll make me nearly as tall as you.' Vanessa and

Pépé watched as Edith struggled into the latex corset, laced like the boots, and then sat on a chair and pulled on the boots, and then teetered and preened in front of a full-length mirror. Pépé looked pleased with the vision, despite his anxiety about what he might be letting himself in for.

Vanessa adopted a business-like expression. 'Right - down to business. Basically you and I whip Henrik while Pépé takes pictures.' Then she spoke to Pépé in French and told him that he was to take the pictures using the big camera on a tripod. He looked dubious and shook his head to indicate that he was not up to doing this. Basically, he worried that he would be whipped if he messed up taking the pictures.

Edith realised that he was worried. 'I think we should get Claude to take the pictures.'

'How do we make him do that?' Vanessa asked.

'With a gun. We shoot him if he doesn't. In fact, we shoot both of them if he doesn't.'

Vanessa nodded in agreement. Henrik had heard the conversation.

'That will be murder? You will be guillotined for murder,' he said

'You were threatening to rape us. We killed you in self-defence.'

'And Pépé is a witness. He will tell the police what I tell him to say,' Edith said.

'Henrik and I will do whatever you want,' Claude said.

Five minutes later, Claude was behind the camera ready to shoot or be shot. He was naked with his wrists chained in front of him so that he was able to operate the camera. His ankles were chained by another length of chain so that he would not be going anywhere in a hurry.

Vanessa stood behind him and lightly flayed his buttocks with a multi-tailed whip to encourage him to set up the camera ready for the shoot. P  p   sat on a chair in the corner, holding both guns, as he had been ordered to do by Edith.

'All set?' Vanessa said to Claude, as she took up her position to one side of Henrik with her whip and a whip-wielding Edith on the other side. Claude nodded. Immediately, Vanessa whistled the whip diagonally across Henrik's shoulder blades. He screamed. Both girls giggled. Claude kept his head down and focused the camera.

'Your turn, darling.' Vanessa said to Edith. With a grin, which was almost evil, Edith slashed Henrik across the shoulder-blades. Another scream from Henrik, louder and shriller than the first. 'Bit of a wimp, isn't he,' Vanessa said, as she gave him a third slash. Henrik was obviously adverse to pain.

Vanessa strolled behind the whipping post to look at Henrik's tear-stained and flushed face. His eyes were screwed shut as if not daring to look at Vanessa. She clicked her fingers in the direction of Claude. 'Come here and take a picture of Henrik's face.'

Henrik turned his head sideways in a vain attempt to hide his features as Claude clicked. 'Open your eyes and look at me,' Vanessa said. Henrik did as he was told. 'Take pictures as I slap,' Claude clicked again as she hit Henrik's left cheek with the whip handle causing his head to snap sideways.

Then she stood back and smiled at Edith. 'Whip him again, darling, while Claude's takes another picture of his face.' Edith duly obliged and Henrik screamed and Claude snapped him mid-scream. It was then that Vanessa noticed - she could hardly miss - that Claude's penis was fully erect. Also, the tingling sensations, that she had experienced, as Henrik was whipped, intensified to the point that she needed to bring things to a head. She looked at Edith who was standing behind Henrik's back and fondling his buttocks in anticipation that her whip would effect red stripes across the blond-flesh mounds. 'Darling, I'm just going to a little t  te    t  te with Claude in the bedroom.

'What's that?' Edith asked.

'A head to head. Why don't you and P  p   have some wine and cheese and Claude and I will join you in a few minutes. Leave Henrik strapped to the whipping post. We need a few more pictures.' Her tone of voice was that of a society hostess inviting guests to take tea on the lawn and then enjoy a game of croquet.

Claude was still naked, his wrists were still shackled in front of him and his ankles restrained by manacles. He had to hobble when Vanessa took him by the arm and led him into the bedroom closing the door behind them. She sat on the bed. He stood awaiting instructions like a docile footman.

She spoke in French. 'Now, Claude, I want you to be gentle with me. But I want you to fuck me properly. In fact, I would like you to do your best to make me pregnant.'

His eyes opened wide and he opened his mouth to say something but then decided to remain silent.

'I would like to be like my mother. Who is very famous.' He nodded as if to say 'I have heard of her.' 'She had me when she was eighteen. I would like to have a baby at the same age. So you will fuck me. And I will whip you if I don't enjoy the fuck. Understood?' The dark skin paled. 'And then of course, I will expect you to marry me; my version of a shotgun marriage.'

Edith and P  p   had finished one bottle of wine and shared a long baguette stuffed with cheese when Vanessa emerged from the bedroom. She was naked, no longer in the latex cat suit. Edith glanced at P  p  . She was unimpressed when he goggled at Vanessa's naked body, and made a mental note to whip him when she got him back downstairs in his apartment.

Claude's penis, which had been horizontal when he went into the bedroom, was now limp and glistening.

'Nice time?' Edith enquired of Vanessa.

'I would like some wine,' Vanessa said.

'I would like a cognac,' Claude said in a weak voice.

Edith watched Claude shuffle over to a bottle on the floor. 'Looks nice in chains, doesn't he. What's it like'

Vanessa, sat of the floor with her back propped against the wall, and poured herself some wine into a not very clean glass. 'Hurts a bit at first. Bit of blood but then it becomes rather nice.'

'Didn't you use one of those 'letter' things?'

'No.'

'Won't you get - you know?'

'Yes. And then my aunt can be responsible for little Claud or Claudine like she was responsible for me.'

'What about him?' Edith said, pointing her nearly-empty glass at Henrik's red-streaked back. 'Are you going to do it with him?'

Vanessa sipped her drink and stared towards Henrik before answering.

'Might. He's very muscular - if a wimp. But I like men with muscles; they're more fun to dominate. And Henrik's has got a nice bum. Like a blank canvas. Needs some creative strokes across it.' She got to her feet and went over to the clothes rack. 'I think I would like to wear a different outfit to finish whipping Henrik.'

Edith came to stand next to her. 'We could dress like French tarts.'

Vanessa giggled to show that she liked the idea. 'I'll be Fifi and you can be Frou Frou.'

'Are they the names of tarts?' Edith asked.

'Frou-Frou was one of the grisettes in the Merry Widow. It's an operetta. I saw it with my aunt. It was really jolly.'

'What's an operetta?'

'Like a musical, but in German. I'm not sure about Fifi but it sounds like a nice French name. That's who I'll be.' She took an armful of scarlet and black clothes and lingerie and fishnet stockings. 'They have more clothes than Harrods.'

Ten minutes later the two girls emerged from the bedroom in basques, fishnet stockings and high-heeled boots. Their faces were caked with roughed-make-up, black eye-liner and scarlet lipstick. 'What do you think?' Vanessa asked in French.

Claude viewed Vanessa with the leering grin of a kerb-crawler. 'Séduisant. Ravissant.'

Pépé viewed Edith with evident shock-horror; he did not seem pleased to see Edith looking like this. But, wisely, he said nothing, otherwise he suspected he might replace Henrik at the whipping post.

Henrik had been strapped to the post all the while Vanessa had decamped into the bedroom with Claude. She went around to the front of the post and looked into his eyes. 'What do you think?' She jumped back in alarm when Henrik spat at her; the globule of spit hitting her on the mound of her left cleavage.

Edith came and stood next to her. 'Did he spit at you?' A speechless Vanessa pointed to the spit dribbling into her up-tilted cleavage. 'I think we need to teach him not to gob,' Edith said. She reached forward and grasped his testicles hanging just below the 'x' of the whipping post. She squeezed lightly.

'I am sorry,' Henrik squealed.

'Not as sorry as you will be when I get my little tube of lipstick out of my

handbag,' Edith said.

Urine started to dribble down Henrik's legs, and the dribble became a stream. Both girls jumped back out of the way. 'Claude, take pictures,' Vanessa shouted in French.

Obediently, and quick as a flash - or as quick as his manacles would allow - Claude came around and flashed his camera at what was now a deluge. The two girls were giggling. P  p   looked embarrassed for Henrik. Henrik's eyes were closed.

'I don't think I want P  p   to stay. I think he can be a bit squeamish. Can you tell him in French to go back downstairs and finishing cleaning up the apartment. Also, tell him to change the sheets. I like sleeping in a nice clean bed.'

Vanessa translated what Edith had said, adding that P  p  's should leave the two guns on the chair in case the girls needed to shoot Henrik or Claude. P  p   seemed relieved to be allowed to go. He went without saying a word. 'Sweet, isn't he,' Edith said to her friend.

'We'll need to ask him why he has guns,' Vanessa said.

'Probably as protection against these two,' Edith said, looking malevolently at both Henrik and Claude. 'As well as needing a gun to rob banks.'

'I think Claude is sweet,' Vanessa said, 'although he does need a whipping. But Henrik needs more than a whipping. Let's take him into the bedroom.'

'Why into the bedroom?' Edith asked.

'You'll see,' Vanessa said. 'First we make Claude comfortable.' Claude was standing away from the whipping post, having taken compromising pictures.

The looks which Henrik had given Claude, as Claude was snapping, said volumes; the final volume could be summarised as 'you're not my friend anymore'.

'You hold the two guns whilst I unstrap Henrik from the post. Don't hesitate to shoot him if he spits at you.'

Vanessa paused whilst Edith collected the two handguns from the chair where P  p   had left them. Then Edith pressed the barrel of one of the guns into the nape of Henrik's neck as Vanessa unstrapped his arms from the post, pulled his arms behind his back and clicked handcuffs over his wrists. Then she unstrapped his ankles.

He stepped away from the post. Edith stepped back in tandem keeping the gun against his neck. 'I don't think you need to point the gun at Henrik, darling. He's not going to cause a problem. Point it at Claude instead,' Vanessa said.

Claude blinked and looked worried when the gun was pointed at him instead of Henrik. Quickly, and in order to show his co-operation, he stepped forward so that his front was against the cross and raised his arms to be strapped and widened his legs so that Vanessa could easily strap him to the post. Having strapped him, she gave his buttocks a light pat and said in French. 'Be back in a few minutes, darling. We're just going to give Henrik a few lessons in manners and teach him not to spit at young ladies.'

Inside, the bedroom, Vanessa closed the door. 'On your back on the bed.' Henrik assumed he was going to be tortured and stood stock still. 'If I have to tell you twice what's going to happen to you will be twice as painful.' Slowly, he edged onto the bed and lay full length on his back, his handcuffed wrists in the small of his back, his eyes wide open with fear. His face looked grey; his penis putty-soft.

Standing by the side of the bed holding her whip, Vanessa looked down at his groin. Edith, also now holding a whip instead of two gun, stood next to Vanessa. 'Why have you made him go on his back?'

Henrik watched, with mounting anxiety, as Vanessa took Edith by the arm and lead her into the corner of the room where she whispered into Edith's ear. 'My mother told me that having me at a young age made her grow up quickly. I would like to be like my mother. She also said she would like to be a grandmother at a young age - she's thirty six - so I would like to oblige. Also I've just remembered, she likes blond children with blue eyes. On reflection, I think I might have jumped the gun with Claude. His children will probably be a bit on the dark side with brown eyes and jet-black hair.'

Edith listened to Vanessa with a degree of incredulity, and whispered back. 'You wouldn't catch me having a bun in the oven at my age. P  p  's going to have to use those rubber-Johnny things.'

'We both know he's a bank robber. If you're his girlfriend you'll get into trouble with him. And I'm not talking about buns in ovens. Your best bet is to help Claude and me with the magazine. We can make lots of money.'

Henrik felt even more anxiety as the two girls kept whispering, and then looked over their shoulder at him, and then turned their faces to the wall again, and Edith whispered to Vanessa. 'How are you going to make it go

firm enough?'

'They usually go stiff if you touch them.'

'I'm not touching it. He's just pissed himself like my stepdad used to do.'

'Maybe we should see if one of the magazine's helps?'

'Do you mean we should show him some of the pictures?'

'Yes. That's why men buy magazines like this, isn't it. To make them go stiff.'

'Worth a try I suppose.'

Henrik watched the two girls come towards him. His penis shrivelled even more. Vanessa smiled at him. 'Henrik, darling, we are going to make you go stiff.'

"Are you going to kill me?'

'We will unless you go stiff.' She pointed to his crotch so that he would get the message. She picked up a magazine from a pile in a corner. She flicked through the pages. All of the photos were black and white; a bit out of focus and, to Vanessa's mind, not very interesting. 'I don't think this stuff would make anyone go stiff apart from with boredom.'

Edith was flicking through other magazines. 'They'll all fairly uninteresting.'

'You wait until the next edition comes out with me as editor,' Vanessa said. 'I'm going to have a another word with Claude.'

The muscles in Claude's back tensed and his buttock's clenched as Vanessa came out of the bedroom and around the whipping post to face him. She was smiling pleasantly, and spoke in French. 'I need some advice, darling. As you are a man I would you like you to tell me how to make a man's penis go stiff enough to fuck me.' He didn't answer but looked down at his own penis. It was wavering upwards. Vanessa followed his line of sight. "You don't seem to have any trouble getting yours to go stiff, but Henrik does. Why is that?'

Claude looked embarrassed. 'Now I know Henrik does not like women so much.'

'He fucked Francine.'

'In her bottom after he made her wear a moustache.'

'So, he's ...'

Claude's penis wilted as he said the French word for homosexual as if to indicate that this was not his bent.

Vanessa was not someone easily dissuaded from a plan of action. 'I would

like Henrik to fuck me. I would like you to tell me how to make him go stiff enough to do that.'

Claude's shoulders shrugged, even though his arms were strapped to the whipping post, to say that he had no idea how to do this.

Just then, Edith emerged from the bedroom with the magazine which had no women. 'Looking at these pictures they seem to go stiff if one bloke sucks it.' She held out the open magazine for Vanessa to view.

'Disgusting,' Vanessa said. 'Would you suck one?'

Edith looked at the picture again. 'I might do if it was Pépé's. Would you suck one.' Both girls looked down at Claude's slanting, longingly, upwards.

'I suppose it's something you get used to, like eating carrots,' Vanessa said.

'Or a banana,' Edith said.

'Claude's is more like a banana than a carrot,' Vanessa said. 'Have you got one of the guns?'

'Are we going to shoot him?'

'No. I'm going to unstrap him from the post and then handcuff him.'

Claude was getting better at deciphering the English conversation. And guns worried him. 'I not struggle,' he said meekly.

'You had better not,' Vanessa said, reaching up to unstrap his wrists. Edith watched, ready to run for Pépé's two handguns which she had left on a chair in the corner. But Claude did not struggle. His penis stiffened to a 'ram-rod' state as Vanessa handcuffed him.

'I think he likes being tied up by a woman,' Edith said.

'I think he's a masochist,' Vanessa said.

'What that?'

'A man who likes being beaten up by a woman.'

'Are there women who like being beaten up by a man?' Edith asked.

'I shouldn't think so. Let's get him into the bedroom.'

Henrik raised his head off the pillow as the three entered. Vanessa came over to the bed with a wide smile, as Edith held Claude just inside the door. 'Miss us?'

'What are you going to do,' Henrik asked.

'We going to give you a treat. But first I'm going to do a strip tease for you, not that I'm entirely sure how you do a strip tease.'

'You take off your clothes,' Henrik said.

'Is that all,' Vanessa said, starting to strip.

Henrik's penis remained flaccid as she stripped. Claude's penis regained its rigidity.

'Right, now we get down to business. Edith, bring Claude over here. Henrik, edge yourself closer to the edge of the bed.' Henrik did not move so Vanessa picked up one of the whips and flicked it across his groin. Immediately, he edged his body closer to the edge of the bed.

Edith gripped Claude's upper arm and led him to the side of the bed. 'Kneel,' Vanessa ordered. He knelt, staring at Henrik's penis which had begun to stir itself slightly in the hope, perhaps, of close contact with Claude's mouth. It was not to be disappointed.

An amused-looking Edith stood behind Claude as Vanessa placed her palm on the back of his neck and pushed his upper body forward so that his head hovered over Henrik's penis, which rose to greet him, like a sunflower in search of the sun.

Vanessa smiled sweetly at Edith. 'Pass me one of the guns, darling.' Edith picked one of the guns from the seat of a chair and handed it to her friend. Vanessa jabbed the gun into the back of Claude's cranium. 'Suck it.'

He closed his eyes and covered the head of Henrik's penis with his lips. Henrik's buttocks almost lifted off the bed to facilitate his shaft going further into Claude's mouth. Edith giggled. The penis was gorged with blood and iron hard.

'Off,' Vanessa commanded, gripping Claude's hair and pulling his head backwards. Gratefully, his torso straightened, and he knelt back on his haunches as Vanessa quickly straddled Henrik's midriff and gripping the still-firm shaft, looked down between her own thighs to gauge the angle of entry and impaled herself onto it, sliding down so that her buttocks hit Henrik's thighs. Claude's look had a touch of envy. Henrik looked like a gourmet, allergic to lobster, being presented with a plateful of thermidor 'on the house'.

'That wasn't much fun,' Vanessa said, as she dismounted. 'I've had a bigger thrill eating cabbage.'

'I don't know why you did that,' Edith said.

'I told you. My mother likes blond, blue-eyed children.'

'You've got reddish hair and green eyes,' Edith said.

'Probably explains why she's never had much to do with me.'

'What are we going to do with these two?' Edith asked, indicating the two males; Henrik on his back on the bed with a limp penis, and Claude still on his knees by the side of the bed, also with a limp penis.

Vanessa stared at Henrik and then at Claude; making up her mind before answering. 'We keep Claude and get rid of Henrik.'

Edith saw Henrik shiver. 'Do you mean we shoot, Henrik? Or we could string him up with a noose, like they do in cowboy films. I think I would like to do that.'

Vanessa stared at Henrik a long time before saying, 'Turn over onto your stomach.' Slowly he turned as directed. 'Hand me a whip, darling,' Vanessa asked Edith, who obliged. 'We never got around to whipping his arse. You whip it from that side of the bed and I'll whip it from this side.' She dangled the snake-tongue end of her whip so that it was resting on the cleavage of Henrik's buttocks. His tied-hands, with upturned palms, were covering his buttocks. 'Wrists up,' Vanessa ordered, and gave his palms a light slash when he took too long in raising his arms up his back.

'Not very obedient, is he,' Edith said. 'I think that calls for double the punishment. How many are we going to give him?'

'I was thinking of a hundred.'

'Is that each?'

'Yes. Two hundred is a nice round number.'

'Look, you bitches, just let me go,' Henrik yelled.

'I don't think I like being called a bitch,' Vanessa said.

'Neither do I,' Edith agreed. 'Maybe we should just shoot him.'

'Yes, I think we should.'

'Let me go now and you won't ever see me again. You can have my share of the business.' Then he muttered peevishly, 'It's not worth anything anyway.'

'Deal,' Vanessa said. 'I'll untie you, but Edith will keep both guns pointed at you and she won't hesitate to shoot.'

Ten minutes later, having dressed quickly before the girls changed their minds about letting him go, Henrik left the building without so much as giving Claude, his erstwhile partner, a glance or saying goodbye.

Claude sat on the bed, still naked, and still with his hands tied behind his back as Vanessa and Edith returned to the big room, having escorted Henrik to the door at gunpoint. Edith went over to the rack of clothes. 'Can I borrow a costume?' Without waiting for an answer she took a costume; a monk's habit with a hood. And, with a smile, left to go downstairs taking the monk's costume with her.

Still grinning to herself Vanessa returned to the bedroom holding one of

the guns. She stood stock still and stared at the naked Claude. 'Stand up.' He stood. So did his penis. Vanessa came close to him and fondled the shaft. 'From now on, Cherie, this is mine. Understood?' Claude nodded. 'I'm going to untie you and you are going to fuck me again as if you were my boyfriend. But actually you are my slave.' He nodded again. She put the gun on a chair. 'And I going to trust you not to attack me. Because if you do, my friend Edith will tell my mother straight away. She knows where my mother is. And my mother was with the Maquis during the war. And she still has many friends who were in the Maquis with her. And as you know, they are very violent people. They will come after you. Do we understand each other?' He nodded. 'Then after we have fucked I would like you to escort me on a guided tour of the naughty areas in Paris.'

NINE

RED LIGHTS

'Rue Saint-Denis is where there is a big number of demi-monde ladies,' Claude said in stilted English. She sat up in bed, her back propped against the bedhead, naked, smoking a Gauloise and drinking absinthe; a vision of decadence. Also naked, Claude was drinking red wine and smoking; his buttocks smoking-hot from a whipping and his penis limp from exhaustion.

'You can take me there after we've had another fuck,' she said, in a slightly slurred voice. 'I really enjoy you fucking me.'

Vanessa had only one change of clothes with her, and an hour later, an 'English rose', in an 'in Vogue' frock and fur-wrap and pill-box,, was 'blooming' amongst the 'hot-houses' of the Rue Saint-Denis. People on the street were looking at her. She looked as out of place as a tart at a vicarage tea party.

Claude was worried. She was attracting more attention than the ladies for hire. And, clearly, the ladies for hire were not happy about that; neither were their pimps, who, as Claude knew, could be violent. And he did not have a gun. A thought occurred to him, and he whispered to his companion, 'Did you bring a gun?'

'No, Cherie. Why, do you think we should have brought one? How exciting.' There was a gleam in her eye, as though a boyfriend had just suggested they should see the new film, High Noon with Gary Cooper and Grace Kelly. 'Isn't it fun here. Can we go into one of the bookshops?'

'Non.'

'Oui,' Vanessa insisted. 'I would like to see what naughty magazines are on offer; see what the competition looks like as I am now a publisher. This shop looks the biggest.'

'It is not safe for an English lady.'

Vanessa giggled. 'Of course it is. I'm sure I'll be quite safe. There's even a policeman on the corner. He seems to be looking this way.' She pointed to a gendarme loitering under a lamp post and staring at them.

Claude gripped her by the arm and hurried her underneath the garish neon sign which read 'Cat House' and through the beaded curtain. 'Darling, please don't hold my arm so tight. I bruise as easily as your bum.'

A man in a dirty shirt, and with an even dirtier face, sat at a counter just inside the door. He stared at Vanessa, without blinking. She smiled at him, like a 'lady of the manor' just popping in for a postage stamp would smile at the village-postmaster. Stumps of yellow teeth leered back at her. 'We have any picture book you would like in here, mademoiselle.'

'You speak good English,' she said to him.

'I live many years in Dartmoor.'

'Its lovely in Devon, isn't it. My aunt has a holiday place near Chagford.'

He smiled, almost wistfully, 'I did not travel much in England.' Then he brightened. 'What book does mademoiselle like to see?'

'I like pictures of women whipping men.' She said this in French, quite loudly. The man grinned at her, and then grinned at Claude. Claude did not grin back.

The man pointed to a table in a corner. 'Ah, le vice-anglais pour un homme. And we have whips over there for madam to chose.' He pointed to shelves.

'I already have plenty of whips,' she said in French. At this, Claude held her firmly by the arm and dragged her out of the shop. 'Why did you do that?' she said angrily, stamping her heel on the pavement to emphasise her displeasure, with the gendarme in close earshot.

'We go,' Claude said.

'No. I like it here.' She stamped a high heel again.

'It is dangerous,' Claude said.

'It can't be that dangerous, there are police about.'

Claude spoke close to her ear, 'They are paid not to see.'

'You mean like one of the three wise monkeys?' Claude did not fully understand the reference, but nodded. A man bumped into her deliberately, feeling her breasts as he did so. Vanessa jumped back as though she had been stung by a wasp, and collided with another man who squeezed her buttocks. Vanessa swung around and made as if to slap the 'squeezer's' face, but she

thought better of it, and her slapping-arm froze in mid air as she realised she was about to hit a policeman. Two girls in doorways laughed.

'We go,' Claude hissed. Vanessa did not resist as he marched her down the street, so quickly that they almost collided with a man in a raincoat and trilby exiting another sex shop. The man looked furtive, but politely raised the brim of his hat and said 'pardon' averting his eyes from both of them. Despite saying only one word, Vanessa gleaned that the accent was English. In that fleeting moment, she had also recognised the man. He walked away at a fast trot, like a stallion under the whip, ignoring invitations from the fillies in the doorways.

'I would like to follow him,' Vanessa said, pointing to the man's back.

'Why? Who is he?' Claude asked.

'Someone I had a brief encounter with,' she said, stomping ahead of Claude. He caught up to her. 'Where are we going?'

'Same place he is,' Vanessa replied, somewhat breathlessly as they were walking as fast as her high heels could click. They were about fifty paces behind when Reggie Carmichael dodged yet another invitation to a lovers' tryst and entered the subterranean vaults of the Sébastopol Metro.

'It is very expensive in there,' Claude said, standing a few minutes later at the entrance to the George Cinq hotel and being eyed by a watchful, splendidly-uniformed doorman in case the pair were up to no good. They had followed Reggie, like two deerstalkers on the track of a rutting stag, without being spotted, or so they thought.

Another figure had followed them from the Rue Saint-Denis without being spotted, and was now keeping a watchful distance across the road from the hotel.

'I've been in more posh hotels than I've had le rosbif,' Vanessa said to Claude. 'Follow me.' She smiled imperiously at the doorman, who felt intimidated enough to give her a formal tilt of his peaked cap by way of a salute. She went straight to the reception desk and gave a haughty look at the snooty receptionist. 'I am expecting,' Vanessa said in French, with a pregnant pause, 'to meet a Mr Reginald Carmichael.'

The receptionist looked down at a list, and then up at Vanessa, and answered in English, as Parisians are prone to do when an English person speaks French. 'You are Madame Stannard?'

'Mademoiselle Stannard.'

'Monsieur Carmichael is expecting you. He is in Le Bar.' The receptionist

directed her gaze and fluttered her eyelids at Claude, who was standing behind Vanessa, much to Vanessa's annoyance at both of them.

'He is expecting me?' Vanessa queried, trying to keep the surprise out of her voice.

'Yes. He instructed me that when Madame Stannard arrives...'

'He said madame not mademoiselle?'

The receptionist looked a bit flustered. 'I am sorry, I cannot remember whether he said madame or mademoiselle.'

'It doesn't matter. Claude go and sit on the chair in the corner and you may have a drink whilst I go into the bar.'

Vanessa had spoken in French. The receptionist looked surprised, and not a little annoyed on Claude's behalf, at the imperious way Vanessa had spoken to him. This man was a gorgeous hunk and should not be brow-beaten by a rude English girl. Her eyes opened wider when, sheepishly, Claude obeyed the instruction and went to the chair in the corner.

The receptionist returned her astonished attention to Vanessa. 'My gentleman friend would like a beer and I would like champagne. I assume that Mr Carmichael has a tab behind the bar.' The receptionist nodded. 'Monsieur Carmichael will pay.'

'Very good, mademoiselle.'

'I shall expect vintage Krug,' Vanessa said over her shoulder, as she flounced away from the reception desk and towards Le Bar.

Reggie was sitting in an alcove engrossed in Paris Match and he did not see Vanessa approach. 'Hello, Reggie darling.'

His eyebrows shot up at the sound of her voice. 'Vanessa! What are you doing here?'

She bend forward and gave him a peck on his cheek. 'The receptionist said you were expecting me.'

'She did?'

'Yes.' Vanessa slid onto the leather-padded armchair opposite Reggie and crossed her legs, making sure that a glossy-length of silk-stockings thigh was on view.

'How did you know I was here? And what are you doing in Paris?'

'I spotted you in the Rue Saint-Denis coming out of a dirty bookshop.'

She spoke quite loudly in English in a crystal clear voice. A nearby couple stopped their conversation and listened. Reggie flushed and leaned forward and said in a whisper, 'Please keep your voice down. That couple are

American.'

'Of course, my sweet,' she whispered back. And then asked in a lower whisper, 'What did you buy? May I have a look.'

'I didn't buy anything.'

'You had a brown paper parcel.'

'No.'

'I saw it. It was about the size of a magazine.'

Reggie's cheeks flushed with embarrassment and then with anger. 'Vanessa, my reading habits have nothing to do with you.'

Vanessa, sat back in her chair and smiled sweetly. 'I'm interested because I am now the editor of a naughty magazine. Would you like to subscribe?'

'No thank you,' Reggie said, glancing over towards the Americans in case they were still eavesdropping; they were.' He leaned forward towards Vanessa who leaned forward towards him so that the tips of their noses almost touched. 'Does your mother know?' he whispered.

'Are you threatening to tell my mother, Reggie, because if you are that sounds to me like blackmail. And when it comes to blackmail I am an expert. You tell my mother that I am producing a naughty magazine and I will tell all your friends, including my mother, that you are a sex pervert.'

'I am not a sex pervert,' he almost shouted, causing the American lady to spill her sweet Martini.

Further discussion about whether Reggie was or was not a pervert was quelled by the arrival of a waiter with a crystal glass of champagne. 'For mademoiselle,' the waiter said, placing the glass on the small table between them.

'I take it you placed the order, Vanessa.' She smiled as she sipped. 'I'll have a double brandy,' he said to the waiter.

'And could you give the gentleman sitting on the chair in reception a beer on Monsieur Carmichael's account,' Vanessa said to the waiter.

'Who is this gentleman?' Reggie asked when the waiter had departed on his errand.

'My friend, Claude. He's now my business partner. He was with me when I saw you come out of the dirty book shop with your brown paper parcel. Do you want me to tell him to come in?'

Reggie blushed. "No. What is it that you want, Vanessa?'

'Want, Reggie? I just wanted to see you and chat over old times. Is your wife with you in Paris?'

'No.'

'In that case, we can pick up where we left off.'

'Left off?'

'I was just about to tie you up and belt your bottom with my belt when your wife arrived. Don't you remember?'

The American man nearly choked on a peanut.

Just then the waiter returned with Reggie's brandy and a message in French. 'There is a message for Monsieur Carmichael in reception. Madame has been delayed at Croydon airport. She will be here in two hours and will meet you in your room, monsieur.'

The American couple had edged their chairs closer. Reggie saw this out of the corner of his eye. 'Finish your drink, Vanessa. And then you'll have to leave.'

'I don't want to leave you all alone, Reggie darling. And your visitor isn't here for another couple of hours. Let's go up to your room shall we and have some fun.' Deliberately, she escalated the volume of her voice as she said this, causing the Americans to snigger and Reggie to blush somewhat furiously.

'Come, Vanessa,' he said, getting up from his chair quickly.

She drained her glass of champagne and, with an enchanting smile at the Americans, followed Reggie out of Le Bar. In reception, she looked towards the corner where she had instructed Claude to sit. The chair was vacant.

'Reggie, wait for me a moment, I need to speak to the receptionist.' He paused at the foot of the sweeping staircase, as Vanessa went over to the reception desk. The receptionist almost glared at Vanessa as she approached. 'Where is the gentleman who came in with me,' she asked in English.

The receptionist gave a smile, which had a hint of triumph. 'Monsieur has left you, mademoiselle. He asked me to give you a message. He is not a traite des blanches ...' She paused, searching for the English words,

'A white slave,' Vanessa translated for her.

'Oui. He is not a white slave.'

'Yes, he is,' Vanessa said with a smile at the receptionist and then glanced at Reggie. She nodded to him as if instructing him to lead the way upstairs. He mounted the stairs. Vanessa turned to the receptionist. 'The English gentleman is also a white slave.'

'Don't just stand there, Reggie darling, take off your clothes. I would like to see you in your birthday suit.' Vanessa and he were standing by the side of the king-size double bed in Reggie's hotel room.

'Look, Vanessa, this has gone far enough.'

'I intend to go further. In fact, much further than I went in your house. We've only got two hours or so before your lady friend arrives, whoever she is. I just need you to kiss me quickly, as they say at the seaside, and then fuck me slowly. And then I'll go before your lady friend gets here.' Reggie stood like a statue, causing Vanessa to look petulant. 'Reggie darling, unless you start stripping within the next five seconds I will start screaming rape.'

'I'm not going to rape you.'

'You are going to try,' Vanessa said, raising her hands to her bust and gripping the material as if she was going to rip it apart and expose her brassiere. 'You are going to try to rip my dress off me and try to fuck me against my will. And I will scream and scream.' Then her left hand hitched up the front of her skirt and pushed down her knickers to her groin. 'The story is you enticed a young woman - me - into your bedroom to discuss Sartre and existentialism when you intended to demonstrate de Sade and sadism.'

'No one would believe you.'

'Doesn't matter if they believe me or not. But it will be in the papers and on the wireless. Plus, my mother will get to know and will kill you painfully, as she is prone to do to men when they upset her.'

'That was in wartime. This is not fair.'

'There is a saying, Reggie darling, all is fair in war and love.'

'It's the other way around. And we're not at war and you don't love me.'

'I might love you. In fact, I might marry you. You have a really nice cock.'

'I'm married already.'

'There is such a thing as divorce. You have one second left.'

He put his hands up to his shoulders in a gesture of surrender. 'You win.' She watched as he stripped to his underwear. 'Knickers down please,' she said pointing to his underpants. Slowly, he pushed his underpants below his testicles to reveal a penis slanting at the ornate ceiling. Vanessa viewed it with an appreciative eye. 'You are rather big, Reggie. I've been fucked by two men today, and actually, of the three cocks, I think yours is the biggest.'

Reggie almost blushed at the compliment. Then he looked displeased. 'You've been fucked by two men today?'

'Yes. I just said that.'

'Who were they?'

'Claude and his friend, Henrik. Although, I don't think Henrik is Claude's friend anymore.'

'Did they rape you?'

"No, of course not. I made them do it to me. Want me to show you how I made them do it?"

'No. Your mother will be very displeased.'

'I'm trying to get pregnant.' Reggie's penis softened. 'My mother would like to be a grandmother at an early age.'

'No she wouldn't.'

'How do you know? I know you met my mother during the war. You said so on the train. But have you met her recently?'

'No.'

'Are you a father, Reggie?'

'No.'

"You ought to be. You're not that young anymore, if you don't mind me mentioning it. You must be all of forty. I'm thinking that perhaps I ought to do it three times today with three different men. As they say, three times lucky. What do you say, Reggie?"

His response was to cover his crotch with both hands like a maiden about to be ravished. 'Your mother would kill me. And she'll kill those two men.'

'Perhaps. But am I not worth dying for, Reggie? It would be ever so romantic if you thought so.'

'I'm not going to have sex with you, Vanessa.' He backed away as he said this, until his back was against the Toile de Jouy wallpaper.

'That's a pity, because I've decided you are going to marry me.' She came close to him; her pouting mouth close to his.

His eyes held panic and fear. 'I'm married. I don't want to get divorced. And I don't want to get married again.'

'What you want is irrelevant. It is what I want that matters. And I've decided I want you to fuck me. And be the father of my child. At least there will be a one in three chance that you will.'

'Can I use a condom?'

'No. Get on your back on the bed.' He didn't move, although his penis stiffened. 'Unless you do as I tell you I'll start screaming.' She started to undress as she spoke.

Watching her, he climbed onto the bed and lay on his back as instructed, his neck arched off the pillow to watch her step out of her panties, and her fulsome hips sway towards the bed. She straddled him, one knee either side of his midriff.

'Are you going to be a good boy and not struggle or shall I tie you?' He shook his head, and she took this as confirmation that he would behave himself and not struggle and she would not need to tie him. Then she spotted his tie carefully laid on the shoulder of his suit jacket on a hanger in the open wardrobe. 'Actually, I think I will tie you. Roll onto your stomach.' Knowing that resistance was futile, and she was about to have her wicked way with him, he twisted onto his stomach as she fetched the tie and straddled his buttocks. 'Hands behind your back.' He crossed his wrists and she tied them, making a second knot like a big floppy bow on a birthday parcel.

'It's a Hermès silk tie,' he said. 'Don't spoil it. My wife gave it to me as a birthday present.'

'You are a bit of a dandy, darling. But I like a man with nice clothes. Claude dresses like a gypsy. His clothes are not exactly to my taste.' She knelt up straight and looked down at him. 'On your back again, please.' When he turned, a damp stain was spreading over the eiderdown and his penis was dripping semen. 'I didn't say you could ejaculate. That deserves a beating. I'll use the belt off your trousers.'

'I was wearing braces. I don't have a belt.' Vanessa got off the bed again and looked around for something suitable with which to beat his buttocks.' She could not see anything. 'The belt on my dress is cloth. That's no good.' Inspiration dawned. 'I know. 'You must have a hairbrush.'

'No.'

'All men have hairbrushes.'

'I don't.'

She spotted his closed suitcase next to the wardrobe and clicked the lid. Then rummaged through the case. 'You pack neatly, don't you. Or, perhaps your wife packed for you.' She picked out a magazine as she spoke. 'What's this?' She flicked through the pages. 'It's one of the Red Windmill's magazines. Women spanking men.' She giggled. 'You really do like being spanked by a female, don't you, Reggie. Does your wife spank you?'

'No.'

'Oh dear, how disappointing for you. So you have to resort to going into dirty bookshops and reading spanking magazines. Never mind. When we're

married I'll spank you as often as I feel like it, which will be several times a day. And you'll be able to read these magazines for free as I now own the Red Windmill publishing company.' She paused. 'What's this?' Gingerly, she took a revolver from the case. 'Why have you got a gun hidden in your suitcase?'

'Be careful. It's loaded.'

'You haven't answered my question.'

'I have always carried a gun since the war; force of habit. Don't touch the safety catch.'

She examined the gun carefully. 'I would like a gun. Perhaps I'll keep this one. Although, it's a bit heavy.'

'It's army issue.'

'Is it. You told me, when we first met, that you worked for the Government.'

'I do.'

'So, do you chase spies? Is that why you have a gun?'

'I work in an office in London. In Whitehall. I don't chase spies.'

'You're lying to me again, Reggie. I think you're a special agent. Like Dick Barton.'

'I'm not. I'm a boring civil servant.'

With a flaring of her nostrils to indicate that she still not believe him, but having satisfied herself that there was nothing further of interest in the suitcase, Vanessa closed the lid of the suitcase and then opened the wardrobe door rattling the empty coat hangers. 'A wooden coat hanger; just the thing to beat you with.' She reached into the wardrobe and took out a hanger for a jacket without a bar. 'This will do. I think you need to bend over a chair.' She swished the hanger in the air. 'Wood's a bit thick. I think this is going to leave some welts and bruising.'

'You can't use that on me.'

'Yes I can.' She went over to the chair at the small writing bureau and repositioned the chair at the foot of the bed where there was plenty of room to swing an arm attached to a coat hanger. 'I want you to bend over this chair.'

He didn't move from the bed, but stared up at her defiantly. Slowly, she put the hanger on the seat of the chair and went over to the gun which she had placed on the bureau, out of harm's way. She picked it up, swivelled the barrel to check it was loaded, then released the safety catch. She looked pleased with herself at having worked out how to release the catch. She smiled at him. 'I could shoot you, Reggie. And then I will embellish the story.'

You forced me to undress at the point of a gun, but you were careless; you dropped the gun in your haste to drop your trousers and, as quick as a flash of a gun, I managed to grab the gun and shoot you. Pop! Straight through the heart. Or I might even shoot you a bit lower in the groin area.'

He paled, and without comment or a response, he levered himself off the bed and went to stand behind the chair in a position to bend over its back. His penis, which had been limp, was wavering upwards to resemble, once again, a leaning tower. She came close behind him, as he remained standing straight, his tied hands covering his buttocks. 'Lift', she ordered. Slowly, he raised his tied and crossed wrists into the small of his back.

She patted his right buttock with the palm of her right hand with the hanger clamped under her left armpit. 'I'm just noticing that you've got distinct marks and lines across your bum, like faint scars. I'm not an expert - yet, but I would guess your bum has been whipped and caned many times. Is that right or wrong?' He didn't answer. She gave his buttock a mild slap. 'Answer.' He stayed silent and received a harder slap. 'My palm is beginning to sting. So now I'm going to use the hanger on your arse.'

'It's too thick. It will cause me permanent damage.'

'Oh, dear. My heart bleeds for you, just as your bum is going to bleed.'

He swallowed heavily before replying in a low, croaky voice. 'There's a small whip you can use in my suitcase.'

'I've just searched your suitcase. I didn't see a whip. I think you're playing for time in the hope your lady friend, whoever she is, arrives earlier than expected and saves you from a beating, just as your wife arrived and saved you from a beating by me in your home in London.' She paused. 'It's not your wife who you're expecting, is it?'

'No.'

'Good. She looked a bit prim and proper, if you don't mind me saying so. Did she beat you after I left?'

'No.'

'I bet she gave you a tongue-lashing, though. She looked the sort that has a lot to say. Bit like my aunt; the lady you saw with me at the train station.'

'A very attractive lady.'

'You like thin, birdlike women, do you? Is that why you don't like me very much, as I've got hips and boobs and a biggish bum?' She opened the lid of his suitcase, as she spoke, and rummaged through the packed items. 'Still can't see a whip. Is it an invisible whip; bit like the emperor's new clothes?'

'The suitcase has a false bottom.'

'Really, how clandestine. You probably are a secret agent; or perhaps a spy.' She pulled all the clothes and toiletries out of the case. 'How do you open the false bottom?'

'Click the inside of the left-clasp.'

She clicked as instructed, and a lid covering the bottom sprang open. A small whip lay coiled with some handcuffs, and also a paperback book. 'As a matter of interest, Reggie darling, why have you got a concealed whip and handcuffs? Who are they intended for? This whip looks vicious.'

'My lady visitor likes to pretend she's the protagonist in *Venus in Furs*.'

'How decadent. I have heard of that book and would really like to read it. Is this it?' She picked up the paperback. 'No, this book is called *'White Slavery'*. Are you a white slaver, Reggie?'

'No.'

Vanessa sat on the edge of the bed with the book and read the blurb. 'An exposé of white slavers in Europe in modern times. Beautiful young women kidnapped from cities like Paris and Stockholm and sent to brothels in North Africa. Many French and Swedish girls have been kidnapped. Dear me, this is dreadful reading. Don't they like English girls? Why do they prefer French and Swedish? And why are you reading this stuff, Reggie?' He didn't answer. but closed his eyes and lay prone on the bed. 'Were your little whip and handcuffs meant for a white slave, Reggie; possibly me - even if I'm neither French or Swedish?'

'No.'

'You're very fond of saying 'no', aren't you, Reggie. If in doubt say 'no'.'

'I'm not a white slaver,' he said, still with his eyes closed.

'I'm going to have to beat the truth out of you, Reggie.'

'I am telling the truth,' he almost whimpered.

'Let me look in the index - see if I can find your name - no, it doesn't appear to be listed. But you probably use a false name when you're doing a spot of white slavery.' She put the book down, and took the whip from the case and cracked its tail in the air. 'Wow! I like this whip. It feels nice in my hand. Although, I don't expect it will feel nice across your back and arse.'

'I will tell you the truth,' he said in desperation.

Just then, they heard a knock at the bedroom door. 'Want me to answer the door, Reggie?'

'Bellboy,' a voice called.

'Looks as though you've been saved by the bellboy, Reggie darling, 'for the moment.' Hastily, she pulled on her dress to cover her nakedness, and opened the door so that it was just ajar and peeped out into the corridor. A figure wearing the uniform of a hotel bellboy stood in the doorway.

He moved slightly to one side to allow another figure, a woman, to leap into view and press a gun against Vanesa's forehead, and say in English in a low voice, 'Don't scream. It's got a silencer. Let us in.' Vanessa opened the door wide, and both newcomers came fully into the room and the bellboy kicked the door shut behind him with his heel.

The woman pulled Vanessa bodily, by her arm, to the foot of the bed. Reggie lay prone, his mouth open in evident shock-horror but he made no sound. He was not in a position to intervene, tied as he was on the bed, naked.

Everything seemed to Vanessa to be in slow motion. Her vision was blurred. But she had recognised the woman's voice. Gripping Vanessa by the hair, the woman forced her to stand still, and then pulled her arms behind her back. The point of the gun pushed into the side of Vanessa's head.

'Resist and I will shoot.' Emilia said. The bellboy was Pierre. Vanessa had whipped them both that morning in the Red Windmill.

'I will do what you want,' Vanessa said, her voice a frightened whisper. Cold metal encircled her wrists. She was handcuffed.

'Let's go,' Emilia said.

'Where are you taking her?' Reggie called out in French.

He said no more when Emilia went over to him and pointed the gun at his head, the knuckle of her trigger-finger went whiter than Reggie's cheeks. The gun clicked as she cocked the gun as if ready to fire. But instead of firing she spoke in English. 'Say anything to the police and you will be assassinated by one of my gang.' He nodded, with his eyes closed, and his mouth tightly shut.

Without looking at the faces of her captors, one on each side of her, holding her upper arms, Vanessa allowed herself to be frog-marched along the plush-carpeted hotel corridor. They were abducting her.

They knew the geography of the hotel and escorted her through a door marked 'personnel seulement' and down several flights of the stone stairs, normally used by staff and tradesmen, and out into a dark alley. Vanessa did not struggle. The gun dissuaded her from shouting for help. She was breathless at the pace they made her move.

A Citroen van had been backed into the narrow alley. They stopped

behind the van. Emilia opened the van's back doors and Pierre pushed Vanessa's head down so that she doubled up and shuffled her knees onto the floor of the van. A mattress was covering the floor of the van behind the driver's cab. She lay on the mattress as Pierre slid into the van. She looked at him with frightened eyes as he lay next to her. The opened-doors had illuminated a light in the back of the van, and she could see clearly his girlish feature. Under normal circumstances, she would have had an impulse to kiss him.

Pierre had a syringe in his hand. Emilia, holding the van doors semi closed, watched as Pierre jabbed the syringe into Vanessa's arm.

'Sleep tight,' Emilia said in English. And added, 'White slave.'

TEN

MADAME YVONNE

Two hours before Vanessa's kidnap by the white slavers, P  p   was washing dishes, having mastered the new-found art, when Edith returned with a monk's habit. He followed her into the bedroom with a quizzical expression. She handed him the habit. He held it up and inspected it, and then shook his head, to convey the message that he would decline to join the Order. She realised his reluctance, and pouted her disapproval. Just then, there was a knock on the bedroom door and Vanessa called, 'Edith darling, I'm going out with Claude to do some sight-seeing. We'll be gone for most of the evening.' Edith opened the bedroom door and came face to face with Vanessa, who gave her a broad smile. 'Use the facilities upstairs if you need to. Here's the key to upstairs.' Vanessa gave Edith a wink as she said this. Claude was hovering in the doorway. He smiled weakly.

Edith listened to their footsteps going down the stairs and heard the front door bang shut. P  p   had dropped the monk's habit onto the floor. She indicated, by pointing, that he should pick it up, and put it on. Slowly, he began to do so. Edith was not entirely sure what monks did, but probably they did not rob banks, even though the hoods on the habits would be good for keeping faces covered - nearly as good as beards. Possibly that is why Americans called gangsters 'hoods'. But the long robe might be a problem. P  p   would need to hitch it up to his knees in order to scarper at speed with the loot.

Another thought struck her. She thought of floorboards. She would return to the thought of 'floorboards' after she had escorted P  p   upstairs. He was pulling on the monk's habit over his clothes. By waving her hand imperiously, she told him to stop, and follow her. She led the way out of

Pépé's apartment and up the stairs. He mumbled something in French which might have indicated that he did not want to go upstairs, but she ignored him, and he followed. She unlocked the door to the Red Windmill and located the light switches. The rooms were untidy; fetish clothing and instruments of pleasure, or pain, strewn around the room. Edith was not impressed. Males needed to be kept in order. She blamed Vanessa for not stamping her authority to the extent required..

'Take off your clothes.' Pépé stood still, understanding the instruction, but looking around the room for somewhere comfy to copulate. The room they were in was designed, haphazardly, for the pleasure of giving pain. But not for sex as such. He looked at Edith. 'If you want to fuck me take off your clothes.'

He undressed as she examined the rack of clothing from where she had chosen the monk's outfit; maybe there was something more suitable. With a giggle, she examined a costume which comprised a striped jersey, tight-fitting trousers, a mask and a canvas bag with the word 'butin'. A rubber jemmy and a replica pistol were the two items which complemented the costume.

'You'd look very fetching in this costume, Pépé. But stripes never suit me; too busty.' Amused by her own joke, she went over to him and took him lightly by the arm and drew him to the front of the whipping post. 'Arms up.' Without demur, limply he raised his arms and she strapped his wrists to the two posts, then knelt and did the same to his ankles.

'I do like a strapping-man strapped to a whipping post,' she said, quietly to herself, as she went over to the rack of whips and flagellation implements, and chose a flogger. It did not look too vicious. She just wanted to titillate not frighten. She spotted, also, a small flogger. 'Wonder what this is used for?' she asked herself, then grinned when she guessed the answer. Taking both the big and the small flogger, she stood behind the post, facing Pépé.

He stared at the small flogger. 'Non.'

'Oui, oui. Which translates as piss yourself twice, my sweet.' She dropped the larger flogger on the floor and, holding the small flogger in her left hand, the fingers of her right hand stroked and fondled and scratched his shaft to bursting point. Leaving it gasping for relief she stood back and lightly stroked the thongs of the small flogger across the 'trigger point' on the underside, just below the bulbous head. Immediately, it spurted great dollops of sperm as its owner gave a high-pitched scream of pain mingled with ecstasy.

Edith stood to one side, out of the way of the milky-firing line, and waited for subsidence. This took a while. Eventually, it collapsed, like a burst ballon at a party. 'Glad that lot didn't end up in me. I'd be awash with the stuff,' Edith thought to herself, 'I don't want to end up like Vanessa's wants to end up. There was enough in that 'dough' to make a large bloomer-loaf, let alone a bun.' P  p   looked flushed; almost wide-eyed. He flushed more and his eyes opened wider when she bent and picked up the big flogger.

'Non,' he pleaded, as she went behind his back.

'You've had your fun, P  p   love. Now it's my turn.' Feeling the same tingles she had felt when strapping her stepfather, and then watching Carol whip her gentleman friend, and then beating Tommy in the fish and chip shop, and then his mother, and the previous beatings in the Red Windmill, Edith laid the flogger across P  p  's buttocks. He screamed with pain minus ecstasy.

Edith stood back, her clitoris glowing with pleasure as P  p   made guttural noises which it interpreted as begging for mercy. Her clitoris was in no mood to be merciful. The flogger slashed again. P  p   slumped, held up only by his chained wrists. The floodgates opened on the third slash compelling Edith to drop the flogger and grip and finger her crotch with two free hands. 'Wow! that was good,' Edith said as the tingles eventually receded. 'Probably better than being fucked. And no risk of a bun.'

P  p   started gurgling, almost as if he was choking. Quickly, Edith went behind the whipping post to see his face.

'Non.'

'Enough for today,' Edith said. He did not appear to understand. 'No more today.' She shook her head from side to side to emphasise that she would not be beating him again, at least for a while. 'You just lean there and have a rest. I'm just going to nip downstairs to go to the lav.' He did not understand what she said, and looked worried when she left him strapped to the whipping post.

Edith went past the lavatory on the landing and straight into P  p  's bedroom. She placed all her weight on the floorboards, one after another. They creaked; some more than others. The floorboard next to the bedroom door see-sawed when she stood on it. She knelt and lifted it, as she had lifted the floorboards in her stepfather's room.

She lifted out the metal box. It was not locked. Inside were bundles of French, high-denomination, bank notes. P  p   was richer than he looked. Somehow this did not come as a surprise to Edith. Her stepfather had also

been richer than he looked. until she relieved him of his piggy bank. But what interested her most was not the money but the notebook underneath the bundles of money. She flipped through the notebook.

Two minutes later she was back upstairs. P  p   looked pleased to see her. He looked less pleased when he saw she had his prized tin box.

'Non.'

'P  p  , darling, I really don't know why you say 'non' all the time. Is it because you expect me to whip you. But you're probably not understanding what I'm saying. I need someone to translate. And Vanessa's missing. But I thought I saw a telephone up here.' She was now speaking to herself.

She glanced towards the small desk in the far corner of the room, and went over to it. She sat in the chair and picked up the handset, dubiously, like a person lifting a stone and not being sure what they would find underneath. A crackling voice spoke to her in French. She put the phone down as though it had become red hot. Taking a deep breath after thinking for a moment she picked up the receiver again, and imitated Vanessa's upperclass English accent. 'I wish to telephone England.'

'Yes, madam, what number would you like?' The voice now spoke English. Edith said Carol's telephone number, which she had memorised in anticipation, that sooner or later, she would need it. She heard dialling noises and then the French voice speaking in English to a third person.

Carol then spoke loud and clear. 'Edith, darling. How lovely to hear from you.'

'Glad you're still in London.'

'My friend, Henry in Scotland, has got the flu. I've been waiting for him to get better. I will probably leave for Scotland tomorrow.'

Edith was not sure how long the line would remain connected, so she came straight to the point. 'I need someone to translate for me in Paris. Someone who won't blab.'

'You mean, someone who is discreet. Where are you?'

'The Red Windmill. The place you said I should come to in Paris.'

'I have a friend in Paris. Madame Yvonne. She is very, very discreet. I will telephone her now and say my friend, Edith needs help this evening.'

Edith listened intently, with her prodigious memory in gear, as Carol explained how to visit Madame Yvonne. Putting the phone down, with a promise that she would return to London in the not too distant future to resume her business relationship with Carol, alias Scarlet, Edith unstrapped

Pépé from the whipping post. He looked relieved that she was not going to whip him again. He seemed to have a low pain threshold.

After locking the door to the Red Windmill, Edith led the way back to Pépé's floor. While he watched, she filled her purse with a large wad of the notes, then signalled to him to replace the rest of the money in the box under the floorboards, and, after giving him an affectionate kiss of the cheeks, and instructions that he should visit a bank before closing time, she left to find a taxi driver who understood directions in English.

Madame Yvonne's address was in a stately terrace in the Avenue George Cinq, a pebble's throw from the hotel in which Reggie Carmichael was staying. The wrought-iron gate swung open, as if by magic, as Edith reached for the bell. She mounted the stone steps, which could have been marble, to the first floor. Again, a door on the landing opened and she knocked gently on the door which was now ajar.

'Please, my dear, do come in,' a female voice spoke English with a heavy French accent.

Edith had never visited an art gallery, or heard of Watteau, Boucher and Fragonard and their rococo world, but she liked the pictures on the walls. They were proper pictures, you could see the paint; not photographs, even if some of the goings on were not 'proper'. The furnishings and furniture were gilded, and resembled the interiors in some of the paintings; like stepping back in time to the frothy and flouncy, eighteenth's century in France.

Madame Yvonne was a statuesque figure; all hips and bust in clinging red satin. Her face reminded Edith of a photograph in one of the naughty mags at the Red Windmill; a drawing of Venus in Furs scowling at a cowering male. Madame Yvonne had the same high cheeks and disdainful mouth as the Venus. But she was viewing Edith with approval and smiling a welcome. 'Scarlet said that you had the face and figure of a Marie-Louise O'Murphy.'

Edith's face was a blank canvas.

'She was the mistress of Louis the Fifteenth.'

'Fifteenth what?'

'King of France. That is her reclining.' Madame pointed to a picture. 'There is a similar pose in the Louvre. You need to visit the Louvre.'

Edith looked mildly confused. 'I've been, thanks. Might need to go again when I've had a drink.'

'Do sit down on the sofa next to me.' Madame sank her rotunda-posterior onto the squishy velvet and patted the tasseled cushion next to her. 'You will have an aperitif.' She jingled the handbell on the small table next to her.

'Absinthe, please.'

'Ah, you have a taste for decadent living. How chic.' Edith was sitting slanted towards Madame Yvonne who glanced past Edith's shoulder at a side door as it opened and a youth appeared. He glided into the room like a swan on a silvery lake. Turning to view the entrant over her shoulder, Edith was entranced instantly. She had never seen such a beautiful male. He was dressed in a man's flannel suit, but she wondered if he was actually female. 'This is my nephew, Pierre.'

The youth came forward to Edith and took her right hand from her lap and raised her limp wrist to his lips and gave the back of her hand a brushed-kiss. As he did so, his peacock-blue eyes, fringed by impossibly long eyelashes, stared into her eyes, and then at her bust. Edith nearly swooned. 'Je suis enchanté, mademoiselle.'

'Pierre, our guest is English.'

Edith was surprised to see his cheeks blush slightly. 'Pardon, my lady.' Edith allowed her hand to be kissed again.

Madame Yvonne had assumed the withering persona of the 'Venus in Furs' drawing in the Red Windmill magazine. She glared at her nephew and said in English. 'Rudeness to a guest demands a whipping.' Edith's just-kissed hand went to her mouth in astonishment. 'Bring us two glasses of absinthe and a whip, immediately.' The youth blushed, then bowed gracefully to his aunt and went as he had come.

Edith watched him go, and then turned to her hostess. 'Please don't whip him on my account. I didn't mind him speaking French to me.'

'I am not going to whip him.' Edith breathed a sigh of relief. The sigh was followed by a sharp intake of breath as she heard Madame say, 'You are.'

'But he won't like me.'

'Yes he will. He adores any woman who whips him.' She smiled at Edith. 'He will like you. Take off your dress.'

Edith's mouth gaped. She was about to say 'no' and then thought better of it. 'In here?'

'Of course. Oh, but do you find the room cold? We will go to a warmer

room.'

Madame rose majestically, picked up a fan from the table, and wafted air in front of her face as she went to the double doors, then stood to one side to let Edith view the interior of the room next door. This room was almost in darkness. Edith entered a little way and Madame entered behind her and flicked a light switch. The lights cast a muted, reddish glow over black, leather-padded furniture similar to the fixtures and furniture in the Red Windmill; whipping posts, whipping benches, stocks, restraining chains. Edith giggled. 'Bit posher than the Red Windmill but the same sort of stuff. Have you got cameras as well?'

'No cameras. This room is for visitors who like discretion.'

'And their bums whacked.'

Madame looked bemused. 'I understand 'bum'. What is 'whacked'?'

'It's when you beat a bum.'

'Ah, excellent. I learn a new English word every day. You will whack Pierre's bum for me.'

Edith's clitoris glowed with pleasure. Without being reminded to do so by Madame she began to divest. Madame sat in a deeply-padded, leather armchair, strategically placed in front of a set of manacles dangling on chains from a beam, so that a spectator could watch a whipping in comfort. She watched Edith undress.

When Edith was naked, Madame pointed her closed fan at a rack of clothes, similar to the rack of bizarre and erotic costumes in the Red Windmill. 'Wear the costume at the end of the rack.'

Edith went over to the end of the rack and examined the costume at the end. It was not much of a costume; a mask, leather g-string and leather high-heeled boots which came above the knee and would not have looked amiss under a 'Jolly Roger' flag.

Edith slipped on the g-string and boots and examined the mask. It would cover most of her head leaving just her mouth and chin visible.

Madame saw Edith's reluctance to wear the mask. 'It is very comfortable. You can see very well.' Edith put on the mask. 'Look in the mirror.' Madame pointed her fan at the ornate, gold leaf framed mirror behind one of the whipping posts. She had seen a drawing of an executioner in a history book on one of her infrequent visits to a classroom; this is what she looked like, albeit the executioner in the book was a man with a beard and was wearing old-fashioned clothes. All she needed was an axe. She looked around the

room. There were whips and various spanking-instruments on view, but no axe. Madame watched her looking around with a slight smile, and then rose and swayed, almost tottered, on overly-high heels, to the racked assortments of whips. 'Which one would you like to use, my dear?'

'Use?'

'To whip my nephew.'

Edith blushed. 'I've only whipped people I'm not keen on.' Then added 'mostly', remembering that she was keen on a certain 'monk' she had whipped.

'Scarlet tells me that you and she whipped Lord Merrystone.'

'You mean the elderly gent in her house?' Edith giggled. 'That was for money.'

'That is why most of us whip,' Madame Yvonne said, in a low voice, almost to herself. Then she smiled again. 'You will practice on my nephew. Scarlet says you need practice. Chose your whip.'

Edith stared at the rack with Madame standing beside her, poised like the proprietor of a fashionable dress shop ready to offer assistance and an opinion on which accessories would suit the gown. Edith, not in a gown but nude apart from boots, a mask and a g-string, took her time choosing. The idea of whipping Pierre did appeal to her and her clitoris, but she was worried, if she overstepped the mark she might only get the chance to whip him the once.

She picked a single-tailed whip and slashed the air a couple of times as if gauging its whipping-power. 'Will this do?'

'A little on the light side. That is for gentlemen with a low pain threshold. Pierre, despite his effete appearance, can withstand a severe whipping. I have severely whipped him many times, as has his mother, my sister. I must introduce you to her.'

Edith blushed again. In her world, a little town on the edge of the Pennines, girls were introduced to boys' mother when matrimony was proposed. She felt a slight twinge of guilt over P  p  . In less than twenty four hours, since she had arrived in Paris, P  p   had become the love of her life. But now he had a competitor for her affection. It is fair to say, the suitors were 'craie et le fromage' as Edith would, in due course, be able to translate herself as 'chalk and cheese'.

P  p   was chubby, placid, sweet-looking, but from the wrong bank of the Seine, and a bank robber. And he was not too keen on being whipped by her.

Pierre was slim, nervy, too beautiful to be male, probably loads of money in the bank, lived in the best arrondissement, and, according to his aunt, would love to be whipped by Edith. On balance, Edith had to say to herself that Pierre was out in front, by a penis-head.

Pierre entered. He was naked except for a maid's white linen pinafore, maid's laced boots and a maid's white cap on his abundant blond curls. The white linen, covering his stomach area, was hoisted by an evident erection. Edith stared at the protruding linen. 'Lift it up.' She was holding the whip she had chosen coiled in her grip, and raised her whip hand slightly to emphasise that he must obey. He lifted. His penis seemed to stretch in Edith's direction.

His aunt positively beamed at the penis. 'What do you think of it, my dear?'

'Very nice.'

'Very nice,' Madame exclaimed, as if 'very nice' was the understatement of the century. 'Rodin could not have sculptured anything more beautiful, nor could Brancusi; not even his sculpture of Princess X.'

'It's a lovely cock. Best I've ever seen,' Edith agreed, not au fait with sculptural icons.

'It needs to be beaten,' Madame said.

'Do you want me to start now?'

'You are in charge,' Madame said, although her tone of voice said that it was Madame who was in charge.

Edith tottered over to Pierre with slow, elongated strides, as she imagined the Venus in Furs would have done. His eyes were lowered as if he dare not look at her, much like the cowering, huddled, male-figure in the drawing.

She stood in front of him, her nipples almost touching his hairless chest, and cupped her hand under his chin and raised his face so that their eyes were level. They stared into each other's eyes, like lovers, except she was masked and had a whip. His maid's apron was bunched up and draped over the root of his erect penis, just where it joined his stomach. Edith looked down at the penis and then back up at his face. 'Do you want to be tied to me with your apron strings?' She giggled.

Madame was not amused; chastisement was not to be laughed at. 'Edith, please strap Pierre to the whipping post.'

Edith stopped giggling. Madame had sounded stern. This was the first time she had addressed Edith by name. As Pierre and his penis stood like statues in front of the most prominent whipping post, Edith went behind him

and untied his maid's apron strings and took the apron off him and his penis. 'Raise your arms,' she commanded in English. He obeyed. She fitted the manacles around his wrists and locked them, and did the same to his ankles. After picking up her whip she stood back and admired her handiwork. Then she uncoiled the whip ready for use. Her clitoris warmed to the task in hand. She would have dearly loved to massage the g-string, but Madame's steely-eye stopped her. She realised this exercise was about pleasuring Pierre, who was obviously a masochist, not that Edith was familiar with the term. Whether or not Edith was pleased was irrelevant. She knew that she had to make this a memorable experience so far as Pierre's was concerned, and as far as Madame was concerned. She appeared to enjoy watching her nephew being whipped. Edith raised her arm in readiness to apply the first lash when a bell rang.

Madame gave a grunt of annoyance and then smiled at Edith. 'Please operate the switch next to the door. We have a visitor.' Whip still in hand, Edith did as she was told.

Beside the door was a switch, ornately embossed in gold leaf to match the decor. Then she retook her position in readiness to commence the whipping. 'We will wait for our visitor. It is someone you have met.' Edith did not ask who this would be. She had a sense of foreboding. Madame's demeanour had changed; now she seemed edgy.

They three occupants of the ornate whipping -chamber waited for the visitor to appear; Madame seated, Pierre strapped to the whipping post with Edith standing beside him, whip at the ready.

The door opened. Emilia from the Red Windmill entered; the girl who had knocked Vanessa and Edith out of the way on the pavement outside the Red Windmill. She stood framed in the doorway, staring at Edith, and spoke to Madame in English. 'I would prefer that this slut did not to whip my brother.'

Madame responded in English. 'He loves being whipped.'

'From now on, only I will whip him.' She moved into the room, closing the door behind her, and looked belligerent. Edith, not someone to shirk from a confrontation, took a step back, and eyed her handbag, sitting on the pile of her clothes on the chair.

The conversation which followed was in French.

'You are early,' Madame said.

'The seaplane will arrive early. I need to take the two passengers now.'

'Oh, dear. Pierre will be disappointed. I think he likes our plump English friend.'

'She needs to be tied.'

'You will need to point a gun at her. She is probably too strong for you otherwise.'

'Where is the other one?'

'In the next room.'

'I will bring her in here.'

'You will need to tie this one first.'

Edith had waited for this conversation in French to conclude, observing the facial and body language of the two women. Although not understanding a word of what they were saying, she knew she was in danger. She smiled sweetly at Madame and said, 'I need to apply some lipstick.'

'Of course, my dear.'

Madame and her niece watched as Edith went over to her handbag and took out the lipstick tube and a mirror. Turning her back on Madame and Emilia, she pretended to apply lipstick, and kept in the shadow when she turned. As she had thought might happen, Emilia was pointing a gun at her. She feigned hand-to-mouth alarm, like an actress on a B-movie poster about to be ravaged by a monster from Mars. 'Please don't shoot me.'

'Put your hands on your head, my dear,' Madame said in English, 'and stand where you are.'

Edith was more still than Cleopatra's Needle, and she was getting the needle. The lipstick was still in her hand. She watched, with her hands on her head, as Emilia opened a door in the wall.

The door was concealed, trompe l'oeil, and it looked like part of a mural. Emilia disappeared through the door. Edith listened intently for sounds in the concealed room. She heard a muffled protest. And then a gagged and tied Vanessa was woman-handled into the room. She was naked with her hands manacled in front of her and a length of chain connecting the manacles on her ankles, like a slave at a slave market. Her hair was disheveled.

Madame almost smirked and said in English to Vanessa. 'So sorry we had to keep you in the dark, my dear. But in the coming months you will see plenty of light and sunshine in north Africa.'

'In a harem, from which you will not come back,' Emilia added, laughing.

'And my dear, you will have a travelling companion to keep you company. Your English friend here, who will join you in the harem. You will

be taken by car to a lake from where you will be flown in a private seaplane to a little fishing port near Marseilles. And then you will be transported by yacht to Morocco. I do hope you are both good travellers and will not be air-sick or sea-sick.'

Vanessa and Edith exchanged glances. Madam now looked at Edith. 'Take off your mask, my dear. And your thong and boots. Unfortunately, we do not have enough time to allow you to whip Pierre.'

Edith placed one hand against the wall to balance herself and did as she was told. She was now naked again, but still holding her lipstick. Pierre was still strapped to the whipping post.

'My niece will now put manacles on you like your friend is wearing. And then she will escort you at gunpoint down the back stairs to the car, You will both travel in the boot of the car.'

As Madame spoke, Emilia, holding her gun by her side, turned to the wall to select manacles from the rack. Immediately, Edith leapt sideways so that she was right against Pierre. The little knife sprang from the lipstick tube and the point rested against Pierre's penis. He screamed. Emilia spun around in alarm, her gun pointed at Edith.

'You can shoot me but I'll still be able to slice off his cock as I fall down dead.'

Madame took charge. 'Emilia, lower the gun. We seem to have an impasse.'

'Tell her to un-gag Vanessa and I would also like her to unlock Vanessa from her chains.' Edith pricked Pierre to emphasise the point. He yelped.

'Do as she says, Emilia,' Madame said, looking even more concerned than Pierre at the welfare of his penis.

With a glare at Edith, Emilia laid the gun on the floor, and went over to Vanessa and took off her gag and unlocked her manacles.

Vanessa grinned at Edith. Then without warning launched a flying kick at Emilia, and the girl doubled up and collapsed to the floor gripping her stomach and shouting in agony. The momentum of her leap took Vanessa as far as the gun on the floor and she grabbed it. Edith and Vanessa had turned the tables on their captors.

'I vote we shoot both of them,' Vanessa said. 'And keep him as our slave,' she added, pointing the gun in Pierre's direction.

Madame sat stiffly in her seat. 'I think we need a pact, my dear. That would be the most sensible course of action.'

'Give me one good reason why we shouldn't contact the police and tell them you kidnapped us?' Edith said to Madame.

'If you do, I will tell the police where to find a bank robber,' Madame said.

'Any idea who she's referring to, Edith?' Vanessa asked, knowing the answer to her question.

'No idea,' Edith said, although her suddenly worried expression indicated otherwise.

'I believe that a bank was robbed today by a monk. Isn't that so very shocking. A monk would you believe.'

Vanessa looked sideways at Edith.

'The police do not know who this monk is,' Madame said. 'At the moment.'

Edith looked thoughtful, and spoke to Vanessa. 'If we agree to a deal what's to stop them coming after us and trying to capture us again?'

'I don't think they would. Because Madame Fat-cow' probably knows who my mother is, and that she has friends in the Maquis.'

'Who are they?' Edith asked.

'French partisans who fought the Germans. The minute we get out of here I will tell my mother what happened to us. I will tell her that if you or I go on the missing list in the future, my mother and her friends will come after Madame and Emilia. And also Pierre.' A gasp came from Pierre.

Madame smiled weakly. 'I am aware who your mother is, my dear. She is not someone I would wish to upset.'

Ten minutes later, Vanessa and Edith were walking along the Champs-Élysées. 'Where did you get that lipstick knife from?'

'My friend, Carol, in London, gave it to me.'

'I would like to meet your friend Carol. Are you going to go back to London?'

'No. I'm going to stay in Paris and learn to drive a car.'

'So you can drive Pépé to and from his work in a bank.'

Edith grinned. 'Are you going back to England?'

'No. I'm going to stay here and run the magazine.'

'Won't your mother be a bit upset when she finds out you're running a sex magazine?'

'She's not going to find out.'

'But you told Madame you were going to tell your mother everything that's happened to you in Paris.'

'There's two reasons I'm not going to tell my mother anything. One, she would send me back to England and probably back to stay with my aunt, and two, I don't know where my mother is. I haven't heard from her for months. So I can't tell her.'

'But what if Madame comes after us?'

'She won't. Anyway, she's not the person at the head of this white-slave gang.'

'Do you know who is?'

'I heard the name mentioned by Madame to Emilia when I was tied up. She said the name 'Henry'. Although it could have been 'Henri'. And then Vanessa had a thought. 'Or even Henrik. She stopped by a tabac, and bought a newspaper. 'I need to see if there is any report of an English girl being kidnapped from the George Cinq. And any mention of Reggie Carmichael.'

'Who's he?'

'Someone who knows my mother.' She flicked quickly through the paper. 'Can't see any report. But there is a report about a bank being robbed by a monk.'

'Probably Friar Tuck,' Edith said with a giggle.

'You'll end up in prison; both of you will.'

'One more bank and then P  p  's going to settle down.'

'Two other reasons I'm staying in Paris; try to keep you out of trouble, and find out who runs the white-slavers' gang.'

'I'd better help you. Lets go into this bar and have an absinthe. I'm getting a taste for the stuff,' Edith said.

'They don't sell absinthe in bars in Paris. It's illegal,' Vanessa said. Let's go back to the Red Windmill, where there's plenty of absinthe.

THE END

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