A Cuckold Size Queen Novel



Her Old Flame

BY CYNTHIA SIZEMORE

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HER OLD FLAME

Chapter 1

"Stevie, *now*."

The voice on the other end of the phone line — the voice of my wife Melinda — was filled with an urgent desire, a longing that I'd seldom heard her express in our six previous years of marriage.

"I need you," she repeated.

I hesitated for a moment in my reply. I was enjoying this. I loved to tease her.

"You don't need *me*," I said, "you just want me to give you a baby. You're baby crazy, admit it!"

"What if I am? According to my temperature, I'm *ovulating*. And I can practically feel it. I need to be filled. Now."

Her voice took on an edge of insistence. She was showing a wilder part of her character that I attributed to her upbringing in a working–class Italian neighborhood in Queens. She'd been out of that environment for a long time — as long as I'd known her — but every once in a while the girl from the streets came out. Her accent even changed. The New York accent — which she'd been so careful to try to conceal once we moved to Austin — was impossible to suppress entirely, especially when she was angry.

Or, in this case, aroused.

"Hmm, I'm not sure if I'm in the mood," I said.

"Damn it, Steven! If you don't get over here and fuck me *right now*, I'm going to just grab a random guy off the street."

"That's kind of hot, I'm not going to lie..."

"Steven!! Get over here, and give me a baby!!"

"Ok, ok," I said, "I'm on my way."

Traffic, as anyone can tell you who's from Austin can tell you, has gotten exponentially worse over the past decade or so. It was so bad that I usually went to work in the morning around 6AM and stayed at the office until 7PM, just to avoid rush hour. That way, I could spend the hour and a

half I would have spent in the car working in my office, or even just goofing off. It wasn't ideal, but it was a solution.

Melinda, who worked as a receptionist at a law firm downtown, would sometimes come and meet me for lunch. Otherwise, we saw each other in the evenings and on weekends.

Today, however, that just wouldn't do.

I looked at my watch. It was 4:30PM. Almost the worst imaginable time to get on the highway.

I grabbed my briefcase and sunglasses and headed for the door, walking past Molly, a perky recent UT grad, who I'd hired as an assistant only a few months before.

"Headed out already, Mr. Cartwright?"

"Yeah," I said, feeling somewhat guilty, as if she knew the reason I was rushing out the door, "something's come up at home."

"Well, I hope everything's ok," she said, a note of concern entering her voice.

"Yes," I said, "it's nothing serious. Nothing bad."

"That's good," she said, "anything that you need me to do while I'm here?"

"Just finish the invoicing and you can go," I called back quickly.

"Thanks!" she said, knowing that I could have easily given her a list of other tasks to complete.

I raced to my Honda Fit and jumped behind the wheel, pulling out of my parking space, just in time to be stopped immediately by the flow of traffic heading down the road that I was trying to turn on.

"Son of a bitch!" I exclaimed, hitting my steering wheel.

All I could think about was Melinda. My beautiful Melinda. Hot, bothered, and waiting for me at home.

She really had sounded desperate on the phone. She'd even made that little joke about finding someone else to fuck.

I mused on this fact as I inched the nose of the Fit just a bit more out into traffic, hoping that some kind soul would have mercy on me and let me

in.

Finally, an older woman in a Ford F–150 and a large white cowboy hat waved me in front of her, grinning.

“Thank you,” I mouthed, before turning up the podcast in the car’s speakers.

It was going to be a long trip home.

As I navigated the streets of the city and found my way to the interstate, I found myself unable to concentrate on what I was listening to. It wasn’t that it was uninteresting. It was that I kept returning to the joke that Melinda had made.

The joke about finding someone else to fuck.

Melinda was no angel, of course (we’d been married too long for me to think that), but she was fiercely loyal to the men that she loved. And there had been a few before me. Well, two to be exact: there was a guy named Gianni (in high school) and another guy named Carlo.

I’d actually met Gianni once, during a trip to NYC for her tenth high school reunion the summer before. Despite coming from such a rough working–class background, he was the opposite of intimidating: a nice, friendly guy who worked at a quick–lube oil place and loved going bowling with his friends on the weekend.

Carlo, on the other hand, was a different story.

I hadn’t ever met Carlo (and probably never would) because Carlo was behind bars.

Yes, my wife’s most important ex–boyfriend was also a current convict. He was doing 15–20 years for voluntary manslaughter.

I’d asked Melinda about the details of his case a few times before. I was curious. Can you blame me? She’d always been evasive, however.

Whenever Carlo came up in conversation, she’d say something about him being a fun guy for a younger woman to date, but that he was also the man who taught her that she needed a more stable relationship.

I began to think, of course, about her and Carlo’s sex life. What else could she mean by “fun”? He didn’t have a motorcycle or something, did he?

I watched a motorcycle slowly weaving its way between the barely moving lines of cars on the interstate.

Melinda swore that she wasn't attracted to "exciting" guys now, and that that was the reason why she'd chosen me: a handsome, successful, professional and incredibly stable man.

"So you're saying I'm boring?" I had teased.

"No," she'd replied, "I'm saying that you're exciting in all the right ways. Ways that don't get you thrown in prison."

I wondered what it had been about Carlo that made him so appealing. I imagined that he was muscular (didn't most guys get that way in prison, even if they were scrawny going in?), fairly tall, and, for some reason, I pictured him having a really nice, thick cock.

The only reason this ever even occurred to me was because of an offhand comment that Melinda had made about a new friend of hers here in Austin, who had been raving about her "Italian stallion" boyfriend. Melinda had just smirked and said something about how in her experience, Italian guys often packed a "nice, thick sausage."

My wife. She was sweet to me, but it was clear that she still had a lot of the streets left in her. After that particular remark, she'd given me a kind of guilty look, which made me realize that she'd been speaking from experienced. At least one of the men in her past must have had a big dick.

Sure, it could have been Gianni who was packing, but after meeting him, he just didn't strike me as the kind of guy who had the kind of swagger I'd come to associate with big cocks.

But what did I know? It was all pure speculation. More my own fantasy than my wife's.

Traffic was moving a little faster now; we were up to almost 35 mph. I finally turned off the podcast, and let my imagination run wild. I didn't really know what Carlo looked like now. Melinda had shown me a picture of them together once, but that was years ago. In that picture, he had a friendly smile on his face — not at all what I'd expect of a hardened killer. He had dark hair which he wore slicked back, and was wearing a shirt with the first few buttons open, exposing his hairy chest and what I assumed to

be a St. Christopher medal. He looked like an extra from *The Sopranos*. A caricature of an Italian–American.

Then again, my wife sometimes looked and acted that way, too. It wasn't hard to see where the stereotypes came from.

For my part, I appreciated this side of my wife: her love of cooking, her inability to hide her emotions, her physical expressiveness. These were all things that were different for me, a Methodist raised in the Dallas suburbs, where men are men and don't shout and gesticulate with their arms when they speak.

I never fit in with that model of manhood, however. I was always a shyer, more artistic type, which is one of the reasons why, after high school, I'd escaped to the cultural mecca of Texas: Austin.

As improbable as it might seem, that was where I'd met Melinda, that beautiful dark–eyed girl from Queens, who I'd mistaken for a Latina at first. I wasn't the only one who made that mistake. Her name, her physical appearance, and the part of the country we were in all contributed to the confusion that people felt when they were informed that she'd learned the dialect of her parents' small Sicilian village when growing up, but spoke absolutely no Spanish.

Melinda was fair–skinned, with large, olive–shaped brown eyes and long, wavy dark–brown hair. She was incredibly curvy, in the way that would almost have verged on being overweight, if she hadn't been so relentless about her workout routine. Her large, ripe breasts had equally large areolas which surrounded surprisingly small, pink nipples which became very pert and sensitive when she was aroused. She had full, child–bearing hips, and a curvaceous ass that she loved to have spanked during sex, something that I almost never did because I couldn't really stay in her from behind for very long. I either came immediately or slipped out due to my size. That was ok. There were other positions that worked for us.

She was an extremely sensual person, and wanted sex more often than I did. To be truthful, I found myself struggling to keep up with her. No matter how many times we'd do it, it seemed like she always wanted more.

That had only gotten worse as we'd started trying to conceive, of course. Now she wanted to do it in the morning before I left for work, and

in the evening when I got home. Sometimes (like today) she'd even insist that I come back from work early.

All of this was great, of course. What husband wouldn't be happy about having an incredible, sexy wife, who wanted to fuck him all the time?

The problem was, I knew that I wasn't enough for her. I could sense it. It wasn't just the little jokes that she sometimes made (like the one just now about finding another guy to fuck her), it was the fact that I'd never been able to give her an orgasm with my penis alone. Usually, I'd have to go down on her before we did it, just to make sure that she got a chance to come. I didn't mind doing this, of course. In fact, I loved it, because it was the one way that I could be assured of making her happy.

When we actually "did it" — by which I mean, when I put my penis into her vagina — I couldn't help but feel inadequate. Even though she never said so. Even though she was always ready to go.

I would get so overwhelmed by her incredible body that I'd shoot my load almost immediately. For the purposes of making a baby, this was ideal of course. But because sex is also about pleasure — and about female pleasure, especially — I couldn't help but think that she could do better. And maybe *had* done better in the past.

Maybe with Carlo?

Had she traded her **sexual fulfillment** with him for **security** with me?

These thoughts plagued me in my weaker moments. I'd also had other girlfriends before meeting Melinda, of course. The sex with them had been good. I thought that a couple of them had even had orgasms. Or at least been pretty good at faking it.

A comment that a girl I'd dated during my freshman year, an art student named Lauren, stood out to me and haunted me for years to come. We'd been fooling around in her dorm, on her bed. Because she'd been on her period, she hadn't wanted to have intercourse, so she had lubed up my cock and given me a handjob.

"You've got such a cute little guy," she'd said.

"Ha," I replied, "cute like *small*?"

“Well,” she’d said, smiling at my cock while she stroked it with one petite hand, “it’s not really small. But not large either. I’d call it the *perfect* size.”

The “perfect size” certainly sounded like “small” to me, even if Lauren had insisted that it wasn’t. Maybe I was just insecure, but from then on, I had been very interested in the size of the other men who had been with the girls I dated, and how I stacked up against them.

I knew that girls would never be straightforward or honest about their size preferences, so I learned to read signs, subtle hints about what they preferred. Only occasionally — like with Melinda’s crass remark about ‘Italian sausage’ — would I get a glimpse into the erotic mind of the woman I was with.

Melinda, despite her outgoing, carefree nature, almost never made comments about my size, positive or negative. At most she’d mention something about men being too hung up about being hung, and not hung up enough about what they did with their fingers or their tongue.

In *that* department, she assured me, I was top–notch.

***

When I finally arrived home, it was earlier than I’d expected. I’d had good luck on a long stretch of freeway, where the traffic had been moving at 45 mph. That was what passed for good around here, anymore. Especially during rush hour.

I pulled the Honda fit into our small, one–car garage and checked the messages on my phone.

There were three from Melinda.

Where are you? I’m so horny...

Sent 45 minutes ago.

Honey, how far away are you?

Sent 34 minutes ago.

Stevie, come on!!

This last message had been sent only about 10 minutes ago, and had been accompanied by a photo of my wife’s curvy body in her (and my)

favorite lingerie set: a black lace teddy and sheer bra that hugged her breasts and fell seductively around her hips.

My cock sprang to life.

Parking now I texted.

I grabbed my briefcase and raced into the house. We had a cute ranch–style house that was about 1000 square feet. Small but cozy and perfectly adequate for just two people.

We were only renting it, though, because we'd bought a plot of land about three miles away, where we would soon construct a new, larger house that I'd designed for us. It had been a labor of love — the design work itself, which I often did after hours in the office while I was waiting for the traffic to clear and my commute to be less stressful — and also the collaboration that had gone into the design.

When I'd come home at night, Melinda and I loved to pore over the blueprints together, imagining our life in the house. Our life and our family.

Melinda, coming from a Catholic immigrant background, wanted to have a lot of kids. She knew that she'd gotten a relatively late start (she'd be 31 soon), but was more than determined to make up for lost time.

That is, of course, if we could ever actually conceive. We'd been trying for about nine months, and couples aren't "officially" infertile until they've been trying for a year or more without success, but it was hard for two people who wanted a child more than anything else in the world to understand this lack of success as anything other than a failure.

So we stuck with it.

Melinda was in the bedroom, laying on the bed in her negligee, the same one from the photo, giving me a sultry look.

"God damn it, Stevie. You left me waiting for so long."

"You know how the traffic is," I said, trying to pull my tie and belt off at the same time, "how was I supposed to get here any faster — charter a helicopter?"

"Mmm," she said, crawling over to the edge of the bed and giving me a wonder glimpse of her cleavage, "maybe we need to add a landing pad to the blueprints."

“Ha ha,” I said, leaning down and kissing her as she reached for my pants and unbuckled my belt.

“Mmm,” she said, massaging my balls through my underwear “I hope you have a nice big load in there for me. I feel *really* fertile today.”

“Oh God,” I groaned, soaking the front of my underwear with a bit of precum.

“Easy there, Stevie,” she said, “put that stuff where it goes — inside your wife.”

Finally, I was undressed enough for us to complete the act. I fell onto the bed, on top of Melinda, who reached down and guided my throbbing cock into her wet pussy. I moaned in ecstasy, determined this time to hold out. To give her the fucking that she deserved and had waited on so patiently.

“Yes, Steve,” she groaned, “just give it to me. I need it so bad.”

I looked down at her, her eyes closed in concentration as I moved within her.

What was she thinking about? Was she imagining herself with another man? With Carlo or Gianni or some guy from TV or her office?

Was she imagining being a mother? Was she just hoping to get it over with so that she could get pregnant?

“Oh God, Melinda,” I moaned, “I need to take a break, or I’m going to come.”

“Come for me, Steve,” she said, “go ahead...”

I grunted in pleasure as I unleashed a torrent of semen on command. It was funny how much influence she had over my pleasure. It was as if she was totally in charge in the bedroom. The complete reverse of what a heterosexual relationship was supposed to be like.

In our bedroom, Melinda called the shots.

“Mmm, thank you,” she said, opening her eyes and fixing me with her gaze that always melted my heart, “maybe I can get some more from you before bedtime...”

I was still panting in exertion, but I nodded.

“Yeah,” I said, “maybe so...”

That night sticks out in my mind because it was the first hint of something different in our marriage. Something different about Melinda.

And it was me who started it.

After our lovemaking session, we cuddled for a few minutes, then each took a shower. Melinda just put on a white bathrobe with nothing else on underneath it, but I changed into jeans and a t–shirt because I was planning on cooking dinner.

I loved seeing Melinda in outfits like that: ones where her curves were accentuated but her naked body was only hinted at. She was spectacular, and deserved all of the sexual pleasure in the world.

While I cooked, Melinda sat at the kitchen table in her robe, drinking a Lone Star beer. She wasn’t a heavy drinker, or a very particular one, but liked to have a drink after work sometimes. She’d been assured that this was OK, even though she was trying to conceive, and had vowed to stop the moment that the pregnancy test was positive.

I, on the other hand, was a craft beer snob. I’d never been able to convince Melinda to enjoy beer in the same way that I did, but it didn’t matter. So that was how it was: a Lone Star for her, a local IPA for me.

“I like these new dimensions for the family room,” she said, looking at the latest blueprints on our iPad, “would there be space for some kind of — what do they call it — mud room, off the kitchen?”

“What do we need a ‘mud room’ for around here?” I laughed, flipping the quesadillas, “this place had been almost as dry as West Texas recently.”

“I dunno,” she said, “it’s just something that I saw in a magazine, recently. We don’t have to do it if you don’t want to.”

“No, I have no problem with it,” I said, placing the finished quesadilla onto a plate, “I’ll do anything to make sure that you’re happy in our new home.”

“Thanks, Stevie,” she said, “but it was just a thought. You don’t have to do anything. Except, you know, that helipad might be nice...”

I smiled at her and gave her a kiss on the cheek before serving the food.

“Buon appettito,” I said, using some of the little Italian I knew.

“Grazie,” she said, “I love it when you speak my language, honey.”

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Melinda made good on her promise to try to get more sperm out of me after dinner. After doing the dishes, we watched a couple of episodes of a stupid TV show on Netflix while sitting side–by–side on the couch in the living room.

The show was so stupid, in fact, that in the middle of the third episode, Melinda grabbed the remote and shut the TV off, looking at me with lust in her eyes.

“I think we can entertain ourselves better than this,” she said, grabbing a hand and putting it under her robe, “don’t you, Stevie?”

“Yes,” I said, leaning in to kiss her as I felt her breast.

But as much as I wanted to, it wasn’t working for some reason. My “cute little guy,” that is.

Melinda’s hand closed around me as we kissed. I could sense her frustration, but also her intention not to make a big deal about it.

“Mmm,” she whispered, “I was thinking about you all day. Thinking about my handsome successful husband working so hard to provide for his wife. Thinking about what good Dad you’re going to be.”

“Is that what turns you on?” I asked, “thinking about me being a Dad?”

“Well of course it does,” she whispered, “trust me, for a girl from where I’m from, there’s nothing hotter than stability and commitment.”

“That sounds boring,” I said, “but I guess I’ll take your word for it.”

“Sometimes boring is the best,” she continued, playing with my balls in a vain attempt to coax my erection to life, “trust me. I know.”

I took a deep breath. Adrenaline coursed through my body as I decided to broach a subject that I’d wondered about forever.

“How do you know?” I asked, “were some of your other boyfriends...not so boring?”

“You can say that again,” she laughed.

“Not Gianni, though,” I said, “when I met him, he seemed potentially even more boring than me.”

She giggled.

“Gianni had kind of a wild side for a while in high school,” she laughed, “but no. You’re right. He’s really pretty tame.”

“Then you must mean Carlo,” I said, “Carlo must have been the exciting one.”

She got serious for a moment.

“I don’t necessarily want to talk about him,” she said, “but yes, he is the one that showed me once and for all that sometimes boring is better.”

“But at the time, you must have thought that whatever it was that made him exciting was pretty fun. Otherwise you wouldn’t have been with him in the first place, would you have?”

She seemed a bit taken aback. She pulled away from me slightly. Her hand was still on my cock, but she’d stopped trying to make it hard.

“I guess that’s right,” she said, “I was so young back then. 20 years old. The summer before I transferred to UT.”

“So you were with Carlo because he was exciting,” I said, sensing an opening, “what was so exciting about him?”

“Well,” she began, a wistful look in her eyes, “he was a tough guy, like a lot of the guys that I grew up around. That was something that a girl from my neighborhood valued. He didn’t take shit from anyone. He just did what he wanted, when he wanted, wherever he wanted. And that was appealing.”

“Did that extend...to the bedroom?” I asked, my voice cracking a bit.

Blood began to flow to my erection. It was obvious that Melinda noticed this, too, because her eyes perked up and she began to stroke me again, gently, but intentionally.

“Um,” she said, “I’m not really sure it’s proper for me, as your wife, to speak about such things...”

“Come on,” I coaxed, “it’s ok. You can see the effect that this is having...”

“Well,” she said, sighing a bit and smiling, as if at the memory, “Carlo was really sweet, in his way. He could be really romantic. He gave me soft, sweet kisses. That was something that appealed to me. The fact that such a big brute could also be tender.”

“Was he always...tender?” I asked, my cock becoming completely rigid.

“No,” she laughed, “no he wasn’t. Sometimes, his romantic kisses were just the lead–in to something a little rougher...”

My cock twitched in her hand.

“I can’t believe I’m telling you this stuff,” she laughed, “but if it gets you hard enough to give me a baby...”

“Yes,” I said, “tell me more.”

“Well,” she said, “what I liked about him was the fact that his tough exterior concealed this really sweet guy underneath. He and I would make love. I mean really *make love*, like with intense feelings and everything. But we’d also just fuck sometimes. And that was almost as much fun. Sometimes more fun.”

“What do you mean… ‘just fuck’?”

“I mean...”

She started to stammer.

“I’m sorry,” she said, “I shouldn’t have even started this. I don’t want to discuss any more details. It’s really not proper.”

“Ok,” I said, “I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to make you uncomfortable.”

She gave me a smile.

“It’s ok. I’m sick of talking about some stupid ex–boyfriend. I’m ready to make a baby with my husband.”

She climbed on top of me and straddled me, the folds of her bathrobe falling open, her large breasts falling into my face. As she slid my cock inside her and began to gently grind against me, all I could think about was her and Carlo.

Making love, and “just fucking.”

I imagined her climaxing in ecstasy as this dark–haired brute pummeled her from behind.

“Just do it, Stevie,” she coaxed me, “come inside me. Now.”

On command, I unleashed another load of cum, shooting several spurts into her warm, waiting womb.

“Mmm,” she said, “that feels so good. I love having your little swimmers inside me...”

We stayed entangled with each other for several seconds, neither of us saying anything. Then, she slowly dismounted, collapsing onto the couch beside me.

“You didn’t come yet,” I observed, “don’t you think that I should...pleasure you?”

She looked over at me, her face glowing a bit from the exertion of riding me.

“You don’t have to do that, honey. I enjoy sex with you whether or not I have an orgasm.”

“But I want to, Melinda. I want to make you feel as good as you make me feel.”

“That’s not strictly necessary for what we want to do,” she laughed, “that’s the terrible irony of God’s perfect plan. Only the man has to come to make a baby.”

“Sure,” I said, “but I can’t help but think that if I made *you* come a little more often, you might be a little less...”

“A little less what? Insatiable?”

She smiled.

“Maybe what I mean is, you’d be a little more satisfied.”

“Maybe,” said Melinda, “or maybe I’d want even more...”

I kissed her, reaching down and feeling her wetness.

“If you insist,” she said, breaking the kiss, “if you don’t mind going down on me after...you know.”

The fact that I'd be tasting my own sperm hadn't even occurred to me. In that moment, however, I was too determined to prove myself worthy of my beautiful wife to be at all squeamish.

I knelt on the floor in front of Melinda while she remained seated on the couch.

"I guess you don't mind," she said, as I pushed her legs apart and began to explore her folds with my tongue.

"Oh Stevie," she moaned, "you're so good to me."

The difference in her tone of voice between when I was going down on her and when my penis was inside her told me all that I needed to know about how much she actually enjoyed intercourse with me.

It occurred to me that she might only be interested in having sex with me because of the fact that I might be able to give her a baby. If I proved to be unable to do this — or if she proved to be infertile — would that mean the end of her sexual desire for me?

I knew that it wouldn't be the end of *my* desire for *her*. I remained incredibly attracted to my voluptuous Italian wife.

I tried to shake off these insecurities, and focus on the task at hand. I began to lick at her clitoris, teasing it with the tip of my tongue.

"Oh God, Steve," she moaned, "I love what you're doing."

She reached down and laced her fingers through my hair, pressing my face further into her pussy now, moving my tongue from her clit and towards her slit.

I tasted something salty, gooey and a little bitter now. My own cum.

"Oh yes, Steve. That feels so good."

I pulled back for a second.

"I want you to feel good," I said, "I want you to come hard. Just relax and let your fantasy run free."

"Mmm," she said, "that would be really naughty. Fantasizing while my loving husband goes down on me."

"It's what your loving husband wants," I assured her, pushing my head back down between her legs.

“I don’t know…,” she said, “I already felt kind of dirty tonight, telling you all that stuff about Carlo.”

She hadn’t really told me anything of *real* importance about Carlo. The fact that she thought it was so significant told me that she probably had a guilty conscious. Which meant that she probably *was* thinking about him right now, as I was going down on her, even if she couldn’t admit it to me.

This thought was incredibly arousing to me.

Instead of replying, I just buried my head between her legs once more, slowly and sensuously licking at her clit and pussy lips as she moaned her approval.

After a few minutes, I noticed the tell–tale signs of Melinda’s approaching orgasm. Her breathing became more ragged, and her pelvic muscles tensed. She gripped my hair again, holding my head down forcefully between her legs.

I eagerly continued my efforts, determined to bring her to a powerful climax. Maybe to prove to her that I could be as good in bed as the men in her past, even if I wasn’t working with the same equipment, so to speak.

Of course, this was most likely merely my insecurity talking.

“Just like that. Don’t you dare stop what you’re doing,” she moaned, her voice taking on a forceful tone that came out only occasionally.

It was a reminder of the fact that, although she looked like the picture of pretty, submissive femininity, my wife was anything but.

At least around me. Around me, should could sometimes verge on being downright dominant. That didn’t bother me. In fact, I kind of liked it.

I did my best to keep doing exactly what I was doing. To lick her clit in exactly the same rhythm, with exactly the same force. A few moments later, I was rewarded when Melinda’s hips bucked up towards my face and she unleashed a torrent of warm liquid.

Yes, my wife was a squirter. Only sometimes, and only in the right conditions. In this case, I was more than pleased to have been able to help occasion one of her more vigorous climaxes in recent memory.

The force of her orgasm had also expelled some of my sperm into my mouth, of course. I gagged a bit and swallowed it.

As I did, a weird thought came into my mind: what if instead of my own semen, I had been eating the cum of another man out of my wife?

The idea both disgusted and aroused me. It was difficult to express why. It was a thought that would return to me frequently over the next few months.

“God, Steve,” she sighed, relaxing her grip on my hair, “that was great. I’ve really got you trained well, don’t I?”

I looked at her and grinned.

“Anything for my Italian princess,” I said.

“Is that right?”

“You know it is, baby.”

“Good,” she said, smirking a little, “then why don’t you go and get me a glass of ice water? The air–conditioning in here is terrible.”

“I know,” I said, standing, “that’s going to be so much better at our new place.”

“Well,” she said, “if you can’t give me a helipad, at least you can give me an HVAC system that actually works.”

“That’s a *much* easier promise for me to keep,” I said, before going to the kitchen.

Chapter 2

When Melinda got her period a few days later, she was more depressed than I'd seen her in a long time.

She actually called in sick to work, supposedly because of the cramps.

I knew better, however. She was probably despairing of ever getting pregnant. I had to admit that it was starting to bother me as well. This would be our tenth month of trying. The tenth time that Melinda's period arrived right on time.

That morning, she was in an awful mood. I knew this immediately, of course. I knew what had probably happened. What she'd discovered in the bathroom late that night. The spots of blood that heralded another month of failure.

"Hey, honey," I said that morning when I realized that she was still dressed in her pajamas, "aren't you going to get dressed? Lana is going to be here in a few minutes."

Lana was the coworker who she carpooled with. She only lived a few blocks away, so they took turns driving.

"I already told her not to come," she said, completely forlorn, "I'm not going into work, either."

"Did it...come?"

"What the fuck do you think?" she snapped.

I'm not going to lie. Her words stung.

She looked at me a moment later with a face full of regret and sorrow.

"I'm sorry," she stammered, "Stevie, that came out wrong. I'm sorry."

I reached out to embrace her.

"It's ok," I said, "I'm sorry too. I know how much it hurts. But remember, it takes a lot of couples some time to conceive. It's never instantaneous. Especially when the woman is your age."

Immediately, I recognized that this had not been the right thing to say.

“Are you saying I’m too old? That my eggs are dried up? Christ, Steve. You sound like my mother. She would have been happiest if I’d just settled down with one of the guys from the neighborhood and started popping out kids when I was 20.”

“That’s not how I meant it,” I said, unable to control being brought into an argument that I knew was pointless, “and are you sure that’s not what you want, too? Do you wish you’d married Carlo instead of me?”

She looked at me, her eyes watering and circled in black rings.

“What the hell is your problem this morning, Steve? Are you really that jealous of a guy who I last saw ten years ago? A guy who’s *behind bars*?”

“No, but...”

“I regret ever telling you anything about him.”

“But you never really *have* told me much about him,” I said, “like for example why he’s in jail. I only know what he was convicted of. Not what he actually did. Or how you were involved in it. All you’ve ever told me was that you were with him the night that it happened.”

“Look,” she said, the “street” tone entering her voice, “what happened back then is really none of your business. I don’t like to talk about it because it’s traumatic, ok? It’s not fun for me to remember.”

“Ok,” I said, trying to backpedal, “I get that. But don’t you think that as your husband, you owe it to be honest with me about your past?”

“Yeah, and I’ve been honest,” she said, “honesty means telling you the truth, not dredging up every last dirty detail.”

I found her choice of words — “dirty detail” — to be highly suspicious. Was this traumatic memory also connected to some kind of sexual pleasure?

I wanted to know. *Needed* to know. But at the same time, I had to deescalate the situation. No use in this turning into some kind of huge fight.

“Look,” I said, “I’m sorry. I know that you’re upset about getting your period. And probably feeling bad physically because of it too. Why don’t you just stay home, get some rest, and do something that helps you relax.

I'll be home at the usual time and I'll cook us dinner. Maybe we can open a bottle of that good Chianti your uncle gave us. No harm in that now, right?"

She seemed to wince again at this reminder that she was not, in fact, pregnant, but instead of offering another defensive remark, she merely nodded, as if defeated.

"You're right," she said, "I'm sorry for overreacting. I understand why you might want to know more about Carlo. I promise I'll tell you more. When the time is right."

"You don't have to tell me anything you don't want to," I said, leaning forward and kissing her forehead.

"You're such a sweetheart," she said, patting my hand, "have a good day at work."

***

All day at the office I was plagued with fantasies that I couldn't control. Maybe it was what I saw as my failure — once again — to impregnate my wife, despite no shortage of attempts. Undoubtedly, it also had to do with our fight that morning, and Melinda's evasive answers about Carlo. On the one hand, I understood, rationally, that it was silly to be jealous of a man who my wife hadn't seen in at least ten years, and who was also behind bars. On the other hand, I knew as well as anyone else that sexuality is far from rational. In fact, it is the most irrational part of human life.

If I was going to be worried about my wife's ex–boyfriend from back in the old neighborhood, I wasn't going to be able to talk myself out of it with reason.

However, I wasn't *only* experiencing jealously as I tried to imagine what Melinda and Carlo's sex life had consisted of. I was also experiencing a very strange other emotion: lust. Sitting at my desk, staring at the computerized drawings of a strip mall I was designing for a corporate client, strange little fantasies began to flit before my eyes.

I looked at the blank blueprints on the screen, the rooms filled only with labels, and imagined that they were part of a finished building. I imagined Melinda, my wife, dressed in boots and a miniskirt (like in the photo of her that I'd seen with Carlo), bent over, her breasts exposed to me

almost to the nipples, as she was taken from behind by her dominant, hung lover.

I imagined her face filled with yearning, with lust, as he plunged into her from behind again and again. This wasn't the sweet, affectionate lovemaking that she'd mentioned. This was the rough, animalistic *fucking* that I suspected she secretly craved. That I could never give her.

I also imagined the lovemaking as well, of course, though it was harder to do in the bare space of the strip mall. For the sake of my dirty thoughts, I conjured up a bed, a simple mattress on the floor in the corner of a larger room, perhaps something like Carlo might have had in his apartment as a young man. My cock stood at attention as I imagined Melinda and Carlo embracing, him taking her in his strong arms and gently lowering her to the bed, undressing her with his large but skillful hands, fondling her breasts as she cooed her approval.

He kissed down her neck as she parted her full lips in a sigh of satisfaction.

"Oh, Carlo…I need you. Please put that monster inside me..."

A moment later, her skirt was up around her waist and he had her panties off, pulling them down her thick thighs and over her ankles, throwing them to the floor beside the mattress.

She looked down in awe at the weapon he held in his hand, a thick piece of flesh the length and diameter of her forearm, tipped with an angry–looking mushroom head that was aimed directly at her delicate pink flower which lay open for him, wet and waiting.

"Please, Carlo."

He grinned as he pushed himself inside her, groaning in satisfaction as he claimed my wife's pussy for what certainly wasn't the first time. It had to be an amazing feeling, however. To totally fill a woman. To really claim her.

I began to wonder if what I had done with Melinda could even be considered sex, given the size that she was most likely used to. Wasn't it more akin to fingering her than it was to really *fucking* her, the way a man like Carlo could? And didn't she deserve to get the kind of treatment that only a man like Carlo was capable of giving her?

In my fantasy, she was getting exactly what she needed and deserved. She parted her legs as her lover penetrated her again and again with his swollen rod, pushing apart the petals of her sweet pussy slowly and deliberately as the two exchanged passionate kisses, their tongues intermingling.

I had my cock in my hand now, sitting at my desk, completely lost in my own fantasy, when suddenly my office phone rang.

It was Molly.

"There's a contractor for you on line one," she said, "Brett Miller."

Brett Miller. Of course! The general contractor that Melinda and I had hired to supervise and coordinate the construction of our new home. We had spent months of poring over reviews, interviewing former clients and colleagues before settling on Mr. Miller's company. It may sound like overkill, but as an architect, I wanted every detail of my own home to be perfect, and I didn't want to trust just anyone with the job. Brett had come highly recommended by several other architects that I knew, and we'd checked his references extensively.

The only problem was that Brett was in high demand, and for that reason was a difficult man to get a hold of. We'd been playing phone tag for the better part of a week, but now, finally, it seemed like we were going to get a chance to talk in person.

"This is Steve Cartwright," I said, after thanking Molly and switching to the other line.

"Mr. Cartwright," said the voice, "this is Brett Miller. I've had a chance to read what you sent over, and I'd like to arrange a meeting with you and your wife as soon as possible."

This was wonderful news. Both Melinda and I were anxious to get started on the construction of the new house as soon as we could. I was basically finished with the plans (at this point, I was just tinkering around with some of the details, and adding in last minute inspirations like the "mud room" that Melinda had suggested). Now all that was standing in the way of our dreams was finding someone (a reliable someone) to get the show on the road.

After a little back and forth about the exact date and time, Brett and I settled on a plan to meet at Melinda and I's place in a little over a week and then drive to the jobsite together. He told me that he wasn't going to be able to get to our project until after the New Year — in February, probably — because of some new apartments he was building. It seemed like the construction never stopped in Austin. That was fine by me, because it kept my business booming, and it was good for guys like Brett as well. It just wasn't so great if you actually wanted to get something done.

Like get a house built fast.

Nevertheless, when I got off the phone with Brett, I was giddy with excitement. I knew that Melinda would be overjoyed, too.

This would be just the thing to break her out of her bad mood and make her forget about our troubles conceiving a child — at least for now.

For the moment, I forgot all about my little sordid fantasy of Melinda's reunion with Carlo, and instead of the strip mall drawings, I spent the rest of the afternoon and early evening putting the finishing touches on our new home.

I worked with an intensity that I'd seldom been capable of, intent on lifting Melinda's spirits when I presented her with the latest drawings that night.

If I couldn't give her a child on command, at least I'd be able to give her a home.

***

When I got home that night, Melinda was sitting in the kitchen, reading a book.

"Do you want some dinner?" she asked, "I made something already because I wasn't sure when you were going to be home."

I waltzed over to her and gave her a kiss, hardly able to contain my enthusiasm.

"Honey," I said, "I've got some great news. Guess who finally called me today and wants to meet with us both soon?"

She gave me a confused look for a moment, then her face melted into a smile as she realized what I meant.

“You’re kidding. Finally!”

“Not only that,” I continued, “I’ve also got another surprise for you.”

She was positively glowing now. I knew that I was getting her back on my side after the disappointment of her period, and the tiff that we’d had that morning.

“I finished the plans.”

“Really?”

“Yeah,” I said, pulling out my iPad, “take a look. I was even able to incorporate a mud room. Or, as I like to call it, a dust room. Seems more appropriate for this part of the country.”

“Wow,” she said, “what did I deserve to get a husband like you? I guess maybe you really should get out that bottle of Chianti.”

I went to the pantry and reached around on the top shelf until I found it. A few minutes later, we were drinking a toast.

“To the new house. To our new family. Whatever form it will take,” I said.

“Cheers,” she said, smiling as she raised her glass to mine.

After taking her first sip, she sighed.

“I’m sorry if I was kind of a bitch this morning,” she said, “I just get so frustrated. Not with you. More with myself.”

“Honey,” I said, “it’s not your fault. We’re not even sure if we’re technically infertile yet. And if we are, it’s just as likely that my guys don’t swim as it is that there’s something wrong with you. It doesn’t have to be anyone’s fault. It could just be bad luck.”

“I know,” she said, “I just can’t help but blame myself. I mean, every woman in my family was telling me to get an early start. That that was the best way to make sure you have a large family.”

“Do you really wish you’d followed their advice?” I asked.

“No,” she said, “of course not. I would never have met you if I had, for one thing.”

“That’s true,” I said, “so you still love your husband?”

“Of course I do, Stevie,” she said, nuzzling her nose against mine, “now why don’t you eat something. All of this good news has me in the mood to fool around. Even if I am on my period, I can still make you feel good...”

“In that case,” I said, “who needs to eat? Let’s take this wine to the bedroom...”

She gave me a big, toothy grin and then stood, taking her glass in one hand and leading me by the other.

“What do you want to do, Stevie? You don’t need to worry about knocking me up tonight, since we know that’s impossible. I want to do something that makes you feel good.”

To tell the truth, this was something that I was a little uncomfortable with. I was so used to the idea that the woman should come first (in every sense) during a sexual encounter that it was a little strange for me to try to relax and let Melinda pleasure me.

We kissed for a while, her hands finding their way to my crotch as I fondled her breasts. She seemed to sense my hesitation, because after a few minutes of this, she pulled back and whispered in my ear.

“I can talk dirty to you while I stroke you off,” she said, “seems like you might like that.”

“Yes,” I said, probably a little too eagerly.

I was anxious to see if she’d tell me any more about her past. Or her present fantasy life.

“Let’s get you comfortable,” she said, unbuttoning my slacks and pulling them down.

She smiled as she saw how erect I was.

“Your little guy is really excited,” she said, “I promise not to let him down.”

“You never do,” I said, a bit humiliated by her choice of nickname (which curiously echoed the one chosen by Lauren so many years ago) but also turned on by the clear implication that she’d seen bigger cocks before.

“Now,” she said, after she’d lubed her hands with some K–Y from the nightstand, “what kinds of dirty things should I tell you about?”

“How about...something from your past?” I asked, my breathing already ragged.

“Something from my past, huh?” she said, looking off into space, “I’m starting to think that my husband might be a little bit of a perv. You really like thinking about me back in my young and wild days, don’t you?”

“Maybe I just wish I knew you back then,” I said.

It was true. Sort of. Not because I wished I could have been one of her first boyfriends. At least I was pretty sure that wasn’t the reason. More because I wished I could have witnessed her with one of her first boyfriends. To understand what made her tick as a young woman.

What turned her on. What she might be doing without, now that she was with me.

I admit that this was slightly masochistic. I tried not to let her know that side of it. That side of me. That seemed too intimate, even for my wife. Too tied to personal insecurities, to my upbringing as a somewhat quiet, introverted boy in a world of masculine, manly men. Texas will do that to you.

No, I didn’t want to admit that to my wife. Not yet, anyway.

“Well,” she said, “I was a pretty good girl back then. But of course I did fool around with some boys.”

“Tell me more,” I said, feeling my cock stiffen.

She felt it too.

“My, my,” she said, “I think we might have found an easy way to turn my Stevie on. I’m going to have to remember this when it comes time to make a baby again.”

She stroked me for a few more seconds, looking off into the distance as if reminiscing.

“Ok,” she began, “you remember Gianni, right? Well, he was the first guy I ever fooled around with. We were both 18, but we didn’t have our own places, so we had to find ways to sneak around without getting caught. Sometimes that meant going to the movies, or to the park after dark...”

“I’d rather hear about Carlo,” I blurted, too horny to think about the fact that mentioning the wrong guy might break the mood.

Luckily for me, Melinda was in a great mood that night, and seemed ready to indulge my interest.

"Ok," she said, "you want to hear about your sweet little wife fooling around with a tough guy from the old neighborhood. Alright."

She stroked my shaft lightly, taking another moment to reminisce.

"Well," she said, "he was really romantic. I told you that before. He would bring me flowers and stuff. Call me sweet names. I never had a guy do things like that for me before. Gianni was sweet, too. But he was too awkward to really do romantic stuff, even the things that Carlo did which could be a little corny. I'll tell you, though. Corny can still get in a girl's pants."

"Carlo didn't live at home anymore, at least not really. That was appealing to a girl like me. He had a room in his uncle's house in Woodside (that's a part of Queens, honey, since I know you're not necessarily as familiar with the city as I am). His uncle (unlike his mom) didn't care when he came or went or who he had over. Or who *slept* over. This was when I was almost 20 and he was 23. That's the summer we got really hot and heavy. Of course my parents still didn't like me being out all night, so I'd usually tell them that I was at my friend Lisa's place. She'd cover for me if they ever asked."

"So when did you and Carlo first...do it?"

"You really want to know the dirty details, don't you honey? Well I guess I can't blame you. I've got your dick in my hand after all. Ok. When did we first do it? Well, my very first time was with Gianni. That was very memorable of course — a girl always remembers her first — but wasn't exactly what I'd call 'special.' Sure, Gianni was a really sweet guy, but even though he said he'd had a girlfriend before and done it with her, he still wasn't what you'd call skilled. He was finished really fast, almost as soon as we started."

I cringed. This hit a little too close to home. I wonder if she was aware of the fact that she was implying that I was also unskilled? I didn't want to point this out because I had a feeling that somehow, whether through the wine or her good mood caused by news, she was in a mood to be completely honest with me. And honesty was what I was after.

“So after being with Gianni I was eager for a more experienced guy to show me the ropes. And boy, that first time with Carlo. Wow. It was like...”

“What was it like?”

She had a huge grin spread across her face, but suddenly it darkened with guilt.

“I shouldn’t even be telling you this stuff, honey. It’s not right for me to do as a married woman.”

“Keep going,” I panted, “please?”

“I don’t know…,” she said, her brow furrowing, “this conversation is honestly making me a little uncomfortable.”

“Ok,” I said, “just tell me one thing.”

“Ok,” she sighed, suddenly seeming impatient with the game that she herself had suggested.

“Was he bigger?”

She gave me a look of confusion, as if she hadn’t understood the question.

“Was he *bigger*?” I repeated, my balls aching.

The pain in my balls was unbearable. I was so close to exploding. The right word and she’d set me off…

She blushed.

“I don’t feel comfortable telling you.”

I felt like my head would explode. I knew that the fact that she was being evasive meant that he really *was* bigger than me. Otherwise wouldn’t she just say he wasn’t? Or at least lie to me?

My cock erupted, sending a spurt of semen arching into the air and onto her bare chest. It was the most vigorous orgasm I’d had in years, and definitely the most powerful ejaculation that Melinda had ever witnessed me having.

The initial burst was followed by two smaller ones, then another as powerful as the first. I moaned in pleasure as I shot several smaller spurts all over my wife’s hands.

“That was...really impressive,” she said, suddenly awed, “I think we’re going to have to put your pervy side to good use.”

“How do you mean?” I said, already regretting how turned on I’d been by imagining Carlo’s huge cock.

“I mean, if you can produce that much when you’re *actually* inside me this month, we’re going to conceive for sure!”

A wash of shame came over me. Why was I pushing her into doing this? Did she really enjoy talking about this stuff with me? It seemed at first like she didn’t. And then that she did. And now that she didn’t again.

As my orgasm subsided, I began to kick myself for interrogating Melinda about her ex. Intuitively, I knew that nothing good could come of it, even if he was in prison. What was wrong with me? Why did hearing this stuff turn me on so much?

Chapter 3

The next 28 days came and went. Melinda's period arrived again like clockwork. We had managed to make love dozens of times, especially during the critical week when she should have been fertile.

She hadn't cared at all about her own pleasure during this time, she had only been concerned with getting the sperm out of me and into her as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Not that Melinda's own pleasure was *entirely* absent from her mind, however. That was made evident by several off–hand remarks she made during our lovemaking. I remember one session after work on a Friday afternoon. I'd just spent over an hour in traffic, and I was sore from sitting for such a long time. Nevertheless, I had ejaculated into Melinda less than five minutes after entering the house.

"I'm sorry," I had said, "you probably didn't get much out of that, did you?"

"Hah," she'd said, as if that was the least of her concerns, "you can make all of this up to me later. I know you will, Stevie."

I started to wonder what she had meant by that.

The arrival of her period once again occasioned a foul mood in Melinda. I knew well enough not to try to cheer her up or console her. Instead, I tried to stay out of her way.

She called in sick again that morning.

"I think I'm going to go through some old boxes of stuff. See what we can give away before the move," she said, "it's never a bad idea to downsize."

She said this with a kind of sadness.

I nodded.

"I mean, if I even feel like getting out of bed with these cramps..."

"Take care of yourself, honey," I said, kissing her on the forehead, "I'll be home early if I can be."

"Thanks."

She seemed relieved that she would be able to relax alone. When I left that morning, she was curled up on the couch with the iPad in her hand, looking over the plans for our dream home.

***

When I got home that night, the iPad was on the coffee table. Next to it was a high school yearbook.

Melinda's high school yearbook.

A shot of adrenaline, arousal and something approaching fear flowed through me. Had she been reminiscing about old times? Had our conversation last night made her want to remember being with Carlo?

Had Carlo even *gone* to high school? It seemed likely that he was a dropout at the very least, especially given where he was now.

Not that I knew anything, really about *why* he was behind bars. Just that he'd killed someone.

That fact alone made me shudder.

Melinda was in the kitchen, cooking dinner. The delicious smells of Italian cuisine wafted in the air. I loved it when she cooked one of the dishes that her Nonna had taught her.

While I could hear her humming to herself, I picked up the yearbook and flipped through it. Not seeing Melinda immediately, I flipped to the front cover and checked the year.

She would have been a senior.

I turned to the index, looking for her maiden name. Messina. Melinda Messina. That certainly had more of a ring to it than her married name, Melinda Cartwright.

Though "Melinda Cartwright" also had a certain dignity to it. And no one would guess her Italian origins with a name like that.

There she was. *Messina, Melinda. 79; 112–113;*

I flipped to the first entry. Page 79.

Scanning the faces quickly, I found her in the third row from the bottom, smiling at the camera with her hair up in a hairdo that would have been dated already at the time, but was even more hopelessly so now.

My wife. Beautiful even back then.

I turned to the back pages. There, as expected, was a collection of signatures of all my wife's friends. I read a couple of them, smiling. They referred to places and events that were completely foreign to me. To parties, bands and inside jokes that were completely out of my frame of reference.

Only here and there did I catch a name that I recognized.

I turned to the very back cover, the final page. There was only one signature there, at the bottom of a very brief message.

I love you forever, baby. No matter what happens.

—Carlo

My heart leaped into my chest. Was she reminiscing about the old days? Had my insistence on having her tell me the dirty details of her youthful encounters caused Melinda to start to fantasize about her old boyfriend again?

I didn't really know myself what I wanted the answer to be.

I closed the book, feeling a bit guilty, and walked into the kitchen, embracing Melinda from behind and giving her a kiss on the cheek.

"Hey, honey," she said, "how was work?"

"Tiring, as usual. And I hate that commute!"

"I know, honey. I know."

"To what do I owe this delicious home–cooked meal?"

"Stop it, honey," she said, turning around and hitting me playfully, "I cook for you all the time."

"Maybe so," I said, "but I can tell that this is something special. Did I do something to deserve this?"

"Well," she said, "I know that you've been working really hard lately. The house is coming along great. And I've been kind of a bitch about the whole baby thing."

"No, honey, don't say that. It's a difficult thing to deal with, and we're both —"

“No,” she said, raising her hand, “I was a bitch to you. It’s true. There’s nothing you can do about the fact that you can’t get me pregnant.”

My face fell at her choice of words. Melinda noticed this, and backtracked immediately.

“I mean, that *I* can’t get pregnant. For whatever reason.”

I nodded.

“So I wanted to do something nice for you. So I thought I’d cook you *pasta con le sarde*. I haven’t made it for a long time.”

“Sounds great,” I said, “I’m really hungry tonight.”

“Good,” she said, giving me a kiss on the cheek, “there’s a bottle of wine in the fridge. Why don’t you pour yourself a glass and relax?”

“Thanks,” I said, heading to the fridge, “so your cramps seem better. What did you do today? Besides go shopping for this wine and look at your yearbook?”

I hoped that the reference to the yearbook would seem innocent.

“Ha, I left that out, didn’t I?” said Melinda, a bit embarrassed, “I was looking at that because my friend Lisa, from high school called today.”

“Is she the one who was at our wedding?”

“That’s right.”

I remembered her: a pretty, slightly overweight woman who had already been divorced at the age of 22. She was somewhat loud and obnoxious, from what I remembered, but that could have been due to the alcohol flowing at our reception. It was unfair of me to judge her, I supposed, without talking to her when we were both in a sober state.

“Wow,” I said, “how long had it been since you’ve talked to her last?”

“I guess like three or four years. We weren’t really good friends or anything, but for some reason we kept in touch, even after I moved out here.”

“So what did she want?”

“Oh,” said Melinda, as if surprised by this question, “she actually told me that she’s going to be in Austin this week. Tomorrow to be exact.”

“Really? That’s incredible. What is she doing here?”

“She’s visiting a friend,” said Melinda, “some guy that she might be getting involved with. It’s hard to say...”

That sounded just like the Lisa I imagined. I bet this particular guy was a real class act, too. But why was she looking for guys in Texas when there were so many in New York, I wondered. Maybe it was something about the distance that interested her.

Or maybe she was into the whole “cowboy” thing. A lot of women were. Not that there were many “real” cowboys in Austin anymore.

“It sounds like she’s already involved with him,” I said.

“Yeah,” said Melinda, “you know how she is.”

“So do you want to...get together with Lisa and this new guy?”

“Yes,” she said.

“Did you invite them over here?”

“No, honey,” she said, turning away from the stove to face me where I was sitting at the kitchen table, about to pour myself a glass of the wine, “I know you don’t especially care for Lisa.”

“Is it that obvious?”

“Mm–hmm,” she said, smiling, “so I arranged to meet them downtown. We might be out late, though. I’m not sure what they have planned. I’ll just tell them that you have to work.”

“Thanks, honey,” I said, raising my glass to her, “you’re the best!”

“Of course, baby.”

The meal was, as expected, delicious.

***

I only saw Melinda briefly the next morning before work. I knew that she was going to be spending the evening with Lisa, but it was still strange coming home to an empty house.

I warmed up some leftovers for dinner, then washed my plate and poured myself a beer.

Afterwards, in the living room, my eyes fell on my wife’s yearbook.

I thought again about Carlo. I thought about what she'd said about going through old boxes in preparation for our move.

What if she wasn't just trying to get rid of old junk?

What if her trip down memory lane wasn't just because of Lisa's call?

What if my questions had caused her to start to reminiscence about the good times with her old boyfriend?

After I finished the beer, I was still restless. I poured myself another, then went into the bedroom, to Melinda's closet.

Where *were* those old boxes, anyway?

I knew that I shouldn't be snooping. A marriage requires trust. But if *I* was going to trust *her*, I reasoned, I had to know exactly what was going through her mind.

I pulled down a cardboard box that had obviously been recently disturbed. It was labeled "high school stuff."

I dug through it. I found Melinda's diploma, a couple of report cards (really? she'd gotten an "A" in algebra?! These days, she has to use a calculator for long division), and a few ribbons from her time on the swim team.

Then, in the bottom of the box, on top of a stack of letters, was a pink volume labeled "diary." A small key was sticking out of the lock, as if inviting me to turn it.

On the one hand, reading her teenage diary would be a betrayal of trust. On the other hand, it was so old, she couldn't be *that* upset with me, right? And how would she ever find out, anyway?

I took the book over to the bed and flipped it open.

Reading by the light of the lamp, I skimmed through a few tales of volleyball games and swim meets, anxieties about tests in English, and complaints about obligatory trips to see relatives in Jersey (nothing to do there. So boring).

Finally, I passed Melinda's high school graduation.

Suddenly, things started to get juicy. The name "Carlo" appeared.

I read carefully:

> Carlo and I went to a movie last night. I couldn’t even tell you what we went to see, because we didn’t do much looking at the screen. I know that Tom Cruise was in it. With some blonde.
>
> As soon as the lights were out, our hands were all over each other. I wanted him so bad. I have never felt about a guy like this before. He is gentle yet firm, and every touch feels like a warm surge of energy through my body. Carlo is never pushy. But he doesn't have to be, either. I let him know that I wanted him to touch me everywhere. I was the one who put his hand between my thighs. I was wearing this short little jean skirt, and my panties were soaked the moment that he kissed me. I loved the way he slipped a finger inside me while he played with my nipples. It turned me on so much that I wasn’t even scared of getting caught like I normally would have been. God, it went on for so long. The whole movie. I hadn’t even necessarily intended to sleep with him that night, but after two hours of heavy petting, I was begging *him* to take me someplace more private. When he suggested that we go to his room at his uncle’s place, I jumped at the chance. The only reason I didn’t cum in the theater is because I was holding myself back. I guess I was a little embarrassed after all.

I took out my cock and starting rubbing myself. I couldn’t believe my luck. I had stumbled upon one of my wife’s most erotic secrets: the story of the first time she’d slept with Carlo.

> In his room all he had for furniture was a mattress on the floor. That didn’t matter to me at all, though. I pushed him back down onto the bed and climbed on top of him. Ha, I guess I can get really aggressive when I’m turned on. We tore the clothes off each other. Our hands were all over each other. I explored his big, manly chest. He had so much more hair than Gianni. And his muscles were so big as well. At the same time, he had his hands all over my boobs. He was teasing my nipples with his thumb, then tweaking them, rolling them between his thick fingers. All the time, just behind me, I could feel something big, warm and thick. I was overwhelmed with lust. It was like a primal urge. I wanted him to take me. I was so turned on I would have done anything that he’d said. He was so commanding, so masculine, so

totally in control (which sounds like a strange thing to say because I was on top. Blah.)

I was amazed that her description of Carlo's room — specifically, the mattress on the floor — squared with the fantasy I'd constructed for myself in my office a while back. Then again, maybe imagining what a young unmarried man's room might look like wasn't exactly something that required psychic powers.

I looked nervously at my watch. It was 8:30. Melinda and Lisa were almost certainly still at dinner. I had plenty of time to read.

My cock was slick with precum as I continued to read the diary:

> He was so hard. I couldn't believe it. I just rubbed up against him for a long time while he played with my nipples. He told me he loved my big boobs, and I blushed when he said that because I am really proud of them even though they are two different sizes. I love that he notices them and that they make him want me. I reached back and took hold of his shaft and I knew that I needed it inside me. I wanted it so bad. He didn't have a condom, so I made him promise not to cum inside me. I know it was stupid, but I was so fucking horny. All my judgment just goes out the fucking window. I guess I need to go to confession. Ha.

Fuck.

I couldn't believe what I was reading. My wife had shattered all of my stereotypes about young men being hornier than young women. This was quite an explicit erotic story.

> I have to say something about Carlo's cock. I am sort of embarrassed writing this, but since no one is going to read it but me, I might as well come out and say it: he's huge. Like, really big. Long *and* thick. Normally it wouldn't matter to me one way or another. Actually, if you ask me, most dicks are ugly. I never wanted to see a penis. Or touch one. (Lisa and I talked about this last summer. She felt the same way.) But when it's attached to a guy like Carlo, that's a different story. I want to do anything I can to please him. Having said that, though, if I hadn't been out of my mind from making out for so long at the movie theater (and then on his bed), I would have never agreed to let him put

it inside. He was like twice the size of Gianni, who is not small. The first time I did it with Gianni I thought my Nonna was going to notice that I was walking funny the next day at church. Looking back, it's probably good that I lost my v–card with Gianni, because if Carlo had tried to be my first I don't think it would have worked. No way.

Any illusions I had harbored about my wife being a blushing virgin bride were now shattered. I'd known that she wasn't *actually* a virgin, of course, but I had still always pretended that I'd been able to show her a few things in bed. Now I knew that wasn't true at all. I couldn't help but feel a little betrayed. Not betrayed by Melinda herself (who could have expected a girl like her to be a virgin, especially these days?) but betrayed by some ideal image I'd had of her. And hadn't she told me before that Carlo had been her first? Maybe she had meant that in a more metaphorical way: the first guy who she really loved.

I started to question if Melinda had been telling the truth about anything sexual. Even though I'd had hints of Melinda's past and her desires, reading this diary was like unlocking a whole new secret side of her.

It was like getting to know a completely different woman. A character based on the woman I knew, but who had needs and desires she never spoke of around me.

The passage went on:

God, doing it with Carlo for the first time was even harder than the first time with Gianni. He was so thick that we really had to take our time to get him inside. I was glad to be on top, where I could control how deep he was going. He was really sweet, though, telling me how beautiful I looked and how much he loved my tits. Ha. I know lots of girls might not find that romantic, but to me his words were like honey. I love his deep voice. I love how he's so tough with other people but around me he's like just the sweetest. We went so slowly but I was so turned on that he finally got all the way inside me. I just **melted** in that moment. I bent down and gave him the longest kiss. I felt like it would never end. I never **wanted** it to end. I wanted to live with him there. In that moment.

God, *I* wanted to live with them in that moment, too, even though it was far in the past. Even though it didn't involve *me* at all. The thought of my voluptuous wife, as a young woman, struggling to sit down on a huge cock was just too much for me.

I shot a dribble of cum onto my hand, immediately thankful for the fact that I didn't unleash a virile squirt like Carlo probably had that night, otherwise I might have soiled my wife's diary and given away my betrayal.

Feeling immediately silly and a little embarrassed, I cleaned myself off with tissues and then carefully put the diary back into the box.

I spent the rest of the evening watching Netflix and trying to keep myself from going to pull out the box again. I wanted to, but the immediate need had been sated, and I couldn't risk Melinda catching me if she came home.

As it turned out, however, I went to bed without seeing her.

The next morning when I got up for work, I turned over to see her dozing angelically on the bed, her brown hair falling onto the pillow in the thick, wavy curls that I so adored.

My Melinda. What had she been up to that night with Lisa?

I gave her a gentle kiss on the forehead, and she smiled.

"Hey, honey," she said, without opening her eyes.

Her voice was low and raspy, like it often was after a long night out.

"Did you have a good time last night?"

"Mmm–hmm. Tell you about it tonight, ok?"

"Ok."

I squeezed Melinda's hand, then got ready for work.

During my long drive to the office, I started wondering what the women had talked about. Carlo must have come up. He was someone they both knew, and he had obviously been very important to Melinda.

I also kept thinking back to Carlo's inscription in Melinda's yearbook.

I love you forever, baby. No matter what happens.

—Carlo

He sure didn't *sound* like a thug. More like a lovestruck 18–year–old.

Of course, I *also* couldn't get the diary entry out of my mind. I hadn't read to the end. There *must* have been more! It was still difficult for me to square the sexually voracious woman that I'd met between the pages with the angelic visage I'd kissed goodbye in my bedroom that morning.

Molly was already there when I got to the office. She smiled at me and handed me a message.

"Mr. Miller called," she said, "he said he's got some good news."

"Really?" I said, looking at my cell phone, "why didn't he try my cell?"

"He said he figured you'd be driving. And you were."

"Ok," I said, "thanks."

I took the note with me and went into my office, grabbing the phone and dialing Brett's number.

"Steve," said the voice on the other end, "thanks for calling me back. Two things. First of all, I got the revised plans. They look good, but I do have a few questions of course. That's not why I wanted to talk to you, though."

"Ok," I said, "what is it?"

"Well," he continued, "I actually had a major cancellation. It might sound bad, but it's not. You know that project I was working on for the development company? Those apartments that were going to take me until February?"

"Yeah, for Jake Carlin, right?"

Jake was a fellow architect in the area. I had spoken to him a couple of occasions, and found him entirely unobjectionable, if a little boring.

"That' s right," he said, "he's had to withdraw the plans completely. The structural engineer had some kind of issue with them."

"How could that be? Jake's done two dozen buildings just like it."

"I know," said Brett, "but never one on top of this kind of soil. I guess there's a rare type of limestone deposit, mixed with sand. And potentially some underground water there."

“They didn’t know about that stuff before they started?”

“Negative,” he said.

“Ok,” I said, “so you’re free now?”

“That’s right,” he said, “you’re next on my list. So after we go out and look at the site, my guys can get started pretty much right away.”

“That’s amazing!” I said, “I can’t wait to tell Melinda.”

“We’re still going to meet out there on Saturday morning, right? 10:00AM?”

“That’s right,” I said.

“Good,” he said, “but while I’ve got you here, let’s talk about this entryway...”

We spent the better part of the morning discussing the finer points of materials sourcing and landscape architecture.

By the time I got off the phone with him, it was almost 12:00. I thought about calling Melinda and telling her the good news right away, but I decided to surprise her instead.

When I got home, however, she greeted me at the door with a look on her face as if she herself were harboring a wonderful surprise.

Could it be? I remembered her last period. No. Totally impossible.

“You look like you’re in a great mood,” I said, giving her a kiss.

Melinda giggled a little.

“I guess I am,” she said.

“What did *you* do today?”

“I just got off the phone with Lisa,” she said, lapsing back into her Queens accent without noticing it, “we talked for like an hour after I got home from work. It was like being back in the old neighborhood.”

“You visited her yesterday, too, right?”

“Mm–hmm.”

“How’s her new guy?”

“Oh, Gary? He’s like a cowboy or something.”

“A *real* cowboy?”

She laughed.

“No, he’s a software developer, like everyone else around here. I don’t even know if he’s from Texas. But he sure *looks* like a cowboy. I think Lisa’s into that. It’s kind of exotic for us, you know?”

I chuckled.

“So, I’ve got some great news,” I said, “not only are we going to meet with Brett on Saturday, but he’s also going to be able to start on the build *much* sooner than we planned.”

I watched as her eyes lit up. I loved making Melinda happy.

“Really? How soon?”

“He didn’t say, but he had another major project cancel. We’re next on his list. If he can pull the right permits, I’d say they *might* be done with everything by March or April. May at the very latest.”

“You’re kidding!”

She jumped for joy, embracing me.

“I love our home,” she said, “because *you* live here. I don’t love the house. And I’ll be happy to be in our own place. Designed by my talented husband.”

She rubbed up against me.

“You know,” she said, “I think maybe my talented husband should take me to the bedroom now...”

“If you insist,” I said, kissing her as I felt my erection rising.

We moved into the bedroom and began to kiss. I pawed at Melinda’s large, pendulous breasts, slipping a hand under her blouse and then under her bra.

“Oh Stevie,” she said, “that feels so nice.”

I reached behind her with my other hand and unsnapped her bra clasp, then pulled her blouse over her head.

She looked amazing without a shirt.

I slowly realized that, while *my* hands were all over *her*, *her* hands were somewhere else entirely.

At least her right. It was in her pants.

I couldn't believe it. My wife was masturbating! This was quite uncharacteristic. Something had gotten her really worked up.

"Honey," she said, "let's move to the bed."

She quickly stripped out of her work pants, revealing her black panties which matched the bra I had just removed. She fell back onto the bed, and beckoned me to join her with her finger.

I thought she wanted me to penetrate her. To try again to make a baby.

I was certainly ready. But to my surprise, Melinda playfully pushed my head down towards her crotch, pulling her panties to the side with her free hand.

"Lick me, Stevie..."

A jolt of electricity went down my spine as I tongued her clit. She was already soaking wet. My chin was covered in her juices.

"Oh," she sighed, "that's so good. You're good at that, babe."

"You like that?" I asked, pushing a finger inside her.

"Yeah, that feels good, honey," she said, "very nice."

I circled her clit with my tongue until she was moaning. At the same time, I was pressing against her g–spot with my index finger.

She was moaning softly now.

"Ready for me?" I asked, my erect cock aching.

She giggled.

"Ready for you to do what?"

"To try to make another baby…," I said, my voice betraying my confusion.

"Oh," she sighed, pushing her hips into my hand as I continued to massage her vagina, "I think there are things that you're better at."

"Huh?"

“I mean licking me,” she said, “you were doing such a good job. But you stopped.”

She grabbed my head, lacing her fingers gently yet firmly through my hair.

“Come on, Stevie. I need your talents down *here*,” she said, pushing my head down and then guiding me to a different area of her labia than I’d been licking before.

“Oh wow,” she gasped, “I knew you were good at this. That’s it… don’t… stop...”

I continued to lap at her lips in exactly the place where she’d pressed my head.

“I’m so close,” she continued, pressing her hips up into my mouth, her juices flowing over my face, “please...”

I realized in that moment that I had an opportunity to extract more information from her. On the edge of orgasm, Melinda was more likely to tell me the truth. Or at least that’s what I thought.

I pulled away from her mound for a moment, stopping the motion of my finger as well.

“Melinda,” I said, “just tell me one thing...”

“Why’d… you… stop…?”

Her voice was desperate.

“I just want to know something, honey...”

“What?”

“Did he make you cum when he was inside?”

“Who?”

She was really playing dumb now.

“Who do you think?” I said, “Carlo, of course.”

“Oh babe,” she moaned, “why are you asking me that?”

“I just want to know,” I said, “did you come with his cock inside you?”

“Stevie,” she said, pushing my head down.

I resisted.

“Ok,” she said, “you’re making me feel so dirty.”

“Is that a ‘yes’?” I asked.

She moaned, as if stalling for time.

“Yes, *ok*?”

“Every time?”

“I don’t remember,” she protested, “and you said *one* thing.”

“Thanks, honey,” I said.

I pushed my head back between her legs and continued to rub her g–spot. She let out an immediate sigh of relief. A few seconds later, she was screaming in ecstasy, her hips slamming into my face as she climaxed.

“That was great, Stevie,” she said, after the tension had left her body, “you’re good at that.”

“Now shouldn’t we try to...you know,” I said, stroking my erect cock.

“Oh. That.”

“Yes,” I said, frustrated, “*that*.”

“Well, I’m kind of sore now. Maybe you can just jerk off?”

“Ok,” I said hesitantly, “is that all?”

“You can look at me for inspiration,” she said, gesturing to her large breasts and full hips, “doesn’t your wife turn you on?”

“Of course you do,” I said, “I was just hoping that you’d be more...involved.”

“I *am* involved, though, honey. I’m sitting right here.”

I felt my self–respect leaving my body, but I couldn’t help it. My wife was so beautiful, and going down on her had aroused me so much. I took my cock in my hand and began to stroke while I stared at her shapely body.

I imagined her making love to Carlo, her sitting on his thick, long cock for the first time. Him being so gentle, taking his time with her…

A moment later, I squirted all over my own hand. Melinda smirked.

“See? I knew you could do it.”

She gave me a kiss on the forehead, then announced that she was heading to the bathroom to take a shower.

I cleaned myself off, feeling a mixture of disappointment and relief. The physical release was nice. But what was I to make of the fact that my baby–crazy wife had suddenly seemed to give up all hope of conceiving?

***

The diary in Melinda's closet was like a magnet to me from then on. I found myself thinking about it while I was at work. When I was at home, I looked for opportunities to steal a glance at it. What other secrets did it contain? Unfortunately, however, I didn't have another chance to look at it until about a week later, when Melinda announced that she was going to happy hour with her colleagues at the law firm after work.

She invited me to come along, but I declined: the pull of her former life was too strong.

As soon as I had fought my way home through the traffic, I poured myself a drink and went into the bedroom. The box was still at the top of the closet, but as I lifted it from its place and set it on the floor, I noticed something.

The flaps of the box, which I had pushed down and interlaced securely after my last session, were now open again.

Had Melinda been taking another stroll down memory lane?

I had to think so.

The thought of my wife reliving her romantic relationship was incredibly arousing to me for some reason.

I opened the diary again and began to read. I skipped past a couple of rather boring accounts of dates with Carlo (none of them approaching the erotic fever–dream of that first encounter) and some entries about her doubts and fears about what she was going to do in college. She had planned to enroll in a community college in Queens and stay at home while she got her degree, but was still not totally sold on the idea of a college education being worth it when she could sometimes make $100 a night in tips at the restaurant where she worked.

However, I soon stumbled upon what I was looking for: an entry from the end of the summer.

It was the story of that fateful night. The night that Carlo killed a man.

I read through it with baited breath. This is what it said:

> I feel like now that everything is over — or at least different now — I need to write about it to get things straight in my mind. In my memory. Nothing is **over**, but something has definitely ended. I'm completely devastated.
>
> It was a Friday night. I'd worked the lunch shift at the restaurant my uncle owned, and I was exhausted. But I was so happy to be going out with Carlo. Being with him was always so exciting — you never knew what was going to happen. Even though he was an older guy, he was still a little impulsive, but **so** confident. The day before, I'd gotten a new miniskirt that my mom really didn't like because she thought it made me look like a "prostitute." But I loved it and I knew that Carlo would too, so I was excited to wear it for the first time that night. I remember working on my make–up for a long time, too. I wanted to be so pretty for him. At the time, I wasn't thinking about the kind of attention that my appearance might bring from **other** men **besides** Carlo, but looking back on it now, I realize that I probably liked being noticed by guys besides Carlo, too. Even if I wouldn't admit it. I also had on this low–cut blouse that made my boobs look incredible. I probably really *did* look like a prostitute. Looking back on it, my mom was right.

I smiled. Melinda's mom could be as feisty as she was sometimes, but ultimately they usually ended up seeing eye–to–eye on most issues. It was amusing to see that this dynamic had been going on for quite a while.

The handwriting of the next entry was a little different, and the pen was thicker. She must have written it on a different day, even though she hadn't provided the date.

> I got to the bar a little earlier than Carlo. I'd been there a couple of times so the bartender knew me, and they had no problem serving me. I was sitting at the bar and drinking a beer by myself. I must have

looked like I was there to meet guys. So I don't blame the guy for coming up to talk to me. I feel kind of guilty about it. I mean, the way I was dressed.

A chill ran down my spine. "The guy" could only be the guy that Carlo killed. It had never occurred to me that Melinda had been *this* involved with Carlo's crime. I had sort of a sick feeling, even though I knew Melinda had been blameless.

He was was Puerto Rican. I could see that right away. There are a lot of them in the neighborhood, and usually we get along. We really have a lot in common with them (but don't tell my Nonna that). Anyway, the guy came up to me and wanted to buy me a drink. I told him no, that I was waiting for my boyfriend, but he didn't believe me. He said that if **he** were my boyfriend, he'd never leave me alone at a bar. Typical stupid pick–up line. Eventually, he gave up and went to go sit in the corner, but kept watching me. I could feel his eyes on me the whole time. To be truthful, it was kind of fun knowing that he liked me, but also a little uncomfortable.

I painted the scenario in my mind. The curvy, sexy Melinda alone at the bar. Of course she'd be irresistible to any heterosexual man in the place. You could scarcely blame the Puerto Rican guy for trying out his luck.

A few minutes later, one of that guy's friends came in. He sat down next to him and and they started talking. Then, suddenly, they were both standing next to me, one on either side. I started to get nervous. They were speaking Spanish. I didn't understand much, but I knew the word *tetas*. Tits. I might have *unconsciously* wanted attention with my outfit, but I definitely didn't want two guys leering at me while I was alone. I tried to ignore them, but they kept talking to me, and *about* me, sometimes in Spanish, sometimes in English, until I stood up and told them to fuck off. Right about then, the bartender (who'd been washing glasses down at the other end of the bar), realized what was happening. He told them to get out.

They started cussing him out, and he threatened to call the police. Right about then is when Carlo walked in. The first Puerto Rican

looked at him and said ‘is this faggot your boyfriend?’ Carlo was not in the mood to fuck around. He saw how scared I was. He had no idea what was happening, but he had this natural protective instinct. He asked the guy to repeat himself. The guy must have been feeling confident ‘cause his friend was there, because he got up in Carlo’s face and *did* repeat it. The guy really was looking for a fight. So Carlo gave it to him.

He hit the first guy so hard that he fell backwards and his his head on the bar,” she said, “then the friend took a swing at Carlo, but Carlo ducked and then punched the guy hard in the stomach with his left. While the guy was doubled over, Carlo grabbed my hand and pulled me out of the bar. We ran down the street to an alley and turned down it, hiding for a second until we were sure that the Puerto Ricans weren’t coming after us.

My pulse started racing. I could feel the young woman’s passion pulsing off the page. The handwriting became a bit more erratic.

Carlo grabbed me and then we were all over each other. He pushed me up against the wall and hiked my skirt up. I wanted him *so* bad. I was soaking wet already, and I hand my hands on his belt, totally desperate to get his cock out. That big, beautiful dick. The first couple of times we’d done it, it was hard to get all the way inside me, but by that point I was used to it. I craved being stretched and filled by him. So I had him out and was stroking him with my hands while he kissed me, but I wasn’t sure how we were going to manage to do it in that position. That’s when he looked me in the eye and told me to turn around and stick out my ass. I loved how authoritative he was. How he took control. The image of him effortlessly taking out the two guys in the bar flashed in front of my eyes as he entered me from behind. I told you that he was sweet, but also rough sometimes. This was one of those times. It was like getting in that fight had awakened something primal in him. In both of us. I was ready to submit to him. To do anything he wanted. And if he told me to turn around and bend over, that was exact what *I* wanted, too, in that moment.

I had told myself that I wasn't necessarily going to jerk off again while I read the diary. Last time I had felt weird about it. Sort of ashamed. But the heat radiating off the page caused me now to begin to rub my cock through my pants. I closed my eyes for a moment, imagining the scene. Carlo, the brute who had just unknowingly killed a man, taking my young wife from behind in a dark alley, like a conquering hero.

> He slapped my ass and told me to take it like a good girl. **That** turned me on so much that I exploded all over his cock, almost the second he had bottomed out inside me. In the distance, we heard police sirens. That just made the whole thing that much more erotic, knowing that the cops were on their way and would be looking for Carlo. But even though the cops were on their way, Carlo was taking his time with me. Giving me several rough, hard thrusts, then fucking me slowly and sweetly for a while, whispering sweet things in my ear as he absolutely ravished me from behind. I had a second orgasm, and then I slowly realized the situation we were in. I told him that we needed to hurry. To get away from there, and that he should just come inside me.

My own cock was out and I was stroking it fast. I wouldn't be able to last for much longer, but from what I was reading, neither would Carlo. All of my inhibitions were, once again, gone.

> Every time that we'd done it before, we'd used a condom, or Carlo had at least pulled out, but I was in no mood to be careful. When Carlo heard me say that, he let out this adorable little growl. I guess it feels really good for guys to come inside. He shot a load inside me and then wiped himself off and pulled his pants back up. We could hear the sirens stop as the cops parked outside the bar. He took my hand and we ran through the alley, then down several blocks to a subway station, where we jumped on a Manhattan–bound train. We rode it all the way up to Harlem, then back down to Queens. It was a long time before we were back in the neighborhood.

I closed my eyes, stroking myself quickly, imagining Carlo depositing his seed inside my warm, fertile young wife for the first time. And perhaps the last time, as well (since I knew that the cops would pick him up eventually, I just didn't know when).

It was funny. I didn't imagine myself *as* Carlo, I imagined myself watching this beautiful young couple fuck like animals in the alley. I imagined feeling the electricity between them as this alpha male claimed what was rightfully his.

This time, instead of dribbling, I exploded, staining the comforter and missing the pages of the diary by mere inches. I cursed my own carelessness, and resolved to be more careful next time. The feeling of being a voyeur of my wife's secret past and her fantasies and desires had been intoxicating, something I'd never experienced before.

I felt like an addict. I needed my next fix.

After I cleaned up, I closed the diary again and was about to put it back where I'd found it in the box when something caught my eye.

The pile of letters at the bottom of the box. I'd seen the first one already. It was from Melinda's mother while she was at summer camp. Totally uninteresting to me in my new capacity as archaeologist of my wife's sexual history.

I suddenly had an intuition, however, and I pulled out the whole stack of papers, which included several envelopes as well.

Who wrote letters anymore? I understood having a couple of letters from summer camp, because cell phones and internet had probably been non–existent or restricted, but after that? Melinda and I were millenials. We'd been using e–mail our whole lives.

My heart began to beat quickly as I realized *exactly* who still wrote letters.

Inmates.

Chapter 4

That evening, I skimmed the letters quickly, trying to piece together the scope and duration of my wife's correspondence with Carlo while he was behind bars. I only had *his* side of things, of course. I had to infer what my wife had written to him based on the content of his replies.

Many of the letters were disappointing insofar as they lacked salacious details. They were mainly questions about his relatives in the old neighborhood, how she was doing in school, etc. These letters dated back to right after he was imprisoned, and Melinda transferred to UT Austin. You could tell from the tone of the letters that Carlo was extremely disappointed that Melinda had transferred out of state and wouldn't be visiting him as often anymore, if at all.

However, I had to give Carlo serious credit, because it was also clear that he recognized that the scholarship Melinda had received was a serious opportunity for her, and that she would be crazy to wait for a man who had been put behind bars for 10–15 years. She had to start her life.

Through reading his letters, I felt like I was getting to know Carlo. To see him the way that Melinda did. He didn't make a polished or particularly well–educated impression. There were plenty of spelling and punctuation errors in his letters, but his warm good humor and perseverance in the face of the terrifying reality of such a long prison sentence always shone through.

These qualities were almost impossible not to admire, and I found myself smiling when Carlo would mention one of the small pleasures of prison life: cooking noodles in his cell, for example, and trying to replicate one of his favorite Sicilian recipes with the ingredients available from the commissary.

Once in a while, however, there was a hint of sensuality and passion in his writing. He alluded often to the night in the alley that I had read about in the diary, and also mentioned something about the last night before he went to prison.

I managed to figure out that he must have been hiding out in an old high school, in the janitor's closet. Melinda had come to visit him the night

before he turned himself in to the police. They must have had *quite* a goodbye fuck, because Carlo said that he thought about it every night before he went to sleep.

This final night was also connected to some kind of loss, some tragedy in Melinda's life that clearly went beyond the fact that her lover had been imprisoned. It was something that Carlo only hinted at a couple of times. Something that he promised to "make better someday." Whatever it was, it didn't seem to be anything that Carlo had done wrong, because he wasn't exactly apologizing for it, just offering his sympathy.

I probably *would* have had time to read all of the letters that evening before Melinda came back from happy hour, but for some reason I stopped myself. Part of me must have wanted to prolong that incredible feeling of erotic excitement that came from snooping in my wife's past.

When Melinda came home about an hour later, she was giddy. She'd probably had a drink or two at the bar, and now she poured herself another one.

I used the opportunity to try to pump her for more information.

"So," I began, "the other night when you saw Lisa. That must have been fun, huh?"

"Oh yeah," she gushed, "I felt kinda bad for Gary, because here he was sitting there listening to us talk about the people we knew in the old neighborhood. Did you know she dated my cousin Freddie for like two months when we were seniors in high school? Do you remember that guy? You met him at our wedding, I think. Total weirdo. Anyway..."

"Speaking of the old neighborhood," I said, "you must have talked about Carlo, too."

"Well yeah," she said, "he's kinda the reason that I moved away."

"I know," I said, "but you've never really told me why he's in jail. What happened that night. All I know is that he killed a guy in a bar fight."

She sighed.

"I've told you before. I really don't like to talk about this."

"I know you don't, honey," I said, "but think about it from my perspective. It's like this big part of your history that I have no idea about."

“Ok,” she said, “so he was in a bar fight. He punched a guy in the face — with his bare hands. The guy cracked his head against the brass railing of the bar and died a few minutes later from internal bleeding. The prosecutor said that Carlo was wearing brass knuckles, even though he wasn’t. He got extra time because of that.”

“What? That’s terrible. They set him up?”

“Sort of. It’s complicated,” she said.

“Ok,” I replied, I understand that this is hard for you to talk about, but thanks for letting me know what happened. That makes him seem like less of a bad guy.”

“He’s not a bad guy,” she said in a flat tone, as if she were somewhere else in her mind, “he was just a little rough around the edges.”

“Yeah,” I said, “I understand.”

She nodded, her eyes welling up for a moment, before she blinked hard and swallowed, her happy face coming back. I regretted having brought up a topic that caused her such obvious pain.

“Let’s talk about something else,” she said, and we spent the next half hour or so before bed discussing some of the decorating options on the new house.

***

It was around that time that I began to notice another change in Melinda’s behavior. Not only had we not had intercourse in quite a while, she hadn’t even so much as touched my cock in what felt like forever. On top of that, she had started wearing a dressing robe and sexy black lace underwear around the house more often. It was a little strange.

When she caught me staring at her (and trust me, it was hard *not* to stare at my own sexy wife, especially after being deprived of sex for so long), she would smile to herself and pull the robe around her body more tightly.

A few minutes later, however, it would hang loose again.

Finally, one day, I confronted her about the lack of sex. It was after work and we were thinking about going to a movie. She had on an

incredible skirt that hugged her curves and a tight sky–blue button–down blouse that her chest was practically bursting out of.

My cock, deprived of her touch for so long, was like steel in my pants as I pulled her in for a kiss. Rubbing up against me, she smiled.

"Oh, Stevie," she said, "you must *really* like my outfit."

"What man wouldn't?" I whispered, my lips grazing her ear, "it's been so long since we've...made love..."

"Well maybe," she whispered back, "we should go to the bedroom."

I couldn't believe my ears. Was it really finally going to happen again?

Without saying anything, I took her hand and led her into the bedroom, kissing her gently and feeling her pleasingly round ass in both hands as she ground against my erection.

A few minutes later, her blouse was off (but not her bra) and she was on her back on the bed.

"Stevie," she said, giving me a come–hither look and following it with the appropriate finger motion, "you know what your job is, right?"

"To give you a baby?" I asked, trying to recapture the chemistry of our year or so of trying.

She smirked.

"No, I don't think you've been proven to be particularly reliable in that department," she laughed.

"But Melinda," I said, trying not to sound resentful, "I'm your husband."

"I know you are, honey," she said, "and you're a very good husband. An excellent provider."

I couldn't help but feel that I was being manipulated, but I was so close to having a sexual encounter with Melinda for the first time in a long time, that I didn't want to spoil things by starting a big fight.

So when she gestured to her crotch, I got on my knees and buried my face in her pussy once again.

Maybe, I thought to myself, *I can use this as an opportunity to get some more information.*

She sighed in contentment as my tongue found her clit.

“That’s good, Stevie,” she said, “down just a little bit.”

She grabbed my head and moved it to where she wanted it.

“Not so fast,” she said, “slow and steady, Stevie.”

“Like this?” I asked, after pleasuring her for a few moments.

“Oh yes,” she said, “*just* like that.”

I continued my efforts for several minutes, savoring the flavor of her pussy juices until the end of my tongue started to go numb.

“Oh God, Stevie. That feels so good.”

I lapped at her sopping wet pussy, her juices coating my chin.

“A little lower,” she ordered.

I moved my tongue down, pressing against the lower wall of her tunnel.

“Lower,” she gasped.

Did she want me to...lick her asshole? The thought excited me quite a bit. My cock was instantly rock hard, even though this was a totally humiliating position to be in.

“That’s it, Stevie,” she said, “just a little lower.”

She *did* want me to eat her ass. She was just hesitant about coming out and saying it explicitly, even if her voice was authoritative.

“Lower still, Stevie,” she said, “right there. Yes.”

My tongue found her bottom, finally. It tasted a little musky. Not unpleasant, I had to admit.

“Oh, God,” she moaned, “that’s it, Stevie, eat my ass...”

That was a very strange phrase indeed to hear uttered by my wife.

“Fuck that’s good,” she said, “you can get me ready like this every time now, honey...”

The phrase “get me ready” seemed a little strange to me. Suddenly I imagined that I was preparing her not for intercourse with me, but for sex with a much better endowed partner.

Carlo.

It seemed possible that Melinda was having the same thought, because she said something that caught me off guard.

“So you’ve been asking a lot of questions about Carlo. Still interested in your wife’s past?”

The question hung in the air for a moment. There was a delicious tension. She was just coming out and saying it, during sex.

“Mmm–hmm,” I hummed, tonguing at her asshole enthusiastically as the flavor become more familiar.

“So naughty,” she said, laughing a bit between little adorable moans.

“Are you going to tell me something else?” I said, taking a break.

She grabbed me by the hair.

“About what?”

“Your past.”

“I don’t think so,” she said, pushing my head back down, “it wouldn’t be proper...”

We’ll see about that... I thought to myself, redoubling my efforts to pleasure her.

I was finger–fucking her now with my thumb as I continued to lick her asshole. Melinda’s breath was coming in short spurts.

“Just tell me something,” I said, stopping again, “you still think about him sometimes, right?”

“About Carlo? No,” she said, whimpering in frustration, “keep going. Don’t fucking stop, Stevie!”

“I don’t believe you,” I said, hesitating, even though she was pushing forcefully on my head now.

“Ok,” she gasped, “I do think about him sometimes.”

I knew it I thought.

“Thanks for answering the question,” I said, plunging my tongue back into her ass as I fingered her.

“Yeah,” she moaned, “I sometimes wonder...how he’s doing...”

I pleasured her for a few more seconds, then pulled away again.

Her cry of frustration made it seem like Melinda might slap me.

“Do you ever think about visiting him?”

“Yes,” she gasped.

“So you want to?”

“I said,” she stammered, pushing my head down once again, “that I *think* about it.”

“Mmm,” I said, starting to swirl my tongue around her anus again.

This was very interesting information indeed. I didn’t want to push this “interrogation” too far, however, for fear of scaring her.

I decided that enough was enough, and this time when she cried “don’t stop, Stevie!” I didn’t.

She exploded all over my hand. The quality of her moans and the contractions of her body that I could feel through my face and hand seemed different from her other orgasms. Perhaps this was due to the fact that I’d been licking her ass, or perhaps it was due to the fact that I’d put the idea of Carlo in her mind just before her climax.

But had *I* really put the idea there? Didn’t her confession to me prove that the idea had been there from the beginning?

“Ok,” sighed Melinda, “I guess we have to take care of you, now?”

I rolled onto my back next to her, and she took hold of my erection, which was already slick with precum.

She began to stroke me, completely without interest, staring into the distance.

“Admit it,” she whispered, her strokes getting faster and faster, “you’ve been thinking about me and Carlo together. Haven’t you?”

“Yes,” I gasped, on the edge of orgasm.

She smirked, removing her hand, just as I was reaching the point of no return. My cock twitched, leaking semen, but my orgasm was ruined.

“You little perv,” she said, then gave me a kiss on the forehead.

I was left feeling less like a husband and more like some kind of voyeur. In fact, that was basically what I was becoming: a voyeur of my wife's past.

Perhaps that's why Melinda was pulling away from me sexually. Or was it something else?

Chapter 5

Though I'd read many of the letters that Carlo had sent to Melinda in the box, I hadn't yet finished the diary. I'd only read perhaps 2/3 of the entries. Even though much of Melinda's writing (up until "the incident" of course) was completely banal, I held out hope that there might be more juicy details lurking in the pages.

In fact, over the next few days, my fantasy ran away with me. I tried to imagine the last few times that Melinda and Carlo had made love. I knew that there had been some kind of encounter after the one in the alley. While he'd been on the run and sleeping at the high school.

I hoped to find some sort of account of it in the diary pages.

But I didn't get a chance to look at the diary for a long time. Work kept me away from the house when Melinda was also away from it, which meant I didn't have an opportunity to rummage through the box.

The holidays were approaching, and I raced to finish up my most important work before Christmas, so that I would be able to take a real break.

This was the time of year when Melinda sometimes took a trip to New York to see her mother and some of her other older relatives. I had accompanied her on these trips during the first few years of our marriage, but eventually it became clear that my presence made them uncomfortable for some inexplicable reason.

They were very hospitable, of course, like Italians tend to be, but it was this very hospitality which seemed to be a burden for them, a obligation. Not that Melinda's mother or her aunts and uncles would ever *admit* this, of course. But when I floated the idea of not accompanying her one year, Melinda had agreed immediately. Melinda told me that her mother protested my absence at the holidays, but I assumed that this was a merely *pro forma* complaint, done for the sake of propriety.

We'd been so wrapped up in the excitement of the new house (and our hopes of populating it with a child) that we'd failed to discuss our plans for the upcoming season, which was now practically upon us.

One morning in early December, just before we were about to both leave for work, I finally broached the topic.

“I’d like to see my parents,” I said, “and I think they’d love to see you, too.”

“Oh,” she said, as if trying to let me down easy, “you know what? Why don’t you go and see them by yourself.”

“Ok,” I replied, “I didn’t know that you wanted to go out east this year. Usually you say something before now. The flights are going to be really expensive.”

“I’m going to stay here,” she answered quickly, “Lisa is coming back into town to visit her cowboy, and I thought that we could celebrate Christmas together.”

“You’d rather spend Christmas with a friend you haven’t talked to in years and some guy she barely knows — and who you barely know — than visit my family?”

It was hard to hide the disappointment in my voice. I loved “showing off” Melinda around my parents and other relatives. I knew it was wrong to think about her that way, but she really was something of a “prize” for a guy like me: the kind of beautiful woman who I never would have been able to date as the high school nerd I was.

Thinking about Melinda not accompanying me on this visit was the first time I’d been conscious of this fact, the fact that I considered her a sort of “achievement,” as objectifying as that sounds. I hated myself for even thinking it, but I knew that it was true on some level.

“Hey,” she retorted, “you have no ground to stand on, mister. After you stopped coming to Christmas at my mom’s place.”

“But that was different. You said yourself back then that it was ok if I didn’t go. That your mom felt too much pressure with me around. You know she has this need to be the perfect hostess. That tendency is bad enough just with your family around. But it’s different with my parents. They *want* to see you.”

“Sure,” she said, “but they’re already used to not having me there. Besides, you mom is clearly not totally comfortable around me. And don’t get me started on your uncle Ron.”

She had me there.

“But I already told them that you were coming.”

“That’s your problem,” she said, “you should have talked to me about it first.”

“I just assumed...”

“That’s the problem,” she said, “you shouldn’t have.”

I was angry. I admit it.

“Look, honey,” she said, sensing my anger, “please just let me have this one. You know how stressed out I’ve been recently. With the whole baby thing.”

Her tone had softened, and she was gazing up into my eyes. I found this look practically impossible to resist.

“But if we’re apart for Christmas,” I said, “we won’t be able to try anymore to make one.”

Of course we hadn’t really tried at all over the past few weeks. I didn’t mention that of course — it was a fact that Melinda already knew.

“There’s always next year,” she sighed.

“Ok,” you’re right, I sighed.

Something didn’t make sense. How could Melinda suddenly be so unconcerned about making a baby with me, when she’d been so baby–crazy before? What had changed?

“I’m going to go out with Stacey and Adrian, tonight” she said, referring to her two bosses, the senior partners at the firm, “and you know how they are. Don’t feel like you need to wait up tonight.”

“Ok,” I said, secretly happy that her absence from the house would give me more opportunity to snoop into her past.

“Great. See you tonight,” she said, giving me a peck on the cheek before heading out the door.

I could sense the tension in the air.

Suddenly, my work didn’t seem so important.

I waited until Melinda's car was gone, then I headed into the bedroom. I couldn't wait until that night to figure out what other secrets the diary might contain.

I pulled down the box and began to read. My eyes flitted past accounts of Carlo's trial. To me, those were trivial now. Boring. I could return to them later.

Finally, I struck pay dirt. Yes. *This* was what I was looking for.

> I can't stop thinking about it. That first night. In the school. We we slept on the gym mats. We were both so fucking horny. I didn't know that he'd actually killed someone. Neither of us did. All I thought about was my big manly boyfriend defending me from not one but *two* creeps. My pussy was soaking. I just wanted to take his cock inside me. I was still thinking about the incredible fuck we'd had in the alley right after the fight. The way he'd turned me around and slapped my ass and just pushed himself inside me and taken what he wanted. He had conquered his enemies, and now he was conquering his woman. It was so primal. So natural. And so, once we'd found a safe place for the time being, I was aching for his touch again. He felt the same way. Maybe he knew that those next several days would be his last opportunity for sexual contact with a woman for years. Maybe he somehow sensed it even then, even though neither of us understood the gravity of what had actually happened.

God, it was all better than I could have imagined. Her passion. Her *lust* practically jumped off the page. I pulled out my cock and began to masturbate. I couldn't help it.

> I told him to lay back on the mat and take his pants off. He did that, then I proceeded to give him the sluttiest blowjob I could. I didn't really know what I was doing, it just came naturally to me in that moment. I wanted to prove my worthiness to receive his seed, to be the vessel for his masculine essence. I took his shaft all the way down my throat, worshiping it like it was some kind of pagan idol. In fact, in that moment, he was like a god to me. After all, he'd swooped in and taken me out of an extremely uncomfortable situation. I *owed* him this. I sucked him for about half an hour, taking my time and keeping him on

> the edge. He ran his fingers through my hair and told me what a good girl I was being. I licked his balls — his big, heavy balls. They were so large, so manly. I loved playing with them, and he loved it when I did. Finally, he'd had enough. I knew he was on the edge of coming, and I wanted him to. I wanted to taste his semen, to enjoy the fruits of my considerable labors. But that's not what Carlo wanted. He wanted to finish inside.

My wife's writing was so vivid, so passionate, it was like I was there. Watching them.

> Carlo pushed me back onto the mat and slid inside me. He pinned me down and started fucking me with these hard, slow strokes, each one like the blow of a hammer, but in the best way. I was completely turned on after sucking his dick for so long, and I loved the fucking he gave me. It was like the most incredible mixture of romance and complete animal fucking. Just incredible. I came three times before he held me down, looked into my eyes and told me he loved me, right in the same moment that he finished inside me. We weren't using protection, and that made it so much hotter. To have him tell me that he loved me, right in the moment that he shot his big load inside me. I felt so loved. So wanted. So vulnerable and feminine. It was incredible. I don't think I'll ever be able to replicate the high of that moment.

I realized that she was right. She would never be able to replicate that experience. Not with me, anyway!

I standing next to the bed, I jerked off into a wad of tissues before cleaning myself quickly and replacing the box at the top of the closet.

Suddenly, I felt very stupid. What was I doing? Sneaking around and jerking off to my wife's diary?

On the other hand, didn't I have reason to be suspicious? Why had she suddenly stopped letting me inside her?

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These thoughts plagued me during my commute to the office, made even longer than usual due to the fact that I'd been delayed at home reading the diary.

That was when I got the idea to search for Carlo in the New York State Prison System.

As soon as I got to the office, I answered the most urgent e–mails before going to the website to search for Carlo.

I knew that his last name was Castellino.

How many Carlo Castellinos could be there in the system? As it turned out, he had a fairly common name, and there were, in fact, no less than five prisoners in the state system with the same name.

I didn't know his middle name, so I couldn't narrow it down beyond those five.

One name, however, caught my attention.

Carlo A. Castellino. TRANSFERRED: FCI BASTROP

Bastrop. Why was that name so familiar?

A quick google showed that "FCI Bastrop" stood for "Federal Corrections Institute: Bastrop."

A facility *very* close to Austin.

A feeling of dread filled me. Could it be? What were the chances? And why was Carlo (a state prisoner) suddenly in the federal system? And so close to us that Melinda would have been able to visit him on her lunch break?

It must have been a different Carlo Castellino. There was simply no other way…

I decided it was time to deepen my investigation. Time to try to find out what Melinda was really up to.

I logged into her iCloud account. Melinda was both very trusting when it came to technology, and also (if I'm being honest) a big technologically illiterate. She didn't care that I held on to all her passwords, and she didn't think to turn off the tracking on her phone.

I was easily able to find "significant locations" on her account history.

There was our house, of course. And Melinda's office.

That made total sense.

There were also a couple of other addresses that I didn't recognize. One turned out to be her gym. Another one was a coffee shop that I'd heard her talk about before.

But there was another one that she'd visited almost every Thursday afternoon for the last month.

On State Highway 95.

That's right: FCI Bastrop.

She'd been visiting Carlo.

Chapter 6

The next week, the firm where Melinda worked had a holiday party. It was a small place — just two partners and a couple of associates — and so Melinda and I knew everyone well. I even hired her bosses on a couple of occasions when I needed someone to represent my firm in court. It hardly ever came up, but when it did, I was grateful that I had an "in" in the legal profession.

"Melinda's" firm (as I was accustomed to calling it in my mind, even though she was a receptionist, not an attorney) specialized in corporate law. Mainly financial agreements between small businesses and larger corporations. But both of the partners — Stacey Shepard and Adrian Martinez— were quite active as *pro bono* criminal defense attorneys for appellate cases in the state of Texas. Even though they were not criminal specialists, they'd made a name for themselves over the past decade or so by winning the release of a man from Amarillo wrongfully imprisoned for murder after the police coerced a confession from him. Melinda's bosses had been able to prove that the man's confession had occurred under duress, and, moreover, that he had not fully understood the document he had signed due to the fact that he was a native Spanish speaker and largely illiterate in English.

They'd obtained his release after he'd served only three years out of a twenty–year sentence.

Stacey and Adrian were fierce in the courtroom, but they also knew their limits. They'd taken on the Hernandez case (that was the man's name) only after months of careful study, as well as consultation with friends from law school. They were not in the business, in other words, of biting off more than they could chew. They only did one *pro bono* criminal case every few years or so.

Every year at the party, there was a part near the beginning where Stacey and Adrian would review the accomplishments of the firm, recognizing their few employees for their individual work, but also the efforts of the team. They'd talk about the big cases and the clients of the year, and acknowledge the extenuating circumstances — overnight research

sessions, grueling trips to other cities — that sometimes accompanied life in a firm that specialized in litigation.

They usually spent time talking about each team member individually, and that didn't take long, because there were only two actual employees — Melinda and Lana, the paralegal, but they also mentioned the accomplishments of the associates and the partners.

We were gathered that evening in the entryway of their office sipping cocktails. I had a gin and tonic, made from local gin *and* local tonic water. Yes, in Austin such things exist. Melinda was drinking a Lone Star, as usual. We had been chatting with Lana and her boyfriend, Tad, when suddenly Adrian tapped on the microphone and began to speak.

Adrian was a small Hispanic man who seemed totally unassuming, until you heard him open his mouth. He was an expert at catching other attorneys, and even judges off guard. He seemed like just another friendly Mexican guy who might be a gardener or landscaper or something, but if he talked at length, it became clear that he had a formidable intellect. His track record in the courtroom proved that, as did his degrees from UT and then Harvard Law.

His partner in life, as well as in law, Stacey Shepherd (who stood beside him now) could not have contrasted with him more. She was over six feet when wearing heels (as she was now), reed–thin, and an icy Midwestern blond. She towered over her husband. People were often surprised to find out that they were together. When that happened, Adrian would act confused and offended, saying something like "oh, so a Mexican guy can't be with a hot blonde? That's surprising to you?" Usually the person would backtrack, saying something about their difference in height instead, but this would only dig them in deeper, until, finally, Adrian would pull them out of the pit of their own embarrassment with his huge smile and a hearty slap on the back.

I know this because *I* had been that guy, many years ago, when I'd first met them.

"Ladies and gentlemen," began Adrian, "I'd like to welcome you to the Martinez and Shepherd annual Christmas — sorry, Jay..."

He broke off and pointed at the only Jewish member of the firm, Jay Brenner, the younger of the two associates, who raised his glass and rolled

his eyes.

"...*holiday* party."

There were cheers and claps from the small crowd.

"As you know," continued Adrian, "every year at this time, we highlight the accomplishments of our firm as a whole, and of its individual members. This year, I would like to begin by acknowledging the work that the team put into a very important case. It wasn't a case that made us any money — in fact, it cost us some — but it made a huge difference in the life of a young man: Darryl Davis. Davis, as most of you know, was convicted of first degree murder on eyewitness testimony and a coerced confession."

I remembered Melinda telling me about the Davis case. It had made national headlines. Davis — then a teenager — had been seen in the vicinity of a double murder at a convenience store. Because he had superficially resembled the suspect (also a young black man), the police had been convinced that he was the killer. An eyewitness had also sworn in court that she had seen Davis pointing a gun at the two murdered clerks, just before she fled into the bathroom.

The case had seemed open–and–shut because the suspect himself even confessed, signing a long statement explaining where he had obtained the illegal firearm used in the killing and how he had planned the robbery.

A few months into his sentence, however, Davis had told anyone who would listen that he really *hadn't* been the murderer (in fact, he'd never touched a gun) and the police had tricked him into signing a detailed confession that they themselves had written.

No one had taken his claims seriously, until one of his relatives happened to see a TV segment featuring Stacey and Adrian talking about one of their previous cases. She contacted them, and they'd begun a long series of appeals that ended in freedom for Davis after his confession was overturned. After three years in prison, Davis was now a free man.

I knew that Melinda had worked on the case as part of her normal secretarial duties, but for some reason the parallels to Carlo's case hadn't struck me until that moment. It seemed there were similar elements in play: a young man manipulated by the police and convicted due to faulty eyewitness testimony. Of course, in Carlo's case, he really *had* killed

someone, but not in the cold–blooded and premeditated way the prosecution had claimed, and not with the deadly weapon that they found in his backpack days later.

I mulled over these facts in my mind during the rest of the party. While Melinda got progressively drunker, I switched to sparkling water, and not only because I was going to be the one driving home. I needed a clear head.

On the one hand, Stacey and Adrian only took a single case every few years. They reviewed cases for their pro bono criminal work carefully, and only took those where they had a comprehensive understanding of the law. Furthermore, to my knowledge, they'd never tried a case outside of the state of Texas, and even though Carlo was currently incarcerated just a few miles away, the New York courts must still have jurisdiction in his case. Right?

I had to admit that my legal knowledge was inadequate to understanding the complexities of Carlo's case. But it certainly seemed to me that it might have been something that Melinda had already discussed with her bosses.

She, Stacey and Adrian had developed a very cordial relationship over the past few years, and I knew that they would take her suggestion seriously.

In the car on the way home from the party, I decided to ask her.

"It was really moving hearing about the Davis case again tonight," I said, "that poor guy. I'm glad he got out."

"Yeah," Melinda said, "I tear up every time I think about it. Stacey and Adrian really do great work. They should quit the corporate stuff and just focus on getting people out of prison. God knows they've got enough money."

"Hey," I said, "have you ever told them about Carlo?"

She was quiet for a moment. Suddenly, the air was tense.

"Yes," she finally said.

"And?"

Again, there was a tense silence.

"And...they're working to get him released on appeal."

“Is that right?” I said, trying not to sound too surprised, “and how long have you known about this?”

“Um…,” she said, as if stalling for time, “not too long. I guess since maybe July?”

“Since *July*?”

Now it was difficult for me to conceal my surprise, and even anger.

“Yeah,” she said, “don’t be mad at me. It was supposed to be a secret. Like an attorney/client privilege kind of thing.”

“I’m pretty sure that’s not at all how attorney/client privilege works. People are allowed to know who your attorney is. And you’re not an attorney.”

“I know, honey,” she said, her voice taking on an emotional tinge, “I should have told you. I meant to tell you. Stacey and Adrian just don’t like people knowing about what cases their working on. And, I have to admit, I was afraid of what you might think.”

“Well,” I said, “now I know.”

I had to wonder. If it really wasn’t a big deal, why *had* she been keeping it such a secret, then? If her relationship to Carlo was really as innocent as all that, if he was really just a harmless ex–boyfriend who was locked behind bars, why hadn’t she mentioned it?

Of course, there was also the fact that I knew she’d been visiting him regularly. And that he’d been transferred to a prison extremely close to us. I decided to keep this to myself for the time being.

After all, if Stacey and Adrian were really working on the appeal, then wouldn’t it make sense that she’d have to go there to the prison with them to help them prepare the case. She was one of their most important employees, after all.

“Yeah,” she said, “you do know, now. But not everything.”

“Oh?”

I braced myself for an emotional blow.

“They put in a request for him to be transferred to someplace closer. A low–security federal place nearby.”

“Nearby?”

“In Bastrop.”

I relaxed. This information I already knew. Maybe she was finally being just a bit more honest with me. I could only hope.

But why did this slow uncovering of secrets turn me on so much? I *wanted* Melinda to be honest with me, didn’t I?

Chapter 7

The night before I left for my parent's house in Dallas, Melinda and I went out for a romantic dinner at a food cart near our house. It was Tex–Mex/Asian fusion. The evening was cool, but there were outdoor heaters set up nearby. I remember how adorable Melinda looked that night. She had to kept brushing her hair out of her face to avoid eating it as she bit into an eel taco (which, by the way, tastes much better than you might at first imagine).

Afterwards, we grabbed a couple of margaritas to go and sipped them as we walked down the street, looking into the windows of the small stores and specialty boutiques that stayed open well past normal business hours to attract the bar goers and food cart clientele.

We knew it was slightly naughty to be drinking alcohol in public, but we were fairly certain that it was legal in certain neighborhoods, and, even if it were not, that it was unlikely to be enforced against such a boring–looking married couple as us.

The alcohol lightened both of our moods, and we came to talk about the coming separation and how much we would miss each other while we were apart. We made a promise to each other to go out for dinner again the night that I returned from Dallas.

Melinda told me that she was thinking of having Lisa and Gary over to our house for dinner. I expressed my approval for the plan, even if I was sorry that I wouldn't be there.

"There's still time to tell your parents you're not going to make it this year," she said.

"No," I said, "you know how my mom is. She'll be absolutely heartbroken if I don't come back."

"I know," she sighed, "my mom's not going to like it much, either, but I figure we can all talk to her on FaceTime on the big day. She knew Lisa back then, and thought a lot more highly of her than of my other friends, that's for sure."

"Like Carlo, for example?"

“Precisely,” she said, sipping her margarita, “she was suspicious of him from the beginning, and was right to be.

“So,” I said, “speaking of Carlo. I still don’t know exactly what happened with the trial. You must have had to testify, right?”

“Yes,” she said, “I did. I suppose I can tell you all about it, now, since you know most of the dirty details anyway.”

She glanced up at me with a slightly guilty smirk.

“I mean, the details of the case and my involvement. I’m too much of a lady to tell you the other stuff.”

“*Most* of them?”

I was suddenly getting aroused. I she only knew how much I really knew.

“Maybe after the holidays I’ll tell you everything...”

Everything? What exactly did she mean by that? Would she come clean to me about the fact that Carlo was being held near our house? That she’d been visiting him on a regular basis?

“You’re sure you don’t want to tell me now?”

I tried to make

“You said you were interested in the trial.”

“I guess I did say that,” I said, “but I can’t help but be curious about everything else. Both before and after that night...”

She put her finger to my lips.

“Nope. Don’t ask about that anymore. I’ll tell you when I’m ready.”

“Ok,” I said, “I can accept that. But I still want to know how Carlo got the book thrown at him. You told me some of it. How the DA and the eyewitnesses claimed that he was wearing the brass knuckles when he hit Marco. But how did things get to that point?”

“I really don’t want to talk about this,” she said, suddenly irritable, “you know this is a sore spot for me.

“That might be the case,” I said, trying to sound firm but still kind, “but you obviously had to tell Stacey and Adrian everything about your

involvement, and they're just your bosses. I'm your husband, Melinda!"

I hardly ever used her first name. She gave me a kind of anguished look. She could tell that I was serious, and that I wasn't going to let this go now.

"You're right," she stammered, "you deserve to know this. Even though it's difficult for me to talk about."

"You were just a kid."

"I know," she said, pausing and looking into the display window of a store that sold trendy baby clothes with irreverent slogans, "it was such a strange time. It's traumatic, but also embarrassing, in the way that I'm sure many of your stories from the same time in your life are embarrassing."

"I get it," I said, "but I'm your husband. You've left me in the dark about this for so long..."

"You're right," she said, then began to walk again.

I didn't know if the wistful look in her eye was due to the store display that she'd just been staring at, or the ambivalent memories she was about to relate.

"So after Carlo punched the guy in the bar, he hid out for a few days."

This much I knew, of course. I noticed how she didn't mention any of the mind–melting sex she'd experienced with Carlo during the time he was on the lam.

"Then, he eventually realized that it was a terrible idea, and went to the cops and turned himself in. Nothing happened for a while. I found out that normally the judge would have released him on bail, but the DA, at the last minute, argued for bail in excess of a million dollars because of aggravating circumstances."

"The brass knuckles they thought he was wearing?"

"Yes, but we — or at least I — didn't know that then."

"You went to the bail hearing?"

"No. I was trapped at home. Even though I was technically grown up, and even though my parents couldn't *really* ground me, they could still make my life pretty difficult, and I knew it. So I was at home, hiding in my

room. I was pretty overwhelmed with emotion. My boyfriend had killed a guy while I watched. He'd gone to jail. And I had lied to the cops, and they knew it. My parents knew all of this, too. My mom was just crying constantly, talking to herself in Sicilian, while my Dad acted like none of it was happening. I locked myself in my room and cried myself to sleep every night."

"So did Carlo call you and tell you what was going on or something?"

"He couldn't. But Lisa did."

"Oh really? The same Lisa that you're going to spend Christmas with?"

"Yep. Her mom and Carlo's mom were good friends, so in those first few days, Lisa was the one relaying all of the information about Carlo to me. Besides, even if Carlo *would* have been able to call me, my mom never would have let me talk to him on the phone. I didn't have a phone in my room after all."

"But she trusted Lisa?"

"Yes. She thought, back then, that Lisa was a *good* influence on me, believe it or not. She had no idea about the 'Carlo connection.'"

I smiled. Perhaps Lisa was playing a part in bringing them together, again? Did she know that Carlo had been transferred and then tell Melinda about it? How long had Lisa really been in town? Was she really there just to date some cowboy software developer?

Perhaps this was wishful thinking, too. Why did some part of me *want* Melinda and Carlo to reignite their spark? It *was* a sexual thing, of course — I wanted to watch my wife be penetrated by a larger, stronger man — but it was more than that. I wanted to witness the emotional connection that I knew had existed between the two of them, because I knew that it must be more tender and profound then the one she'd formed with me over the years of our marriage.

After all, Carlo had been her first love. How could I ever compete with that? And why would I want to?

"So your mom let you talk to Lisa," I said, prodding her to continue.

“Yes,” said Melinda, suddenly getting quite serious, “and that’s when I found out that bail had basically been denied. There was no way that Carlo’s family could raise a million dollars, even if they put their house up for collateral, and the judge knew that. He would remain incarcerated until the trial, and the next time I would see him would be in court. The last time, too.”

“How long was he in jail before the trial?”

“About four months, all told.”

“That’s a long time.”

“The judge was nice enough to count it against his sentence when everything was finally over.”

“That’s sort of a comfort, I guess.”

“Yeah. Sort of.”

“So did Carlo have an actual lawyer? Or a public defender?”

“He had a public defender, who immediately advised him to try to go for a plea bargain. The attorney thought he could get him a four–year sentence for manslaughter, which would turn into three or even two years with good behavior. Carlo was ok with that. He felt like shit for killing Marco, and actually *wanted* to be punished for it. At least that’s what it seemed like to me. But after his lawyer had a couple of meetings with the prosecutor, it became clear that it wasn’t going to be that easy. The state had decided, based on eyewitness testimony and Carlo’s belongings at the time of the arrest, that they were going to charge him with first–degree murder, and were not going to take any sort of plea bargain. It didn’t help that the prosecutor at the time was a new guy, determined to make a name for himself by putting criminals behind bars. He ended up running for state senate a few years later, which came as a surprise to absolutely no one who knew him back then. I think he actually ended up losing, though.”

She smiled for a moment, amused by the fact that the man who had prosecuted Carlo had faced some setbacks of his own.

“So he wasn’t going to let Carlo off easy. He tried to get Carlo to confess, of course. Carlo was so torn up emotionally about what had happened he was almost ready to tell the judge that he really *had* been wearing the knuckle dusters, even though he hadn’t been. He just wanted to

get it over with and start to serve his time. Luckily, however, Carlo's attorney talked him out of it. I don't know if his lawyer really *believed* Carlo, but he at least had enough professional integrity to give his client good advice."

"I suppose hiring a real attorney for Carlo was out of the question."

"We talked about it a little. One of my father's cousins actually had a law practice in Jersey. But he didn't do criminal law, and hadn't even taken a case to trial before. Besides that, my father didn't want anything to do with Carlo. He was absolutely mortified that I was involved in the case at all. There was no way he was going to try to call in a favor from one of his relatives."

"What about Carlo's family?"

"None of them knew the first thing about lawyers. I almost wish that they'd been like the Sicilians you see on TV — all mobbed up, with crooked attorneys ready to bribe the cops. But no, they were real people. Mechanics, teachers, salesmen and cops, but no mafiosi — or lawyers. And not much sympathy for the man who'd brought shame to their family by killing someone."

"So you really didn't know anyone in the mafia growing up?"

She laughed.

"You Texas people. Why is that the first thing everyone here asks me? And you already asked me that before — when we were dating, remember?"

"You laughed at the question back then. I remember that. But I thought, since you're coming clean with everything else, you might like to revise your previous statement..."

She stopped walking and looked up at me.

"Sorry to disappoint you, honey. I was telling the truth. Now, you tell me the truth: did you really not know any actual cowboys growing up?"

"Just a lot of guys who dressed up like cowboys," I replied.

"There you go," she said, turning and beginning to walk again, "it was the same in Queens. A lot of guys pretending to be mobbed up, acting and talking like gangsters. But that was only in the second generation. My

generation. My parents' generation had actually dealt with the mob back in Italy. Both the Sicilian mafia and the 'Ndrangheta — the Calabrians. That older generation didn't see anything romantic or heroic about the mafia. To them, it just meant murder and misery. So no, I didn't know anyone in our neighborhood who was involved. There were always rumors that certain guys who worked in sanitation might have been mobbed up, but I didn't ever see any evidence of that. Like I said, things might have gone better for Carlo if he *had* been a career criminal. He at least would have known how to act around the cops."

"What do you mean? Did he make a mistake?"

"He — he let himself be intimidated," she said, choking up for a minute.

This sudden shift in emotion caught me off guard.

"Honey," I said, putting my arm around her, "what is it? Are you ok?"

"Sorry," she said, wiping tears from her cheeks, "it's still hard for me to talk about it."

She choked back a sob, then seemed to regain her composure.

"Take your time," I said, genuinely taken aback by the sudden outburst of emotion.

What secret was she hiding? Did this have something to do with what Carlo had hinted at in the letters?

"Sorry," she blubbered, fishing through her purse for a tissue.

Melinda regained her composure for a moment, then broke down again, this time, sobbing uncontrollably. I pulled her close and held her in my arms, feeling every sob course through my body.

"You were young," I said, "it wasn't your fault..."

"You don't understand," she sobbed, "you don't know anything..."

"*Tell* me," I insisted, "you'll feel better."

"I can't. Not yet."

We walked on in silence for a few moments, then she spoke again.

"I'm sorry, honey. You have every right to be upset with me. I just hope that you can understand that I was a different woman back when all of

this was going on. Barely a woman. Basically a girl. And none of this has *anything* to do with our marriage, or my feelings for you. You have to understand that."

"I do understand it," I said.

It was a lie, at least partially. It was hard for me to understand how something that still caused my wife such emotional pain could have absolutely *no* bearing on her current relationship. Besides the fact that I knew she wasn't being totally truthful with me about her current involvement with Carlo.

"So," I said, "do you want your present now, or when I get back from my parents' place?"

"How about now?" she said, a smile breaking out across her face.

I pulled the small box from my pocket and passed it to her. She eagerly unwrapped it, finding a small jewelry box.

"Oh, Stevie," she said, "you shouldn't have spent money on something like this. It could have gone towards furniture for the house..."

"You haven't even opened it yet," I said, "maybe it's just a lump of coal."

She stuck out her tongue at me.

"It better *not* be, mister!"

She flipped open the box lid to find the diamond pendant I'd bought her, the same one that she'd eyed in a store window on this very street almost a year ago. The light of recognition suffused her face and she beamed at me.

"Stevie," she said, "you were already going to get laid tonight, but now I'm really going to rock your world."

"Is that right?"

"That's right…," she said, pulling me close and craning her neck up to kiss me.

We melted into each other. I may have never felt closer to Melinda than in that moment.

"Let's go home, then..." I whispered.

Chapter 8

Melinda practically attacked me as soon as we were through the door, displaying a bit of the old dominance that she had the night I had licked her asshole for the first time. This time, however, I wasn't on my knees in the middle of the living room. I was standing on my own two feet.

"God, I want you," she whispered, the neediness dripping from her voice, "I'm going to miss you so bad..."

"I'm going to miss you, too," I said, "are you sure you don't want to change your plans? It's not too late."

"I'm sure, honey," she said, "now take me to the bedroom."

We both stripped out of our clothes quickly, and she fell back onto the bed, pulling me down after her. God, Melinda was beautiful! The perfect picture of feminine fecundity.

My cock ached for her. I couldn't wait to get inside her.

We kissed for several minutes as my hands wandered over her ample breasts and her pert nipples. I moved down her body, kissing her bare chest and taking first one nipple, then the other, in my mouth, suckling them, teasing them with my tongue as she moaned in approval.

I reached down and felt her cunt: wet, warm and inviting, seeming to beg for my masculine essence. I was hard as a rock, ready to feel the tight embrace of her walls.

Slowly, I lifted myself up and put my cock in position to penetrate her. How different this situation was from the time after the office party, when she'd played the drunken dominatrix. This time, I was the dominant one, and why not, after all? I was the man, wasn't I?

I looked down at her as I placed the tip of my cock at her entrance, ready to thrust inside. I don't know how she experienced it, but for me, the first moment of penetration was always the most exhilarating. Orgasm was good of course, too (don't get me wrong) but I lived for that first sensation of being enveloped by Melinda.

Melinda's eyes were tightly closed, but as the tip of my cock entered her, they suddenly opened.

“What do you think you’re doing?”

Her tone was playful. Flirtatious, even. What kind of game was she trying to play?

“Making love to my wife,” I said.

“And what makes you think you’re man enough to do that?”

Oh my God. What was she doing? Was this a cruel game, or had she intuited my cuckold fantasies?

“Because I’m your husband,” I said.

“That may be right,” said Melinda, “but it doesn’t change the fact that you’re coming at me with that little thing.”

My cock was instantly stiffer than it had been for years. I’d almost never experienced the kind of sexual frenzy this remark ignited in me. It was a frenzy all the greater for the fact that I was perfectly still now, with my cock halfway inside her.

“I mean seriously, come on. Even Gianni was bigger than you.”

“Melinda…,” I said, stuttering a bit.

“This is what you wanted, isn’t it? You wanted to know the truth about what I thought about your size, didn’t you?”

I paused for a moment. Melinda was correct, of course. This *was* what I wanted. Very badly. But I wasn’t sure how to interpret her new attitude. Sure, I’d alluded to the fact that it would turn me on to hear about her with bigger men. And I’d asked her about her exes before. But I hadn’t explicitly asked for this, and the fact that she was doing it made me feel almost as uneasy as it did aroused.

Did it turn me on? Hell yes it did. But I couldn’t be sure in what spirit it was offered: that of an indulgent and loving wife, or that of a cruel sadistic mistress.

All I knew was that she was driving me crazy.

“You wanted to hear that I like big dicks, right?”

She pushed against my thighs, clearly indicating that I should pull out of her pussy, even if she wasn’t strong enough to actually move me.

I backed out, my erection cruelly deprived, flopping against her stomach.

“Lie down, baby,” she said, pushing me off of her, “I said I was going to rock your world tonight, and I meant it.”

I fell onto my back on the bed. Before I knew what was happening, Melinda was on top of me, straddling my chest at first, but then moving up until her pussy was directly above my face.

“Open up, honey, and lick me.”

I reached down and stroked my erection while she ground her wetness into my face.

“Good boy, Stevie. Lick me. That’s right. Just like that...”

I loved it when she told me I was doing a good job. It was almost like she was training me to be submissive to her, to follow her commands in bed.

“Fuck yes, keep doing that. You’re getting your tongue really deep now. It feels good. Not as good as getting fucked by a *real* man with a nice long, thick cock of course, but still good. I think I’ll have to keep you around.”

I moaned. She was really laying it on thick this time. My feelings might have been hurt if I hadn’t been so aroused. I still had no idea how much of this encounter I should take seriously and how much was some kind of twisted game that Melinda had started in order to indulge my obvious cuckold fetish.

How much of what was happening was for *her* gratification, and how much was for mine?

That was the delicious paradox, the puzzle that fueled my erotic fantasy.

“Oh God, honey,” she moaned, breaking off the narration for a second, “now go lower. Lick my ass again. Just like last time. Oh my God...”

I pushed lower, my tongue once again finding her rosebud.

I redoubled my efforts, reaching around with my free hand (the one not stroking my own cock) and began to tease her clit. It was an awkward angle, but it started to have the desired effect.

“Oh God, yes. Oh God, Stevie, you’re so good to me. Such a good boy.”

Again, I couldn’t help but be encouraged by her words, as condescending as they were. Even if she didn’t respect me as a man, I was still useful to her in a certain way.

“Tell me something,” I said, coming up for air.

I knew that this situation was the only way I could get the truth out of her. She’d only lie to me if she wasn’t completely aroused.

“*What*?” she whined impatiently.

“Do you still think about...being with him? About making love to him?”

“Stevie!” she protested, “I’m a good Catholic girl. I’m not going to tell you that...”

“A good Catholic girl doesn’t have secrets from her husband,” I countered, “especially not when he’s eating her ass.”

“Ohh, damn it, Stevie!”

“Is that a yes? Do you still think about him?”

My question hung in the air.

She whimpered a little bit, grinding her hips into my tongue and hand.

“Oh God, Stevie, don’t you *dare* stop...”

Despite my aching hand, I tried my best to keep going exactly as she had requested.

I stopped the motion of my hand on her clit for a moment, hoping that the sudden cessation of pleasure would cause her to reveal her secret desire.

“Oh...I don’t know if I should say it...”

I stopped licking her ass as well.

“Stevie! You’re going to make me tell you, aren’t you?”

“Mm–hmm,” I moaned.

“Please keep going. I promise to tell you.”

“Uh–huh,” I said, “I want the truth. Now.”

She let out a frustrated cry.

“Yes,” she moaned, “I think about him a lot. I wonder what it would be like to be with him again.”

“To ‘be’ with him, or to make love with him?”

“Both, ok?”

I began the motions of my hand and tongue again, and Melinda climaxed almost immediately. I loved the sensation of her orgasm as I felt it course through her body. She became suddenly rigid, then relaxed, panting and cooing in delight.

“Oh, Stevie,” she said, “did you make yourself come too?”

She shifted down from my face and was now straddling my chest.

“Stroke that cock for me,” she said, “stroke it like a good boy. Did you like not being allowed inside me?”

I nodded. How could I resist it?

“Tell me,” she demanded.

“Yes,” I said, too overwhelmed with desire to really think about what I was saying, “I like it.”

“Like what?”

“I like not being allowed inside you.”

“Come for me now,” she ordered.

I shot a large load all over my own stomach as she smiled down at me.

“What did I tell you, honey? Did that not rock your world?”

She bent down and gave me a long kiss.

“I’m going to miss you so much.”

“I’m going to miss you, too,” I replied, suddenly feeling a mixture of shame and dread.

How much of what had just happened had been a kinky game? How much of it had reflected Melinda’s real emotions? Was she really avoiding going to my parents’ place for the holidays because she wanted to be with

Lisa that bad? Or was she trying to distance herself from me? Was she planning to visit Carlo behind bars?

Chapter 9

The next morning, I kissed Melinda goodbye and jumped in the car to drive down to my parents' place. Though our encounter the night before had been extremely satisfying from a sexual standpoint, I couldn't help but wonder if was a bad sign for our relationship that she seemed to enjoy withholding penetration from me so much.

It wasn't that *I* didn't enjoy it, too. I did enjoy it. Very much so. But I also hated that I loved it so much, if that makes any sense.

I hated that it placed me lower on a sexual hierarchy then men in her past. After all, Melinda had always told me that it was very important for her to respect her husband. In the past, her respect for me had been based in my ability to earn money. I had a prestigious profession and was good at my job. Other people looked up to me and respected what I did.

Melinda had more or less explicitly told me in the past that my status as a breadwinner was one of the things that had attracted her to me in the first place. It was important, she said, for a child of immigrants like her to have long–term stability.

I had no problem being valued for my ability to earn money and not for my body. Like a lot of guys, I knew that I wasn't much to look at — not bad looking by any means, but certainly no Brad Pitt. I realized that this didn't really matter to women as much as it did to men. So I did my best to keep in shape, but otherwise I didn't worry about it.

The turn in Melinda's behavior towards humiliating me (even if I had basically asked her to do it) didn't seem very compatible with keeping her respect.

In that moment, in the car, I had a moment of clarity. Maybe it was just the post–orgasmic lifting of the fog that is quite familiar to many men, or maybe it was something deeper. I realized that the cuckold game I'd only very recently started with Melinda was going too far. Not necessarily because she was going to cheat on me with Carlo — he was still in a maximum–security prison, after all — but because once she lost respect for me she could find any number of men ready and willing to satisfy her.

I resolved to talk to her about it as soon as we were together after the holiday.

***

I spent that day at my parents' place, helping my mom bake cookies. As I expected, she dropped several not–so–subtle hints that she was looking forward to having grandchildren. Because I was an only child, all of the pressure was on me and Melinda to produce this offspring.

I have always had a hard time talking to my parents about sexual matters. I guess that's pretty common, and very natural. So I wasn't about to open up to her and spill my guys about our infertility, probably because I knew that she would offer to help pay for *in vitro* fertilization or some other kind of treatment.

I found that prospect humiliating because even with the expenses associated with the new house, I could still have paid for such treatments out of my own pocket with the help of insurance. Furthermore, it would amount to a kind of surrender, an admission of defeat, that I wasn't quite willing to make.

So I endured my mother's good–natured teasing and innuendos about what beautiful children Melinda would make (I noted, silently, that she mentioned Melinda only, and not *me*) and managed to deflect her indirect questions about whether or not we were trying for kids.

"Once the house is built, you're going to have to find something to do with all those bedrooms, I guess," she said, once the cookies were in the oven.

"Yeah," I said, trying to make a joke out of it, "I guess we'll both have to take up some hobbies."

"My biggest hobby was raising you," she said pointedly.

"That's not really a hobby though, is it, mom?"

"I guess not. More like a vocation. Speaking of which, how is Melinda's work these days?"

I could tell that my mother didn't *totally* approve of Melinda's job. It wasn't that she was against women working (or at least if she were, she'd never say so), just that she clearly felt that a woman's true place was in the

home, raising children (in this case *her* grandchildren). So whenever she spoke about Melinda's work, it was never without a slight edge of condescension or disapproval.

It might sound like I'm being a little unfair to my mother, and to tell you the truth, I probably was. But you'd think that in her years of adult life she would have learned at some point that the topic of fertility (or lack thereof) is a highly personal and sensitive one. Perhaps she thought it was different in the case of her own offspring. It certainly seemed that way. Did she not understand that with each offhand comment about her wish for grandchildren, a knife went into my heart? I wanted nothing more than to be able to call her up one day and share the news that Melinda was pregnant. That she'd finally get her wish to be a grandmother.

But until that day, I didn't want to have my failure as a man rubbed in my face constantly. No doubt she thought that she was simply doing her maternal duty. To me, however, it was torture.

"Fine," I said, answering my mother's question, "did you know they were the ones behind the Daryl Davis case?"

She looked surprised.

"That poor guy who was just released from prison?"

"Yep."

"Wow," she said, "I guess she works with some pretty impressive people."

The way that she'd phrased this sounded like she was subtly denigrating my wife. I was already on edge due to the needling about our lack of offspring, so I may have been overly sensitive.

My mom seemed to think that Melinda was only a pretty little thing whose role in life was to give her beautiful grandbabies.

"Melinda's much more than a secretary," I snapped, "she's an integral part of the team. You should hear how they talk about her. They gush about her performance."

"Yes," said my mom, "so you've told me."

"It's true," I continued, annoyed by my mother's less–than–impressed tone, "and she's actually in the middle of their next big case."

I hadn't meant to talk about Carlo, especially since I knew so little about the appeal that Stacey and Adrian were launching on his behalf. It came out in the heat of the moment.

"Oh? Is that right?"

"Yeah," I continued, pressing forward, "it's this guy who was coerced into confessing to a greater charge than he should have been, through police intimidation."

"I have to admit that I had no idea how involved Melinda was with that part of the work," said my mom, sounding more suitably impressed.

"She is," I said, "and in fact, she's the one who found him."

"Oh, really? How did she do that? Does she hang around in prisons?"

I realized that I had painted myself into a corner. It would be strange if I kept Melinda's relationship to Carlo a secret now. What if Stacy and Adrian won the case and Carlo was released? My mom would hear about it eventually. I decided that I had to tell her.

"Well," I said, "in this case, Melinda herself was involved."

"Involved in what? Finding the prisoner? I know that, you just told me."

"No," I said, "the guy behind bars is her old...friend from the neighborhood. And Melinda was there when he committed the crime."

"What was his crime?" asked my mother.

Great. I had clearly succeeded in impressing her, but for the wrong reasons. Or if not the wrong reasons, exactly, at least for reasons that were a little embarrassing for me.

"Murder," I said, "actually, manslaughter. But he was charged with murder and ended up pleading guilty."

"Sounds to me like they might have been more than just 'friends,'" said my mother, quite correctly seeing through the barrier of dissemblance I'd tried to erect.

"Ok," I said, "he's her old boyfriend."

"I see," she said.

There was a long pause while she wiped down the counter.

“And you don’t see anything at all...concerning about her sudden interest in the case?”

If you only knew, Mom! I thought to myself.

“No,” I said, “she’s only trying to do the right thing. I don’t think she has any feelings towards her ex, if that’s what you’re insinuating. Frankly, that implication is insulting to us both.”

“I’m sorry,” she said, “I really never meant to imply that there was anything untoward going on. I’m sure you’re right. She’s just trying to help out a wrongfully accused man.”

“Exactly,” I said, “it really has nothing to do with her, personally. It’s about the principle.”

If you only knew, Mom. If you only knew.

Christmas Eve was the next day, and we — my parents and I — talked with Melinda on FaceTime. I was relieved to see that she wasn’t spending that part of the day at the prison. Though I had no idea what she might have been up to before that of course.

We also got to see Lisa and Lisa’s boyfriend, Gary, who really did look like the kind of suburban cowboy who was all–too–common around these parts.

He probably grew up in one of the subdivisions around here, I thought to myself, thinking of the Dallas suburban sprawl that had about as much to do with ranching as Melinda’s old neighborhood in Queens.

Gary seemed nice enough, and so did Lisa. Melinda was having the time of her life. Was the eggnog she was drinking spiked? She certainly wouldn’t be driving anywhere after our call.

My mother was on her best behavior, in spirits almost as high as Melinda’s. She studiously avoided mentioning anything about potential grandchildren, and also Carlo’s case. It seemed that despite everything she really did like Melinda. Perhaps she wasn’t such a bad mom after all…

My father, for his part, was friendly as usual. He is an executive for a small insurance company, having worked his way up the ranks from actuary, so he’s used to talking to people. He’s where I got my interest in math. I quickly learned, however, that I didn’t have the chops to do

something as cognitively difficult as actuarial science. Instead, I combined my competence — if not exactly *passion* — for math with my love of art and became an architect. Here, I took after my mother, who had been a high school art teacher before retiring early several years before.

I told Melinda I'd call her the next day so that we could catch up in a more private setting.

"Sure, honey," was her reply, which I couldn't help but find a bit dismissive.

Maybe it was the eggnog talking.

After dinner, I went up into my childhood bedroom, where I was staying. It wasn't really *my* bedroom anymore — it had been completely redecorated for use as a guest room — but it nevertheless carried all my memories within it. That is to say, it *reactivated* them in my mind.

I opened the drawer of the desk near the window, and was astonished to find that my mother hadn't cleaned it at all. It was filled with papers, notebooks and photographs from my last couple of years of high school and my first few years of college.

I stumbled upon a photograph of me and Lauren, the art student, together at a party. How long had my relationship with her lasted? Eight months? Maybe the whole year?

I realized that I'd never dealt with that breakup. Not *really*. I'd just thrown myself into my studies until I met Melinda, around a year later. I'd seen Lauren around campus a couple of times after we broke up. Even though it was a huge campus, we ran in the same social circles and so it was hard to totally avoid her.

Seeing the photo brought me back to that night. Not the night that the photo was taken — those were happier times — but the night that I could last remember seeing Lauren, which must have been three or four months after she dumped me, when the wounds were still fresh.

It was also the beginning of a cuckolding obsession that hadn't let go of me since. To make a very long story short, I'd run into Lauren at a house party a few months after we'd broken up. She had been dating a guy named Pete, a guy in the trades who had never been to college.

Pete was gigantic. Absolutely huge, like 6'5". And when I accidentally walked in on them in the bathroom several hours later when he had the girl I was still in love with bent over the bathroom sink, fucking her from behind, I realized he was "absolutely huge" everywhere.

That night, whether it was due to the alcohol or the shock, I had simply stood with the door open, watching as Pete railed Lauren with his huge, thick cock the size of her forearm. She had been so out of her mind with pleasure that she hadn't noticed me standing there, mouth agape at the erotic spectacle I was witnessing.

Pete, however, turned to the side and made eye contact with me, smiling and then winking as he slapped my ex–girlfriend's ass. He had no problem being watched. In fact, he seemed to love rubbing in his sexual superiority.

I couldn't move from the spot. I was rooted there. Pete began to show off. He grabbed a handful of Lauren's hair and pulled her head back, leaning down and whispering something in her ear.

"I love your cock," she murmured, her eyes still tightly closed and unaware of my presence.

"Louder," he commanded.

"I love your *cock*," she moaned, a bit more insistently.

"Louder!" he ordered, slapping her ass, "tell me *why* you love it!"

"It's the biggest I've ever had," she moaned, "it's so good. You make me come so hard..."

He turned to me and grinned, winking again, still pumping quickly in and out of her.

Lauren, sensing that something was wrong, opened her eyes and looked at me as well.

I'll never forget the look on her face: her eyes glazed over with pleasure. It was as if she was seeing right through me. Knowing that I was there, but not caring.

"Steve," she'd said.

No hint of an apology or even embarrassment.

Suddenly, I was able to move again, and I closed the door slowly as they continued their drunken romp. I'd heard Lauren moaning Pete's name as I paced slowly down the hall.

The sound of her voice still haunted my erotic dreams, to be honest.

That night at my parent's house I thought back on that night, the primal scene of my cuckolding fetish, as it were.

I decided to call Melinda on FaceTime so that we could have a private conversation, but she didn't pick up.

Maybe the eggnog had gotten to her.

I fell asleep that night stroking my cock, remembering the sounds that Lauren had made as she had taken Pete's horse–sized cock.

I wondered if they were still together. I wondered if they'd gotten married and had kids by now. I hadn't seen either one of them again since that night.

Chapter 10

On Christmas Day, I woke up to an apologetic text message from Melinda.

Saw you called, honey. Sorry! I was asleep already. Let's talk soon. Merry Christmas!

That's fine, I responded, *I love you, too. Maybe we can talk tonight.*

That morning, my parents and I went to Church. Afterwards, my aunt and uncle came over for Christmas Dinner.

Even though they were Texas Methodists, my parents still drank (as did I). Some of their more conservative relatives, of course, did not. These included my aunt and uncle, Ron and Cathy, who immediately honed in on the bottle of wine that we had open in the center of the dining room table.

I knew that my uncle wouldn't be able to refrain from commenting on it.

"Did your *eye*–talian wife bring this?" he said, lifting the bottle to his face an inspecting the label through his bifocals, "San gee–o–vay–see..."

I cringed at his pronunciation, but tried to be a good sport.

"No, uncle Ron. She's staying at home this time. I brought it, though."

"Well now," he said, setting the bottle down and clapping me on the back, "you don't suppose I could try a little bit do you? I'm curious..."

This was a shock. I'd heard uncle Ron give whole mini–sermons about the dangers of alcohol.

I exchanged a surprised look with my parents, then started pouring him a glass.

"Whoa there," he said, "that's enough. I just want to taste it. I don't actually want to *sin*."

He smiled at me and raised the glass to his mouth.

"What am I supposed to do...smell it or something?"

"You can if you want," I said.

He sniffed it.

“I detect...plums, apricots, a dead Armadillo off Interstate 45 at high noon in July.”

“Ron, stop,” said Kathy.

He winked at me, then tossed a mouthful back, swirling it on his tongue like a sommelier.

“Not bad, nephew. Not bad. I guess that wife of yours is introducing you to a whole new world, huh?”

“Yes, that’s true,” said my mother, “and you don’t know the half of it. She’s about to help her ex–boyfriend get out of jail...”

“Is that right?” said Ron.

“Yeah, he murdered someone, but he shouldn’t have confessed...how was that again, Steve?”

“He was coerced into taking an unjust plea deal,” I said, trying to hide the annoyance in my voice, “it was a miscarriage of justice. It has nothing to do with the fact that he and Melinda were a couple for a few months after high school.”

“Well Steve,” said Ron, “a lot can happen in a few months. Especially when you’re that young. And — I’m just guessing here — *especially* if you’re two hot–blooded eye–talian teenagers.”

“Uncle Ron,” I said, “I’d appreciate it if you’d stop making comments like that about Melinda’s ethnicity. Is it really that exotic to you? Have you ever been outside of the state of Texas?”

Ron frowned at me. My parents looked on in concern.

“And why would *anyone* need to go outside of the state of Texas? It’s the best place on God’s green earth. Anyone, of course, except for a murder like your wife’s boyfriend. Here in Texas, we still kill scum like him. Hell, if it were up to me, we’d still string them up...”

“Ron,” said my mother, stepping between us, “you’ve crossed a line. You need to apologize.”

He looked at his older sister, and in a single moment, I saw the authority that she still commanded over him. She was five years older, after all.

“I’m sorry,” he said, his face falling a bit, “can we be friends again, nephew?”

He extended his hand.

I took it, somewhat reluctantly.

“Not everyone who is convicted of murder deserves to die,” I said, “and there is such a thing as a forced confession.”

“I know,” he said, “I was just messing with you.”

“Ron just likes to get a rise out of people,” said Aunt Cathy, her tone apologetic, “come on, Ron.”

We ate brisket, ham and mashed potatoes, followed by a jello and marshmallow salad for dessert.

The conversation with Ron had left a bad taste in my mouth. I excused myself and went up to my room to try to call Melinda.

This time, she picked up.

I told her about my fight with my uncle. She listened to the whole story, nodding sympathetically.

“I’m so proud that you stood up for yourself,” she said, “and for me and Carlo. It’s not right that people talk about him that way. He’s a good guy, and he’s not doing great in prison.”

“Oh?” I asked, suddenly listening very carefully to every word that she said, “have you visited him?”

Maybe this was my chance to get her to come clean.

“I mean, prison is a bad place. Especially federal prison where he is now. I can’t imagine that things are good for him.”

“How do you know so much about what life’s like for him? Maybe he’s in minimum security and is making license plates or something.”

“I just know,” she said, “let’s talk about something else, ok?”

She was evading the question. She was definitely seeing him, and definitely didn’t want me to know about it, so her visits couldn’t be due to her work with Stacey and Adrian.

A feeling of dread overcame me. Like some inevitable fate that would crush our marriage was closing in. I tried to hide my suspicions, however.

We chatted a bit more about Lisa and Gary, and what a cute couple they made. Melinda thought that things were getting serious between the two of them, and speculated that Lisa might move to the Austin area permanently, and talked about how much fun it would be to have a friend from her old neighborhood so close by.

Then we said goodbye. I'd stay another two days at my parents' place so that we could see a few more relatives, then I'd drive back to Austin. We'd see each other soon.

Chapter 11

Melinda was sitting in the living room quietly when I came through the front door a couple of day's later. She was dressed in a blue tanktop that showed off her cleavage and black yoga pants. Casually sexy. Curvy and voluptuous.

I loved it. I suddenly felt a surge of passion for my wife. Not for some kind of kinky voyeuristic fantasy involving her, but for *her* specifically.

My urge to confront her about her visits to the prison, about her evasiveness and dissimulation left me.

Instead, I was filled with a king of longing for the kind of sex that had been denied me for so long: the kind of sex that might make a baby.

Lucky for me, Melinda felt the same way.

She stood from the couch when I entered the room, extending her arms for a hug.

We embraced, then shared a long kiss.

"I missed you so much, honey," she whispered, her soft lips tickling my earlobe, "I think I"m ready again..."

"Ready for what?"

"To make a baby, silly..."

We raced into the bedroom and tore each other's clothes off. I covered her body with a torrent of kisses. For once, I felt like I was the man taking control and doing the ravishing, not the one standing in the doorway and gaping like that fateful night in college so many years ago.

"I want you," Melinda moaned, responding to my more dominant touch.

She was on her back on the bed now, and I was on top of her, pressing my lips to her beautiful breasts, my hands caressing her thick thighs, slowly parting them and finding her pussy extremely wet. Incredibly so.

"You're so wet, honey..."

"Mmm yeah baby," she said, "I missed you so much."

Finally, I pushed inside her wet pussy. I hate to admit it, but she was so wet (and maybe I was so small) that I didn't feel much friction. It wasn't as pleasurable as it usually was (at least for me) and I couldn't figure out why.

Melinda, however, seemed to be enjoying the penetration to an uncharacteristic degree.

"Oh yes, Stevie," she moaned, her eyes closed and her head thrown back, "give it to me. I want your baby, Stevie..."

I pumped and pumped, thrusting into her as vigorously as I could. I wasn't on my normal hair trigger. Maybe it was because of the masturbation session I'd had in my room at my parents' house. Maybe it was because of the unusual degree of lubrication inside Melinda. For whatever reason, it seemed like I couldn't get off.

This had the effect, however, of driving Melinda crazy. It seemed that she might actually be able to climax. I couldn't believe it.

I was going to give my wife an orgasm. With my penis.

"Fuck yes, Stevie," she urged me, taking on her more dominant tone even though she was the one on her back underneath me, "give it to me. Please."

I pounded into her harder and harder. Then, something miraculous happened.

Melinda —her eyes still tightly closed, her mouth tensed — moaned a magic phrase.

"I'm coming!!"

This announcement was enough to send *me* over the edge, too, and in that moment, my wife and I experienced our first simultaneous orgasms.

I ejaculated inside her just as she climaxed.

After the moment passed, her eyes opened and she looked into mine.

"I love you, Stevie," she sighed, "what happened? That was incredible."

"I don't know," I said, "you were just really wet...and it helped me last for longer than usual."

“Well maybe I should always get that wet if it’s going to make you perform like *that*,” she said.

“Maybe you should,” I said, falling exhausted onto the bed beside her.

For the first time in a long time, I felt like a real man. Worthy of the love of a woman like Melinda. I was even convinced that I might have impregnated Melinda. Even though I knew it wasn’t scientific.

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Melinda and I decided to do something a little different for New Year’s Eve. We grabbed a bottle of Prosecco and drove out to the site of our new house, where construction would soon begin.

The lines for the foundation were already marked out. Brett had been busy.

We parked the car and got out. I left the headlights on, since it was close to midnight and there were no streetlamps nearby.

The night was cool for Austin, but it was still quite comfortable to be outside with our coats. Melinda held the champagne flutes while I fumbled with the cork, finally popping it and sending a burst of spray out into the direction of the future foundation.

Melinda giggled.

“I love it when you spurt like that, baby.”

“Ha,” I laughed, “maybe you’ll get lucky later.”

I grabbed one of the glasses from her and filled it with the sparkling wine. Then I poured the other before setting the bottle gingerly at our feet.

I raised the glass towards my wife.

“To us,” I said, “to a New Year.”

She grinned.

“To us,” she said, “to our future together.”

We clinked the glasses, then raised them to our lips. Melinda took only a small sip.

“Just in case,” she said, “you never know...it just might work this time.”

I grinned.

“Don’t worry,” I said, “I can drink your part as well.”

We spend another twenty minutes or so pacing the plot, discussing the layout of the house, then I pushed the cork back into the bottle and we got into the car. Melinda drove this time, even though I’d only had two glasses of wine. Better safe than sorry.

Back at home, we made love. Melinda’s lubrication seemed normal this time, so I wasn’t able to replicate the performance of a few days before. I came quickly, leaving her unsatisfied from the penetration alone.

But of course I still went down on her.

“That’s good, Stevie,” she said, “can you taste yourself?”

It was a strange question, but she was right: I was eating my own sperm. It was an odd sensation to be sure, but nothing so out of the ordinary.

I lapped at her pussy, loving the sighs that I was causing.

“Fuck yes, Stevie,” she moaned.

I slipped a finger inside her.

“Do you want me to eat your ass again, honey?”

“What?”

“You know,” I said, surprised that she seemed to be expressing some sort of inhibition, especially since she’d enthusiastically *ordered* me to do it not long before, “lick you...down there.”

“Oh,” she said, “would you, Stevie?”

Instead of answering, I pushed my tongue down between the folds of her ass and probed her tight rosebud while I continued to finger her.

“Oh God, yes. That’s so good,” she moaned.

I continued to pleasure her in this way for a few minutes until I had her just on the edge of orgasm. Then, I puled back.

Something had been bothering me. I needed clarity on a few issues.

“Baby, why’d you stop?”

Her voice was filled with need, desperation, even.

“I need to know something,” I said, “when you said that Carlo was having a hard time in prison. How’d you know that?”

“I didn’t,” she insisted, “I meant for all I knew he was *probably* not having a good time...”

“You seemed really certain. Did you visit him? Write to him or something?”

“What? No…,” she moaned, “please just keep going. I’m so close, honey.”

I licked her ass a few times more, then stopped again.

“Honey,” I said, “are you really telling me the truth?”

“Yes, babe,” she insisted, “keep going...”

“Really?”

She cried in frustration.

“Ok,” she said, “I went to visit him. A couple of times. Always on official business from Adrian and Stacey.”

“Thanks for telling me the truth,” I said, aroused by this revelation but also betrayed because I knew she was once again feeding me half–truths, “why didn’t you just tell me before?”

“Because I was afraid you’d be mad.”

“Why would I be mad? It would be strange if you *didn’t* visit him, what with him being so close by and all. Did you also visit him with Adrian and Stacy?”

“No. They only let one person talk to him at once,” she sighed, “but I often bring him messages from them. Please keep going?”

I decided that I’d learned enough. I’d gotten the information I wanted.

I buried my face back between her legs and licked her ass while I fingered her. A moment later, she exploded.

“God, yes, Stevie! Yes!!”

A few minutes later, we cuddled in a pile of sweat on the bed.

“I’m sorry I didn’t tell you, honey,” she sighed, “I really am. I didn’t want to keep the visit a secret from you, I just wasn’t sure how you’d react.”

“It’s ok,” I sighed, “I understand. He was an important part of your life, and it’s only right that you be able to visit him. I just wish you’d told me first.”

“I wish I had too, honey.”

“It’s alright,” I said, “I forgive you.”

“Thank you, honey,” she said, “I love you.”

“I love you, too. Happy New Year.”

“Happy New Year, babe.”

Chapter 12

The new year brought with it a flurry of activity in our lives. Not only did Brett's crew begin work much sooner and work much more quickly and efficiently than we thought possible, but Adrian and Stacy quickly made progress on Carlo's case.

"We normally wouldn't mess with something as open–and–shut as this," Stacy had told Melinda, "but because he's someone you know, we treated it as a personal favor."

"Open and shut? What do you mean?" Melinda had asked.

"It's obvious that his plea deal should have been thrown out," she'd said, "any appeals court would do that. We just have to file the case. If we cross all of our Is and dot all our Ts, we'll be in business."

This was a shock. Neither Melinda or I could believe that it could be that simple, but Stacy and Adrian insisted that it would be.

"We didn't say it would be fast or even necessarily easy," cautioned Adrian, "but it's definitely simple."

"How long do you think it's going to take?"

"Hard to say."

"And when could he get out?"

"Maybe in a year. Maybe a lot sooner. It just depends on a variety of factors."

We (or at least *I*) scarcely had time to dwell on this news, because the construction of the new house, plus my own architecture practice began taking up more and more of my time. It seemed that I saw less and less of Melinda (a fact that we both acknowledged) but when we were together, the time seemed all the more valuable and precious.

We both knew that these long stretches of seeing each other for only a few hours a day would be temporary, that soon — once the house was finished and I was done with my two new commissions — we'd be able to see much more of each other.

In the meantime, however, our lovemaking was once more energized. On a couple more occasions, Melinda was once again lubricated and stretched the way she had been that night when I'd returned from my parents' house. And, again, I was able to last much longer due to the lack of friction and was able to bring her to climax with only my penis several more times.

This was an incredible boost to my ego, even though I didn't succeed in impregnating her for the months during which the house was under construction. That was somehow understandable, because the time apart meant that we were also only making love once a week at the very most. Often, we'd go an entire menstrual cycle without sleeping together more than once.

The frequency of our lovemaking didn't seem to bother Melinda that much. She seemed to think, like I did, that we'd make up for lost time once the house was complete and we were comfortably moved in.

During the same period, Melinda was also putting in extra hours at work, helping Stacy and Adrian finish Carlo's appeal, which was moving faster than anyone had expected. They'd received a court date just a few weeks before the final walk–through for our house.

Carlo would get his second chance.

I didn't have time to think about how often Melinda was seeing Carlo during this process. I imagined that she'd probably visited with him once or twice as part of the preparation for his defense. I knew that Stacy and Adrian would have been talking to him regularly on the phone.

I had been too trusting. I hadn't checked on her phone records a single time since I discovered her visits to him. Carlo had very slowly become a part of my life — of *our* lives — without my ever having met him.

It didn't hit me just *how* much time Carlo and Melinda had been spending together until one rare Sunday afternoon, when Melinda and I lingered in bed together after making love.

"I've gotta go," she said, looking at her watch.

"What? Where?"

"I have an appointment."

“No you don’t,” I said, pulling her close to me, “you were just at the dentist, and your hair salon is closed on Sundays. I know that.”

“It’s not that kind of appointment.”

“Ok,” I said, still in a playful, flirtatious mood, “what kind of appointment is it?”

“Carlo’s waiting for me. There are still visiting hours until four.”

“It’s Sunday,” I said, surprised, “can’t you wait until Monday to let him know whatever it is you need to tell him about the case?”

“Oh,” she said, a bit guiltily perhaps, “it’s my regular time to visit Carlo. We don’t always talk about his case.”

“You visit Carlo *every* Sunday afternoon?” I said, “since when?”

I thought back on it, and realized that *I* had been at the office most Sunday afternoons in the past few months. Had she been seeing Carlo all of those times?

“Yeah, sort of,” she said evasively.

“Sort of? What does *that* mean?”

“It means I don’t see him every Sunday afternoon. Or not *just* every Sunday afternoon.”

“Not *just*?”

“Well,” she said, “I actually visit him almost every afternoon. Every afternoon that I’m allowed.”

“Since *when*?”

“Since around Christmas,” she said, “I mean, I haven’t always been able to make it. And some days, they don’t even allow visitors in for whatever reason. Probably every other time I try to see him they make up some excuse for why he’s not allowed to be there.”

“Why didn’t you tell me this?”

“I did tell you,” she said, “remember? You said you didn’t mind. That you understood that he was a part of my life.”

“That’s not exactly what happened,” I protested, “I said that I understood that you visited him in conjunction with his case. That I

understood that he was a part of your *past*, not necessarily your current life, and that it was important for you to see him to help him with his defense. I didn't think that the two of you would be having a regular date!"

I was upset, and it showed.

"Why are you being like this? Why are you so jealous of a man who's behind bars?"

"Maybe because it seems like you've seen more of *him* than you have of *me* for the past few months," I snapped.

"Oh? And who's fault is *that*," she retorted, the anger rising in her voice.

"The fault of the guy who's paying for your new house," I said, the words coming tumbling out of me without any regard for their possible consequence, "the fault of the guy who took on extra work to make sure we could afford all of the new furniture that you wanted."

"Oh," she said, her Queens accent evident as it always was when she was angry, "are you talking about the same guy who's been trying to put a baby in me for more than a year without success?"

"Oh that's great," I said, "as if we know for a fact that that's *my* fault. How about *you* get checked out, huh? Maybe your eggs are too old."

I knew I had gone too far, but I couldn't stop then, the anger at her keeping the secret, as well as the fact that she'd thrown our infertility back in my face was too much.

"Maybe if you'd spent as much time with me as you did visiting your old boyfriend you *would* be pregnant now," I said, almost shouting.

"Yeah, maybe that's a good idea," she snapped back, her face red, "at least *he* can do what you never could."

The rage in my voice turned to shock.

"What?" I asked, "what are you talking about?"

"Never mind," she said, pulling on her clothes.

"What are you waiting for — for him to get out of jail so that you can finally be rid of me?"

I was practically hyperventilating now. This was the biggest fight we'd ever had, and it had been a long time coming. I should have known that Melinda's street smarts meant that she wouldn't back down so easily.

She dressed for a few moments. She was fuming, and I could tell.

"You know what I think?"

"What."

"I think," she said, standing next to the bed, now fully clothed, "I think you *like* to imagine Carlo and I together. I think you've been thinking about it a lot."

She slipped her hand down onto my crotch now.

"That's what I thought, little Stevie," she said, a cruel glint in her eye, "you're hard. Nothing gets you harder than the thought of me and Carlo together."

"No Melinda," I said, the wind knocked out of my sails for the moment by her vicious change in course, "that's not what I want."

"Then why does it make your little man so hard?"

"It doesn't," I protested.

She laughed, patting my bulge again.

"I think you should sleep on the couch tonight, honey. You can jerk off there imagining me and Carlo."

"Melinda —," I started.

"Out, now!"

I stood angrily and stormed out into the living room, throwing myself onto the couch as her words echoed in my head.

A moment later, I heard the front door slam.

She'd gone to keep her date with Carlo.

I raced to the bedroom to check her diary.

I was going to read to the end. And I was going to read every last letter in the box.

No more holding back. No more concealing the truth from myself. I needed to know *everything* that had happened between them, and what *other* secrets she was still keeping from me.

Chapter 13

I flipped through the diary, looking for parts that I hadn't read carefully before.

Near the end of the hand–written book, I found what I was looking for. It was an entry written several years after the events had happened.

In fact, it must have been written around the time that Melinda and I had gotten serious.

This was surprising to me at first, but at the same time, it made perfect sense. She'd never gotten over him, and was still thinking about him around the same time that she'd agreed to marry me.

> That last night was so sad, and so tender at once. It was like we both knew what was going to happen, but couldn't talk about it. We didn't have the maturity. Or else we just simply couldn't find the words. In any case, we let our bodies do the talking instead.

I hadn't gotten dressed again after our lovemaking session earlier in the afternoon, so I was naked from the waist down. My shaft was coated with precum now, and I began to stroke my erection as I read more.

> The first time we did it that night was gentle. Beautiful, even. He laid me down on one of those gym mats that he was sleeping on and took all my clothes off, slowly. I should have been worried that someone — the janitor or even the cops — would have busted in and found us, but for some reason, that didn't concern me at all. I was totally concentrated on him and the way our two bodies were communicating. I remember the prickle of his stubble on my nipples. He was trying his best to be gentle, not to irritate them as he sometimes did, but hadn't shaved in a long time, so it was an impossible task. When he was done kissing my nipples, I was soaking wet. I wanted him so bad. I remember that he looked up into my eyes and asked me if I was ready. I nodded. I couldn't talk I was so turned on. I just wanted him inside me.

I had to stop jerking my cock for a moment, because I didn't want to come too quickly. The feelings of arousal, angst and remorse for ever having pried into this part of my wife's life began to overcome me. What was I doing?

I closed the diary for a moment as my breath slowed.

I could do this. I could resist.

The adrenaline, which had spiked in my bloodstream, slowly subsided.

Sitting there, I told myself that I didn't need this. That I could put the book away and never look at it again.

That lasted all of fifteen seconds before I picked the book up again. I had to face it: I was hooked.

> I think that was the first and last time that I really *watched* him penetrate me. I mean, it wasn't the first time I'd seen his cock, of course, but it was the first time I noticed how much its size and thickness contrasted with my poor little pussy. I just remember looking down and watching that monster disappear inside me. It felt — it *looked* like it should have been impossible. For him to fit inside me that easily. And for it to feel so good when it did. In that moment, I felt so submissive to him. So pliant. So feminine. It felt so natural. It really was a miracle of nature, honey. I know now that it was. I could also feel my own fertility, my own radical receptiveness to his seed. I understand how silly it sounds now to say that, but I was *convinced* that he was going to impregnate me that day. It seemed the only natural outcome from such an incredible, profound connection.

I was jerking myself off furiously now, unconcerned about my actions, completely wrapped up in the drama of the story.

> I spread my legs so wide, pulling him deeper and deeper into me until he was bottoming out. He was careful not to hit my cervix too hard, though. So he wasn't being too rough, but he was getting into the perfect position to inseminate me. I didn't think about that consciously at the moment, of course, but I've played this scene back so many times in my head in since then that I'm convinced that this must have been the reason that he impregnated me.

Suddenly, everything made sense. The big secret. The emotion. *He'd* been able to do what *I* couldn't: get her pregnant. But what had happened to the baby? Had she given it up for adoption? Had she lost it? I knew that Melinda was personally opposed to abortion, but I could also see her agreeing to one if she were in a tight situation: unmarried, with her boyfriend in jail, and headed to prison. I continued to read.

> In any case, he was fucking me with these long, slow strokes, keeping me on the edge, until I finally just started begging him to fuck me fast and hard. I remember looking up into his eyes and seeing the fire there as he tried to hold back. He was trying so hard to put my pleasure before his own. Something about that sight just melted my heart and begged for him to come inside me. Wait —that's not quite true. I didn't beg for him to come inside me. I told him that I wanted his *baby*. That I wanted him to knock me up. I can't think of a dumber thing for an unmarried 20–year–old girl to say in a situation like that, but it was the truth. It *was* what I wanted. I wanted his baby. It felt so natural. So right. That's why it was so awful when I lost the fetus. At fifteen weeks. Just after he entered his guilty plea and was sentenced. It can't be a coincidence: the judge and DA killed our future together.

I shot a huge load all over my hand. When the feeling finally faded, I looked at my semen–covered hand in disgust.

She'd carried his *baby*. Only for fifteen weeks, but that was longer than I'd managed to plant my seed. Carlo had been there first. He'd claimed her.

How could I *possibly* compete with *that*?

I kept my knowledge to myself. There was no use telling her what I knew. It would only start a fight. Besides, I told myself, soon we would be in our new house. Soon we'd have a new life as a couple and Carlo would be a distant memory. Even if he eventually got out of prison, there was nothing tying him to the area. He'd have to go back home to his relatives in NYC. It was only logical.

Chapter 14

As it happened, I didn't have a lot of time to dwell on the new knowledge that I'd won. The next few weeks were a flurry of packing and labeling boxes as the big move–in date drew ever closer. Brett had proven his worth as a contractor. There had been no major hang–ups in the construction process, except for when it came to the utility hook–ups, and a couple of the permit inspections. Even then, we were running only a couple of days behind schedule, which was practically a miracle in the world of home construction.

Melinda was still putting in long hours, and my extra commissions meant that I was sleeping at the office sometimes, then waking up early to beat the traffic home, where I'd spend several hours packing before heading back into the office again.

It was a hectic, crazy time, and so when I got news that Carlo's trial had already been scheduled, I barely had time to think about it.

It seemed that the busyness of our lives had left no room for my masochistic fantasies and fears. I was focused only on two things, now: getting ready to move in the most efficient way possible, and making sure that I delivered the best possible plans to my clients.

Melinda was remarkably tolerant during this time. She did the bulk of the packing, often in the evenings after work, when I was still at the office. Sometimes, she had Lisa and Gary over to help her. I would sometimes find evidence of them enjoying a bottle of wine, or even a forbidden cigarette or two (both she and Lisa had officially given up smoking in their early twenties, but still indulged from time to time), but I took this to be a healthy development, all things considered. After all, Melinda was keeping busy. And keeping her mind off Carlo.

That's why, about a week before the final inspection date, I was shocked when Melinda suddenly announced that she was going to stay downtown that weekend to help Adrian prep for Carlo's trial. I would have to move things into the house myself.

This might have seemed odd to some people, remember Melinda had a killer commute. She would have three extra hours to devote to the case each

day that she didn't have to drive to work. Over the weekend, that amounted to six total hours that she could help Adrian and Stacey. They'd done this a few times before, especially on the eve of big cases, so it wasn't *so* out of the ordinary.

On the other hand, it wasn't every day that she would be moving into her dream home with her husband. That had to count for something, I thought!

Melinda told me that she had thought of all of that and understood how I felt, but that she needed to be there for Stacey and Adrian.

In the back of my mind, I suspected that this was a distortion of the truth: that she needed to be there for *Carlo*.

I tried to protest: I wouldn't be able to do it all alone. I wouldn't know where she wanted things. She suggested that I hire some movers. It wouldn't be that expensive because we had already packed almost everything ourselves, and I would be driving the U–haul truck across town. She could rearrange things when she came back if she didn't like what I'd done with them.

I agreed. I felt a little funny about moving into our dream house all alone, but I also saw the wisdom in her suggestions. And, when I found out that it would only cost a few hundred dollars to hire some guys to help me load and unload the U–haul, I became even more enthusiastic about the idea. I didn't much relish spending eight hours or so lugging boxes up and down a truck ramp. Not only that, our new place had stairs.

So it was all decided rather quickly, and that Friday morning before work, I kissed my wife goodbye.

"I love you," I said to Melinda, breathing in the fragrance of her hair as I held her close, "have a good time."

She rolled her eyes.

"It's not going to be at *all* fun," she said, "even if Adrian thinks it's an easy case, *I* certainly don't. There are always so many I's to cross and T's to dot."

I laughed at her mistake, which she also immediately recognized.

“God, I must really be nervous,” she said, “I don’t know what’s going on with me.”

“It will be great to have all of this over with,” I said, “Carlo will be out of jail, and you can stop feeling guilty about whatever it was that happened with him. And he’ll go back to New York, and we’ll start out life in our new house. You’ll finally have the past behind you.”

She gave me a sad smile.

“Yes,” she said, “that will be great.”

“Ok,” I said, giving her another kiss, “say hi to the bosses for me. And good luck.”

She squeezed my hand and smiled, then went out to her car.

And so I found myself there alone, next to Brett Miller, the final morning of the walk–through. It was merely a formality, of course, since I’d been checking in with Brett every couple of days on FaceTime at the very least. Around once a week or so, I’d been on–site myself for a couple of minutes in the late morning, which was one of the reasons that I’d started staying so late at the office.

“Your guys did great finish work,” I said, admiring the trim on the floors in the living room, “and those stairs…”

I let out a whistle of appreciation.

“I’ll let them know that you value their work,” said Brett, smiling.

He was proud of being able to find the very best tradesmen in the area. And of course he charged a premium for it.

“Technically,” he said, opening his briefcase and putting an iPad on the center of the kitchen island, “this is the part where both you and Mrs. Cartwright sign the final approval documents and I get the rest of my money.”

He smiled, producing a stylus and clicking through a few screens.

“But thanks to the miracle of technology, she can give her John — or is it Jane? — Hancock on this PDF document and e–mail it back to me.”

I’d already explained the situation to him, so he wasn’t surprised in the least.

After I'd signed, he smiled at me and extended his hand.

"Congratulations," he said, "have fun…you know…*christening* this place with the missus. I know when Shelia and I moved into our new place, we, uh…explored every room."

He shot me a salute and a wink before handing me the keys.

"Here you go," he said, "the last set. It's all yours, now."

"Thanks," I said, blushing a bit at his insinuation.

"It was a pleasure doing business with you," he called just before stepping over the threshold, "I hope you'll pass my name along to other interested parties."

"Of course," I called back.

The door fell in the latch. I was all alone in the house that I had designed. The house that the *two* of us had designed. And tomorrow was move–in day.

I pulled out my phone and tried to get Melinda on FaceTime. I knew that she would want to see this.

However, I also wasn't surprised when she didn't pick up. She had a lot to do.

And, for the next day and half, so did I. I did manage to connect with her that evening on the phone. The connection was bad. It sounded like she was calling from the bottom of the ocean.

"The house looks beautiful," I told her, "they did a great job with the counter tops. And they even cleaned the all the glass on the walls and windows. We're going to have to get used to where everything is, or we're going to be bumping into things constantly!"

Our new house was in a sort of modified modernist style, with lots of glass walls and light wood. It was designed to both blend into the landscape and to allow lots of light to enter. We were definitely going to need curtains for the bedroom. That was something we'd joked about quite a bit over the past few months.

"What did the structural engineer say?" she asked.

“I looked at his report last week. Everything was great — he signed off without an issue. I thought I already told you about that.”

“Oh,” she said, “maybe you did.”

“You seem distracted.”

There was a pause.

“Yeah,” she said, “I am. I’m tense.”

“Don’t worry, baby,” I said, “you’ve got this. Carlo’s going to win.”

“But what if he doesn’t?”

“Well,” I said, “it will be tragic, of course. But *our* lives will go on. And you can go back to not thinking about Carlo. Like before.”

I realized immediately that what I had said might have sounded a little insensitive, and tried to take it back.

“I mean —.”

But a sob from the other end of the line cut me off.

“You just don’t get it, do you?”

“That’s not what I meant,” I said, “I know that he’s important to you. It’s just that you’re married to me now, and we just built a house and —.”

“I’ve gotta go,” she stammered, “I’ll talk to you tomorrow. Good luck with the move.”

“I love you,” I said, but she had already hung up.

I didn’t have time that night to dwell too long on this conversation, even though it stayed with me for a long time as I fell asleep. I couldn’t rightly fault her for being tense, and even if it was true that she didn’t *love* Carlo anymore, it would still be perfectly understandable if she still felt a sense of guilt or responsibility for what had happened to him, so many years ago.

At the same time, I couldn’t imagine her investing her relationship with *me* with the same amount of emotion, and *that* was what bothered me. Why did this convict — this *deadbeat* (yes, it was ok to call him that, I told myself, even if his long sentence was harsh and undeserved) inspire more passion in her than I did?

I was the breadwinner. I was her rock. Her provider. I would never be as exciting as Carlo, but I'd also never punch someone in the face so hard that he died.

I'd also never be able to make love to her the way that he had. I knew this to be true. And it had nothing to do with the size of my endowment. Well, perhaps not *only* to do with that.

I thought about the man I had seen in court making love to my wife, and became instantly erect. It was the last image I saw in my mind's eye before drifting off to sleep.

Chapter 15

The alarm went off early the next morning. Too early.

I jumped out of bed and threw on some clothes, ready for the big day. I made myself some coffee and paced in the kitchen, going over a list of things to do. I didn't take a shower because I was too nervous about missing the movers. As it turned out, they were half an hour late, so I could have showered in peace, but it didn't matter. I was looking forward to having a nice long shower that night. In our new home.

When they did finally arrive, the guys packed our things quickly and efficiently. When they saw the coat and dress boxes marked "handle with care" in Melinda's girlish handwriting and looked at me.

"You married," said one of the movers, a tall black man named Jared, smiling.

"You've got that right," I said.

"Anything for the little lady, huh?"

"Of course."

He chuckled.

"We'll make sure everything gets there in one piece."

The movers worked incredibly efficiently and precisely. So much so, that I quickly gave up on helping them. I realized I was only getting in their way. I decided that my time would be better spent calling the landlord to confirm the walk–through later that afternoon. Hopefully, the cleaners that I'd arranged to give the place a much–needed scrubbing before we turned over the keys would be able to make it on time.

While I was on the phone to the cleaning company, Jared came into the kitchen and announced that they had packed the truck. I could drive it over to the new house, and they would meet me there.

I thanked him and handed him a $100 tip for him and his crew.

"There's more when you're done," I said, "you know, if you keep the little lady's stuff intact."

“Will do, boss,” said Jared, “but you’re going to have to drive carefully too, you know.”

“I will,” I said, “see you there.”

He turned and left.

After I got off the phone with the cleaners confirming the appointment, I went out to the Uhaul truck and climbed into the cab. I had driven it to the house the night before when I picked it up, but now it was fully loaded. I knew that there would be a couple of tight turns and crammed intersections on the way to the new house, even if I didn’t actually have that far to go.

The high way system in Austin is so inefficiently designed that there was no way to avoid taking the interstate. I was dreading having to accelerate on the on–ramp, and all of the stop–and–go traffic I was sure to encounter.

As it turned out, however, by taking it slow — much slower than many other drivers would have liked — I was able to make it almost all the way to our new place without any mishaps.

I was cruising along, thinking about when the new sofa was going to be delivered, when all of a sudden a stoplight popped into my field of vision.

Where did *that* come from? I could have sworn it hadn’t been there before.

I slammed on the brakes to avoid going into the middle of the intersection. The stopping distance of the Uhaul, even at the moderate speed I was traveling, was *much* longer than I had anticipated.

“Shit!”

Tires squealed against the pavement as I slide to a halt, the cab of the truck extending into the intersection. In the back, I heard a small crash.

“*Shit*!” I repeated.

It didn’t sound *too* bad. The movers must have packed well.

A couple of cars honked and some drivers gave me dirty looks at having to drive around the cab, but the light changed very quickly and I breathed a sigh of relief as I began to drive again.

I drove very slowly the rest of the way to the house, not wanting to repeat my mistake, and feeling rather sheepish about what had happened at the intersection.

“How was the drive, boss?” asked Jared, who was waiting with his crew in the driveway when I pulled up.

“I stopped pretty fast at the intersection and may have broken a couple of things.”

He smiled.

“Aw, sorry to hear that, but better you than me!”

I chuckled.

“I guess that’s right.”

“I’m sure it’s not that bad,” he continued, “we pack these babies pretty tight, and we do it all the time. We know what we’re doing.”

“I’m sure you do.”

“Well, let’s check out the damage,” he said, “come on, guys.”

The movers jumped up and went into action, emptying the back of the truck at amazing speed. I directed them to the proper rooms for each larger piece of furniture, but they moved so fast that I had trouble keeping up.

Finally, they reached the back of the truck, which was also the farthest forward, near the cab.

“If something got broke,” said Jared, “it’s gonna be up here.”

I jumped up into the back alongside Jared to survey the damage, which became immediately apparent.

One of Melinda’s clothing boxes had launched forward and broken open, a couple of dresses spilling out of the seam where the tape had come loose.

“That baby must have flown a long way,” laughed Jared, “we put those light ones in the back.”

He pushed the clothes back into the box and set it upright.

“No harm done, I think,” he said, “you don’t have to worry about sleeping on the couch tonight, boss.”

Then he bent down and picked something off the floor.

It was a turkey baster.

“That’s funny,” he said, “one of the kitchen boxes must have busted open, too. Did you notice anything? My guys are supposed to report it if they see any damage.”

“No,” I said, taking the baster from Jared and turning it over a couple of times in my hand, “I don’t think I’ve ever seen this before. Huh.”

“Well, I always tell people: you never know just how much junk you have until you have to move it all across town. Crazy stuff happens during a move: things turn up, things disappear.”

He flashed me a grin, then wiped his brow.

“I think that about does it. Unless you want us to move some of the furniture around before we go.”

“No,” I said, “I think everything’s roughly in the right spot.”

“Cool,” he said, “we’ll get the last few boxes outta here, then settle up.”

I held the baster in my hand as I walked down the ramp of the truck and back into the daylight. I couldn’t remember having bought it. Maybe Melinda had needed it for something?

I went into the kitchen and threw it into one of the drawers, forgetting it completely for the time being.

***

That night I unpacked the bed sheets and a couple of kitchen boxes and cooked the first meal in our new home: a box of macaroni and cheese. I had no effort for something more elaborate. I was bone tired, and looking forward to that shower.

First, however, I called Melinda. I managed to get through to her, on FaceTime.

“Hey Stevie,” she said, seemingly much happier than the last time I’d talked to her, “how’d everything go?”

I told her about the move, then took her on a tour of the house. We talked for over an hour. She had a lot of opinions on what should go where,

and I tried to remember everything that she told me.

“I think you’re going to have to do a lot of this stuff yourself,” I said, “I can’t remember all this, and I’m not going to have time to unpack everything myself!”

“That’s ok,” she said, “I’ll need something to take this case off my mind while we wait for the verdict.”

“When might you get one?”

“It’s basically anyone’s guess.”

“Do you think it could come soon?”

“Sure,” she said, “as soon as Monday afternoon.”

“You’ll be back home by then though, right?”

“Yeah, I’ll leave right after court in the morning, unless I hear there’s going to be an announcement.”

She yawned.

“Ok, babe. I should get going. I’ve been up forever, you know. I’m sorry I can’t be there with you on the first night in the house! I’m so excited, even though I probably don’t exactly sound like it.”

“I know, honey,” I said, “get some rest, and I’ll see you tomorrow.”

That night, after a long, hot shower in a beautiful new master bathroom, I fell into a deep sleep on a mattress on the floor. It felt great to be in our new home, even if I was alone.

***

I woke up early the next morning, and immediately sprang into action. I cooked some coffee on the stove and then started assembling the bed frame. After that, I removed the protective covers from the couch and other living room furniture, and assembled the dining room table as well.

I put together the mirror that went on Melinda’s vanity, so she’d have a place to do her makeup. I made the bed and straightened the cushions on the couch. Even though there were still boxes everywhere, the place was starting to look a little more like home. I wanted Melinda to be able to enjoy herself as soon as she got home. I knew she would probably be tired from the strain of the trial and the stress of waiting.

Around noon, I got a text message from her.

Sorry I'm going to be a little later than I thought. But I've got a surprise for you…

I smiled. My wife was going to surprise me on her first day in our new house. I wondered what she had in store. I hoped it would somehow involve a new sexy outfit, something to help us "christen" the house…

I made rapid progress throughout the early afternoon, unpacking boxes and arranging shelves. This house had a lot more space than our rental, so even though it was cluttered with boxes it didn't feel full.

I was so absorbed in my work that I didn't notice the time. Around 4pm, I looked at my watch and realized that Melinda was much later than I was expecting.

I was about to text her, when suddenly I heard a key in the lock.

"Honey," she called, "we're home…"

Chapter 16

We're home? What did she mean?

I walked to the stairs and went down slowly. There, standing in the foyer with a big grin on his face was Carlo.

Carlo.

I recognized him instantly, even if I'd only ever seen a picture of him from years ago. He had changed, of course: he had a shaved head now, and appeared to have bulked up in prison quite a bit. He had clearly been muscular before, but now he was extremely jacked, even if he did have a slight belly. He looked like a power–lifter with a bit of pudge, the kind of guy that women would refer to as a "big teddy bear," while knowing full well that he could take 95% of the men in the world and throw them through a wall if he wanted to.

I had always stereotyped Italians (and especially Sicilians) as short, but Carlo was huge. He might have been 6'3". This, combined with his bulk, meant that he would absolutely dwarf me. I suddenly felt very small, helpless even.

Only one thing about seeing Carlo suddenly standing in my new foyer put me at ease: he was wearing an oversize shirt that must have been XXL, and clearly didn't belong to him, and, at the same time, blue jeans that he seemed to be busting out of. His look was almost comic, and I probably would have laughed out loud if the whole situation hadn't caught me so off guard.

"Carlo, meet Stevie," said Melinda, stepping out from behind the giant, "he just got out this morning. Isn't that *wonderful*?"

"Yeah," I stammered, trying to share in her joy, "that's great. It must feel good."

I walked slowly down the staircase. Carlo stepped forward and extended his hand, taking hold of my own and shaking it firmly.

"Steve," he said, "so nice to meet you. Melinda's always talking about you. You got yourself a good girl here."

He put his arm around Melinda, hugging her close from the side at the same moment he said this. I cringed a bit.

“Thanks,” I said.

“Carlo and I went shopping,” said Melinda, “because, as you can see, the clothes he was issued by the court don’t really fit him.”

“I noticed that,” I said.

“Yeah, man. You wouldn’t believe how weird it feels to be able to wear what I want. Lucky for me, Melinda was there to help me go shopping. Everything looks weird now. Everyone’s dressed so different. I guess it’s because I’m in Texas now, too.”

Melinda beamed at him. Behind her, I noticed several bags from a couple of clothing stores.

“Ok, Carlo,” she said, “how about you try these things on again and decide what you want to wear today.”

“We just kind of grabbed whatever at the store,” she said to me, by way of explanation, “but I think I guessed his size just right.”

“Well,” said Carlo, a huge grin still on his face, “is there a place for me to get changed?”

“Sure,” I said, “upstairs and to the left. The guest room.”

“Great,” he said, turning and grabbing all of the bags at once in both of his beefy hands, “be right back.”

“Wait for me,” said Melinda, heading up the staircase after him, “I need to give my opinion.”

“Wait a minute,” I said, putting my hand on Melinda’s arm, “I need to talk to you.”

“Ok,” she said, looking as if she had no idea whatsoever why it might be strange that she had brought her ex–boyfriend into our new house.

I stood, looking at her, for several seconds until the door to the guestroom upstairs clicked close.

“When were you going to tell me that he got out?” I said, my voice a harsh whisper.

I was upset, and she needed to know it.

“I was going to,” she said, “I really was. But it all happened so fast. The bailiff called us back into court about thirty minutes after the judge retired into her chambers. She overturned Carlo’s conviction, effective immediately, and found him guilty of a lesser charge. Then she sentenced him to time served and told him he was free to go.”

“Just like that?”

“Just like that. He had about an hour to pack up his things and say goodbye to people inside, and then he was out. Since I’m the only one who really knows him out here, it made sense that he come with me. You saw the silly clothes that the jail gave him. I had to get him something else.”

“That makes sense.”

“Thank, honey. You’re not mad, are you?”

She looked at me with the big, puppy–dog eyes that I couldn’t resist. I felt the anger melting. Maybe she was just trying to help out an old friend in need. Maybe that’s all it was. Maybe this was perfectly innocent.

“I’m just…surprised, that’s all. I wish you’d called.”

“I know, honey. Like I said, it just happened so fast. It was like a dream.”

*Like a **dream***? That was an interesting choice of words.

“I’m going to go up and see how he looks,” she said, “he needs a woman’s touch if he’s going to adapt to the fashions of this decade.”

“Sure,” I said, “I’ll go up with you and show you what I’ve done in the master bedroom.”

I thought about how I’d prepared the bed, specifically for the two of us to “christen” the house. I hoped she would be dropping Carlo off at a hotel or halfway house or wherever he was staying very soon so that the two of us could be together in our new house.

As we came up into the upstairs hallway, Carlo burst out of the guestroom wearing a button–down shirt and khaki pants. He had been completely transformed. He now looked like the mid–level manager of a cell–phone store.

Melinda shrieked in glee.

“Ooh, that fits perfectly! Turn around for me.”

Carlo did a spin, as if he were a model on a catwalk. Melinda gave a big smile when she saw his ass. She was clearly checking him out.

“Oh yeah. It fits *really* good.”

“Well,” I said, a little upset, “I guess I’ll finish unpacking in the bedroom. Let me know when you want to see what I’ve done with the place.”

“I’m sure it will be fine, babe,” she said.

I walked off into the bedroom and unpacked some boxes. Melinda giggled a couple more times, gushing over this outfit or that. Occasionally, she would reject something completely.

After about 15 minutes of this (during which time I tried and failed to concentrate on unpacking), I finally went back into the hallway where Melinda was waiting as Carlo changed into yet another outfit in the guest room.

At least the door was closed. There was some level of privacy there between them. That gave me hope, honestly.

“Ok,” I said, trying not to sound as exasperated as I was, “when is this going to stop?”

“What?” she asked, fixing me with her eyes, “the fashion show? He just finished with the last outfit. He’s changing into something comfortable for dinner.”

“For dinner?”

“Yeah, honey,” she said reaching out and putting her hand on my chest, “I thought we could make him dinner here at home. Unless you want to go out. I mean, it’s his first night out of prison. We need to make it special for him.”

“I don’t understand why ‘we’ need to do anything special for him,” I snapped, trying not to raise my voice to the level that Carlo would hear me from behind the door, “you’ve already done him a big favor by helping him get out of jail. How much more are you planing on doing for him?”

She smiled at me.

“Oh, Stevie,” she said, patting my chest again, “don’t get so worked up. He’s just an old boyfriend. He doesn’t know anyone around here. We can’t let him down. Especially not his first night out!”

I frowned, but I could feel my resistance crumbling the longer her hand lingered on my chest. It was hard for me to say no to my wife.

“Alright,” I said, “but we’ll have to go shopping. I unpacked most of the kitchen stuff, but there’s barely any food.”

“You leave that to me,” she said, smiling, “I’ll whip up something from the stuff in the pantry. And you can be a good boy and fix Carlo a drink.”

“Sure,” I said, “what do you think he’d like that we have?”

She paused for a moment.

“How about a martini. With olives. We had some in the pantry, and I think that I must have packed them.”

“Ok,” I said, “but after dinner, all of this is over.”

“Yeah,” she said, “of course.”

I slowly went downstairs and looked for the bar equipment. After a few minutes, I heard giggling again. I crept to the foot of the stairway and looked up, just in time to catch a tender moment between Carlo and Melinda.

She was holding his hand, gazing up into his eyes. He bent down, slowly at first, as if unsure of what he was doing, then planted a long, tender kiss on her lips.

Her eyes were closed, she was lost in the moment, as if the outside world didn’t exist for her. He moved his hand onto the small of her back, as if to pull her closer, but she reached out and pushed it away, suddenly opening her eyes.

I stepped backwards in that exact moment, not wanting to get caught.

There it was: the smoking gun. Even if she’d pushed his hand away, she hadn’t refused his initial advances. In fact, she’d obviously enjoyed them.

Melinda was still in love with Carlo. I had suspected it all along, but now it was impossible to deny. The only thing that gave me hope now was the fact that she'd pushed his hand away. But was that because she was really having second thoughts, or because she knew that I was still in the house?

I shook the cocktail shaker vigorously, loud enough for them to hear upstairs. Sure enough, a few seconds later, they appeared in the kitchen, looking like a couple of guilty high schoolers who'd been caught making out.

Melinda went the pantry area and began to rummage around in boxes for ingredients for the meal.

"Hey, Stevie," said Carlo, coming up to me and putting his arm around me and patting me on the back, "is that for me?"

"Yeah," I said, suddenly feeling a groundswell of empathy for this man who, after all, had only just been released from prison that morning, "I think I'm going to join you."

"Sounds great, man."

I poured the shaker into the two martini glasses I'd set out on the kitchen bar.

"You designed this place yourself?" said Carlo, seeming genuinely impressed.

"Yeah," I said, filled with a renewed sense of pride as I looked around the kitchen space that I'd meticulously planned, "it's what I do."

"I love it," said Carlo, "it's so different. I mean, all the glass, the light. Everything."

"Thanks," I said, "I had a lot of input from the little lady, of course."

"Oh, I bet," he said, "Melinda always has to have her way, doesn't she? She's always been like that."

I was suddenly feeling warm feelings towards Carlo.

"Cheers," I said, lifting my glass to his, "to your first night out."

"Cheers," he said, "thank you for your hospitality."

I took a sip. My mix had been perfect. Dry, cold gin with just the smallest hint of vermouth and brine.

“Wooo–wee,” laughed Carlo, “it’s been a long time since I’ve had something that strong. Me and the guys would sometimes make wine on the back of the toilet, but it was nowhere near as powerful as this stuff. Whoa.”

Melinda appeared with a box of pasta, a can of sardines and jar of capers.

“Do you already have the olive oil out, honey?”

“Yeah,” I said, gesturing to the counter near the stove, “it’s over there.”

“Perfect,” she said, “now why don’t you boys get out of here and let me get things ready. Go sit in the living room or something.”

I shoved some boxes out of the way so that Carlo could sit on the couch. I, myself, took a seat on the chair. These were the only two pieces of furniture in the entire living room; random piles of boxes and books were scattered across the rest of the hardwood floor.

Carlo sat down on the couch, spreading his legs apart and giving a yawn of satisfaction.

“Wow,” he said, “I can’t believe that I woke up in the joint and now I’m here.”

“Quite a day, huh?”

I was suddenly feeling very nervous around Carlo, despite my sympathy for him as a person. This guy could easily break me in half. Even if he was a genuinely nice guy deep down inside, he’d still been in prison for much of his adult life, and had probably picked up some very nasty habits there.

He took a long sip of his drink, puckering his lips and shaking his head.

“Wooo–wee. You do mix ‘em strong, don’t you, Stevie boy?”

I cringed at his use of this nickname, but I decided I wasn’t going to get upset. I was going to take everything with good humor. It was probably just his way of bonding. No use rocking the boat.

“Ha,” I said, “I guess I do. It sure smells good in there.”

The smell of garlic was wafting out of the kitchen.

“Melinda always was an amazing cook,” he said.

“That’s true,” I said.

We sat there for a few moments in awkward silence. Then Melinda came in.

“I’ve got the sauce ready, we just have to wait for the water to boil! Look at the two of you, just sitting in here in silence. Can’t you at least talk about football or something?”

She plopped down on the couch next to Carlo, as if it were the most natural thing in the world. She continued to talk, but I stopped focusing on what she was saying, merely nodding my head from time to time as her words washed over me.

I was laser–focused on her hand, which was at her side, but slowly inching towards Carlo’s own, which was also at his side, just out of my line of vision.

They must think I’m really stupid, I thought to myself.

Then again, I *was* really stupid, wasn’t I? My wife was fooling around with her ex–boyfriend right under my nose, and I hadn’t said or done anything at all about it.

Why?

Did I *want* to see what would happen? How far things would go?

I remembered the kiss at the top of the stairway. They must both be aching for a moment alone together.

“And so that’s why I thought it would be good if Carlo spent the first night here,” she said.

I snapped back to reality.

“What?”

“Yeah,” she said, “he can sleep in the guest room. We just need to unwrap the mattress and we can throw it on the floor in there. No need to put the frame together.”

“I don’t know…,” I said, “I mean, are you sure that’s a good idea?”

“I’m positive, honey. I already explained. The social worker told us that it’s very important for Carlo to be in a friendly environment when he first gets out of prison. This is a difficult transition period.”

“I really appreciate it,” said Carlo, “it’s great what the two of you are doing for me.”

“Melinda,” I said, “I wish you’d talked to me about this first.”

“Oh,” she said, “don’t be mad, Stevie. I just figured you’d want to help out. You do want to help out, right?”

“Well, yeah…”

“Good,” she said, “I’m going to cook the pasta, and then dinner will be served!”

Melinda’s cooking was delicious. She’d used sardines, breadcrumbs, capers, olive oil and spices from the pantry to create a scrumptious Italian feast. We opened a bottle of Sangiovese wine. By the end of the meal, I was feeling good despite the tumultuous events of the afternoon.

“Wow,” said Carlo, “that was really amazing. You don’t know how good something like that tastes after so much time in prison.”

“Aww, you’re so sweet,” said Melinda, patting his bald head.

For a moment, it looked like she was going to go in for another kiss, but she stopped herself.

“I think I’m going to go change out of these clothes,” she said, “I’ve been in them all day, and I’m exhausted. It might be time for bed soon.”

“Go ahead,” he said, “I’m going to see if Stevie Boy here wants to mix me up another martini. What do you say?”

He turned to me and flashed me a big grin, then slapped me on the shoulder, letting me feel how large his hand was. There was a threat implicit in this motion, at least it seemed that way to me.

“Sure,” I said, “I could use another one, too.”

And so I went into the kitchen to mix up another batch of martinis, while Melinda went upstairs to change her clothes.

After mixing two more drinks — extra stiff this time, for both of us — I walked back into the living room, just in time to see Melinda descending

the stairs in a sheer teddy and black panties with a silk kimono draped around her shoulders.

I almost dropped the drinks. What the hell was she doing? She hardly ever dressed that way around me, much less around a man who was, for all intents and purposes, a total stranger.

I felt a stirring of desire as I watched her move down the staircase.

A total knockout. An Italian–American bombshell, my wife.

"What are you wearing?" I asked, not knowing exactly why I had phrased my objection this way, but unable to stop to think about it.

Carlo stood, taking one of the drinks out of my hand and putting his arm around me with the other.

"God damn," he said, "excuse my language, but I haven't seen a site like this in a long time. You have to understand how hard it was to be cut off from women like that."

"Melinda," I said, ignoring him entirely, "why are you dressed like that?"

"What's the matter, honey? You don't like it?"

"No," I said, "of course I *like* it. I'm sure Carlo likes it, too."

"I sure do."

Carlo's voice seemed to drip with desire.

"Then what's the problem? Take it easy on the poor guy, Stevie. He just got out of prison this morning. He's been through a lot."

Carlo slowly took his hand off my shoulder and sat down on the couch.

Reluctantly, I sat down in the chair where I'd been sitting before.

Suddenly, music filled the room. I looked over to see Melinda put her cell phone on one of the stacks of boxes. She began to sway in time to the beat.

It was an Italian jazz standard. Upbeat, fun.

Carlo and I stood transfixed as she shook her hips, swirling around to the music. I had *never*, not once in my life, seen Melinda dance like this.

It was absolutely captivating. I was mesmerized by her beauty as she danced.

"Melinda," I murmured, too softly for anyone to hear me over the music that blared from the phone, "what are you doing?"

It was a rhetorical question, of course. I knew *exactly* what she was doing: exalting in her femininity. Reveling in her power to hold men's attention captive.

She was teasing me, I could sense it. Carlo, too. But did she plan on *pleasing* him as well? Would she be *that* bold?

"Oh my *God*," said Carlo.

For the first time, I could detect his New York accent. He was just like Melinda. He had probably learned to hide it in the slammer.

"Oh my *Gawd*. Mel, baby. You're beautiful."

Mel? This was quite an intimate nickname. One that I hadn't known about.

I glanced over at Carlo, my eyes flitting up and down his body. I tried not to stare at his bulge. I knew that he must be getting hard. How could he not be?

Sure enough, I caught a glimpse of it through his pants.

Fuck. How was it possible to compete with that? He probably wasn't even completely hard.

The music shifted now, to a slower number, one still as sultry and sexual as the first. I could sense this, even if I couldn't understand the lyrics crooned by the female singer.

Melinda smiled at me as she moved her hips, stepping closer and closer to me until she she straddled my lap, rubbing her panty–covered snatch on my thigh.

"You like this, honey?" she whispered, reaching down and running her hand over the bulge left by my erect cock quickly.

"Melinda," I murmured, "what are you doing?"

"Mmm," she whispered, kissing me, "I'm giving you and Carlo a show. You like it, don't you? Don't try to pretend you don't. I can see feel

how hard you are."

"Melinda…"

She pulled back, winking at me.

"It's Carlo's turn now, babe. I know he's probably been going crazy in prison. Never allowed to touch a woman. Or even see one…"

Shaking her hips in time to the music, she slowly stood up once more, then moved lithely and gracefully across to the couch, lowering herself onto Carlo's lap, exactly as she'd done to me.

I should stop this. My wife was giving a lap dance to her old boyfriend. If ever there was something that crossed the line, this was it.

I thought about the stolen kiss that I'd witnessed before dinner. Hadn't *that* crossed the line, too? What was I doing putting up with this behavior at all in the first place?

The alcohol was certainly playing a role.

I drank the rest of my martini in a two gulps, wincing at the burn of the liquor on my tongue.

"Oh God, Mel," groaned Carlo as my wife rubbed herself up and down on his leg.

"What do you say, boys? Should we take this to the next level?"

"What do you mean?" asked Carlo.

"I mean," she said, "how about I give you what you'd never get at a strip club."

"Oh God, Mel," he repeated.

"Melinda," I said, my head spinning from the booze, "now this has really gone too far. You've got to stop it."

"Aw, Stevie, just relax, will you? You're *both* going to love it. Just a little handjob…

She sashayed over to me once more and rubbed my cock through my pants.

"Stevie," she said, "I can tell that your little guy likes it. Tell him not to be shy…"

“Ok,” I murmured, nodding, filled with lust for my wife’s voluptuous body.

I heard myself say the word, but it was like someone else was speaking from inside me. Someone who had long ago accepted that I had lost Melinda forever, that she was going to do what she wanted to do, no matter what I said.

Someone who knew the truth: there was nothing I could do but sit back, relax and enjoy the show.

“Good,” she grinned, pulling back from me cruelly and crossing tot the couch once more.

“How long has it been since a woman has touched you, poor baby?” she said, kneeling in front of Carlo and looking up at him as she ran her fingers over his bulge.

“It’s been years. I can’t even…oh my God, Mel. You’re so hot.”

“Get those pants off, big guy,” she said, smiling up at him.

What happened next felt like a dream.

“Melinda —,” I said, “stop!”

But Melinda just turned and winked at me, as if to say, “you know you wanted this. You know you’re curious.”

It was true. I *was* curious.

Carlo pulled down his pants, revealing silk boxer shorts. I guess it’s natural to want to embrace luxury when you get out of prison. I wondered who had paid for that underwear.

I could already see the huge, thick snake tensed under the strain of the fabric as if ready to strike. Melinda reached up under the waistband and it flopped out in front of her, slowly becoming more and more erect until it pointed out at a 45 degree angle. His balls were the size of large plums, and Melinda took one hand and cradled them gently as the other hand found his shaft.

She looked up at him, biting her lip in desire as she smeared precum down his shaft.

“Oh, fuck, Mel,” he moaned, reaching down and stroking her hair, “it’s been forever since I’ve been touched like this. It’s wonderful.”

I looked at his face. It was an expression of pure bliss. Complete sensitivity. In that moment, I felt happy for him. A man deprived of so many things for so long. Now given another chance to experience sensuality. To enjoy the simple pleasure of a handjob, something that most men stopped finding exciting after high school.

“God damn, I missed this,” said Melinda, smiling down at his cock and seeming to admire the way it spilled out of her hands.

She couldn’t even close them completely around his shaft. That’s how big he was.

Holding his rod with both hands, she spat onto his cockhead. This was a crude, almost pornographic move that I’d never seen Melinda do before. I didn’t know where she’d learned to do something like that.

“Oh God, Mel,” groaned Carlo, “you know I love that. Fuck.”

She started jerking him with both hands now, up and down on his big cock. Fast, then slow again. She was taking her time. Enjoying the moment. And letting Carlo enjoy it, too.

“I wanna,” he gasped, his face turning an angry red, “I wanna come on your tits, ok?”

She turned to me and grinned, then looked up at him again.

“Ok,” she said, smiling.

“Honey,” she said, looking at me, “would you come over here and help me with the straps?”

She wanted *me* to help her take her teddy off so that she didn’t have to let go of her lover’s cock for even a single minute?

This seemed degrading. Humiliating. Certainly not something any self–respecting man would do.

Then again, a self–respecting man would have drawn the line a long time ago.

I sighed, my cock a rod of steel in my pants, and stood, shuffling over to Melinda and fumbling with the clasps on her teddy straps. First one came

off, then the other. Melinda lifted her arms a bit, and the fabric fell down around her stomach, revealing her two gorgeous breasts.

"Oh God," moaned Carlo, his eyes finally falling on what must have been the subject of his dreams for many years, "yes, Mel. Stroke it. It's just like that time on the beach…"

I didn't know what time he was referring to, but I could only imagine that it had ended in a similar fashion.

Melinda grinned, pressing his shaft between her tits. It fit perfectly: a huge cock for a huge rack. If I had ever tried a similar act, my cock would have simply disappeared between them.

Pushing her breasts together, she rubbed them up and down on his shaft.

"Oh yes, babe. Just like that."

I fell back into the chair, stroking myself now as I watched the show. Carlo was close, it was clear. Frankly, it was amazing that he hadn't already shot his load already, given how long it had been since a woman had touched him.

The booze I had chugged was starting to go to my head now. The room was spinning a bit.

In almost slow motion, I watched as thick ropes of semen shot from Carlo's cock, hitting Melinda on the chin and chest, and then absolutely coating her breasts. She looked completely debauched. Like some kind of big–breasted Italian porn starlet.

I didn't know exactly what I had expected for our first night together in the new house, but it certainly wasn't *this*.

I closed my eyes, intending to rest just for a moment.

Suddenly, however, darkness overtook me.

Chapter 17

When I woke up, I was still sitting in the armchair, my pants around my ankles. My mouth was dry and my head was pounding.

I sat up straight, then tried to stand. I was still a little drunk, and had a woozy feeling in my stomach. At first, I forgot where I was. Was I back in our rental?

Then, slowly but surely, all of the memories of the last 24 hours came seeping back into my consciousness.

Damn. It was undeniable, now. I had to face the facts: I was a cuckold. There was nothing I could do about the fact that my wife was heavily involved with another man.

I put my head between my legs to try to stop the room from spinning.

I could throw Melinda out. Any court would have to side with me, right? I didn't know anything about divorce law in Texas. I never thought I'd *need* to know anything about it. But she'd obviously been unfaithful.

Yes, I could throw her out right now. And probably go through a complicated, messy divorce.

I'd never see her again.

I'd never see Carlo again.

She and Carlo would be happy. And I could probably find someone else. Someone who wouldn't cheat with her old boyfriend.

As I sat there in the darkened room, these thoughts coursing through my head pounding head, I suddenly became aware of a noise.

A faint moaning was coming from the upstairs.

Of course. They were still here. Where else would they have gone? What else would they be doing?

They were making love. With me out of the way, they were free to do what they had wanted to do from the start.

I stood up slowly. I knew that what was awaiting me upstairs in the bedroom was a truth that I'd long tried to hide from. A truth as terrible as it was titillating. The truth behind all of those diary entries, those letters and

the small details I'd managed to extract from Melinda when I'd gone down on her over the past few months.

The truth of Melinda's desire for Carlo, and his desire for her.

The truth of their love.

When the room had stopped spinning around me, I took a couple of cautious steps forward, and was happy to see that I was able to walk. I went up to the foot of the steps and grabbed the handrail, ascending the steps carefully, one at a time, taking pains not to lose my balance.

Melinda's moaning was getting louder, and not only because I was getting closer.

"Oh yes. Oh Carlo…"

Finally I was at the top of the stairs. I turned towards the master bedroom, expecting that they had gone there, but was surprised when it became clear that they were in the guest room.

I walked over to the doorway of the guest room, not particularly concerned about being noticed. After all, they knew I was in the house, and clearly didn't care if I saw them.

The door was already open a crack, so I gave it a gentle push with my hand to reveal the scene behind it.

There, lit by the light of the moon that streamed through the glass walls, was Melinda, sitting astride Carlo, who was on his back on a mattress on the floor.

I shook my head slowly. It was almost funny. This was just like their first time. The time at Carlo's uncle's place that I'd read about in Melinda's diary.

They were on a mattress on the floor, and she was on top.

She was moving slowly, gliding up and down his long, thick shaft.

God, I thought *no wonder she prefers him. What woman wouldn't, honestly?*.

I didn't make any attempt to hide the fact that I was watching them. I stood there in the doorway as the couple made love.

“God, Carlo. I missed this so much. I thought about you every time… After every visit…”

His hands were on her breasts, running all over them. Then they were on her hips and her ass as she continued her gentle bouncing on his cock.

“It feels so good,” she moaned, “so right. I thought I’d lost you forever. I can’t believe you’re back with me…”

“I know, Mel,” he sighed, “it’s perfect.”

“God, babe,” she groaned, “I want you to fuck me now. I want you to take control. I need it. I haven’t had a real man take charge in so long.”

“Of course, babe.”

She dismounted, but before he could get up, she dropped to her knees in on the mattress and began to fellate him, running her tongue up and down his shaft, kissing it, holding it in her hands and stroking it.

He was as long as her whole head. I couldn’t believe that she was able to take something so big inside her, but I’d just watched her do it with ease, and seeing was believing.

“Mel, babe. You’re so good to me,” he moaned, running his fingers through her hair, “you don’t know how many nights I fell asleep dreaming of this when I was on the inside. Night after night after night…”

He sighed, both of his hands on her head now.

She pulled off his shaft and looked up at him.

“You can go harder, babe. I can take it. I want you to use me. Take out all that frustration. All that time without a woman around…”

“Fuck,” he groaned, pushing her head back down on his cock.

If his actions were any guide he did, indeed, intend to give it to her harder. I watched in amazement as his shaft disappeared further and further down Melinda’s throat. I could have sworn that I could see a bulge forming in her neck, each time he sunk it deeper, but it might have just been a trick of the moonlight, or lack thereof.

After a few minutes of this — Melinda’s gurgles filled the room — he pulled her off, finally.

“Now I want to be inside you again,” he said, slowly standing.

If either of them had noticed me there, standing in the shadow of the doorway, they hadn't said anything about it or given any kind of sign.

"Yes, sir," Melinda said, "just tell me where you want me."

He simply gestured for her to turn around. She dropped to all fours on the bed and rotated so that she was looking directly at me. To my surprise, however, she gave no sign of noticing that I was standing there. It could have been that the shadows were really that dark. Or else she just wasn't expecting to see me there, so she didn't.

In any case, I was now staring directly into the eyes of my wife as she waited there, bathed in moonlight, ready to receive her lover's phallus.

He grunted and then let out a long sigh as he found her wet hole. Then he began to fuck her. Slowly, with long, smooth strokes. Giving her the whole length, every time.

He slapped her ass.

"Oh yeah, baby," she moaned, "you know I love that rough stuff."

"Yeah you do," he grunted, smacking the other side of her butt, "you missed this, didn't you?"

"You know I did."

"He can't fuck you like I can, can he?"

"No one ever could," she said, her voice hoarse with desire, "only you, Carlo. It's all yours."

He laced his fingers through her hair and pulled her head back.

"You're damn right it is. Everything here is mine, now."

It struck me as a strange thing to say, like he wasn't just talking about Melinda, but about the house and everything in it. Was he laying claim to my entire *life*?

Maybe he was. Maybe that was exactly what he was doing.

My head was still pounding from all the booze, but my cock was hard again, and I began to stroke myself as I watched Carlo start to fuck Melinda faster and faster. Her moans became louder and louder, more and more crazed, until she was begging him not to stop what he was doing in an

incredibly desperate tone. She was totally beholden to him, dependent on him.

Completely submissive.

She was going to come very soon. I watched in awe as my wife approached a tremendous climax. Her eyes closed, she bit her lip and began tremble.

“That’s it,” said Carlo, “just let it come.”

It was like he was coaching her through a difficult task. And indeed, the look on her face made it seem difficult. It was like no look I’d ever seen her have before.

“I,” she gasped, as he continued to pound her harder, pinning her to the mattress as she collapsed forward on her stomach, “love. You.”

She loved him. That was it.

She bucked her hips back up towards him, riding out the climax. Just then, he pulled her head up and around towards him, gently and tenderly, giving her a long kiss.

The way their tongues intertwined, so delicately and sensually, was painful to watch. I could hear every tiny smacking sound, every minute moan, and the amount of light coming through the still–curtainless glass of the outside wall was more than enough to illuminate this explicit, tender scene.

His cock, long and thick as Melinda’s arm, was still buried halfway in her pussy.

“That was incredible,” she said, “I can’t believe how good you feel. How much I’ve missed this. How I’ve needed this.”

“Not nearly as much as I missed you,” said Carlo, “you weren’t the one behind bars all that time.”

“Sometimes it felt like I was,” she replied.

My throat, already dry from the dehydration caused by excessive alcohol consumption, now felt like I had swallowed broken glass. To hear my wife declare her love to Carlo was devastating. But to hear her describe her marriage to me as a prison completely annihilated what was left of my self–esteem.

But it was also absolutely titillating. My cock was hard again, and I was stroking as I watched them kiss. Somehow, despite the silence of the room, they still hadn't noticed me.

It was as if nothing else existed for them expect for the other person. And their love.

Finally, the kiss broke, and Carlo slowly slid out of her.

"You didn't come yet, did you?"

Melinda's voice was concerned.

"Not yet, babe."

"Good," she said, "I need your cum. I need it inside me."

"Lay on your back," he directed.

She flipped onto her back, and I watched as he eased himself into her from above, spreading her legs as he bottomed out inside.

"God damn you're thick," she gasped, "I can't believe it. Every time you slip it inside me it's like the very first time. I love it so much."

He bent down and kissed her once more, then propped himself up on his palms and began to fuck her. Hard.

Her large breasts bounced in time with the strokes of his cock, which came faster and faster now. He was growling and grunting in exertion as he pounded her pussy mercilessly.

"God yes," she moaned, "I want your cum. Shoot it all inside me. Give me a baby. I need it so fucking bad…"

"I love it when you talk like that," he said, his voice low and gravely, "I thought every night about doing this to you in jail."

"Oh God. Do it to me, *please*!"

He closed his eyes and exhaled sharply. I watched as his entire lower body twitched as he held himself deep inside my wife, filling her with his potent seed.

It just seemed so perfect. So natural and right.

They belonged together. They'd suffered so much by being apart. Who could deny that they were deeply, truly in love?

Carlo bent down and gave Melinda another long kiss.

“That was so much better than the turkey baster,” she said, laughing a little, “I can’t believe that we even tried that!”

“It was your idea,” he said, “you were the one crazy enough to try to get pregnant while I was still behind bars. But I’ve gotta say: being with you like this also beats jerking off in a condom and sneaking it to you in the visitors’ room. I prefer to deliver the goods the old–fashioned way.”

He kissed her again.

“Well, you’re going to have a *lot* of opportunity to do that now that you’re out.”

“I know I will,” he said.

“Oh God,” she sighed, “come here. Hold me.”

My erection had slowly gone slack during this final revelation. She’d been trying to get pregnant by smuggling his sperm out of the jail and then injecting it into herself with the baster I’d found during the move.

It all made sense. Her cutting me off from sex. Her strange behavior. All of it.

She’d been trying to get pregnant by Carlo this entire time.

As I turned away from the sight of the lovebirds cuddling on the mattress in the moonlight, my toe caught on the corner of a box that was sitting along the wall in the hallway, making a loud creak.

“Stevie?”

Melinda sounded concerned.

“Stevie, is that you?”

I didn’t say anything. I didn’t even move for several seconds.

“Yes,” I said finally, “it’s me.”

Carlo sat up in bed.

“What the fuck, man? We you *watching* us? You little faggot, I ought to…”

Melinda stopped him, putting her small hand on his bulging bicep.

“Calm down, big guy. He’s not worth going back to jail for.”

“Stevie,” she said, “could you be a good boy and go get us a pitcher of water and some glasses? I’m really thirsty, and I bet Carlo is, too.”

“Alright,” I said, “I’ll get the water. But then we need to talk. Just you and me. Alone.”

“Sure, Stevie,” she said, “sure. Whatever you say.”

I went back down to the kitchen and then returned with a pitcher of water and two glasses. I poured one for Carlo and handed it to him.

“Get out,” I said.

“Thanks, Stevie boy,” he said, giving me a gloating grin.

He closed the door behind him gently, and I heard his footsteps down the hall and then on the stairs.

We were alone, just me and Melinda.

“Stevie,” she said, “how much did you see?”

I sat down on the mattress next to her.

“I saw enough,” I said, “I saw everything, really. I mean, much more than I ever would have cared to see.”

“Are you sure about that?” she asked, grinning at me.

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“It means that I can’t help but notice how turned on you get watching Carlo and I together.”

“I do not…”

“Then why were you jerking off downstairs while I was jerking him off? Are you going to deny it now?”

“Are *you* going to deny that you broke our marriage vows? Multiple times? Not only by bringing Carlo into my house, but also smuggling his *sperm* out of jail to try to get pregnant with?”

She didn’t say anything for a moment.

“What kind of wife are you? What the hell would your mother say if she knew this was how our marriage was ending? You together with the

thug you fucked in high school…"

"Don't you dare talk about Carlo that way," she said, pointing her finger at me threateningly and then drawing back her hand to slap me.

Her nostrils were flared. She was beautiful when she was angry.

"I don't see how you can possibly try to take the moral high ground now," I said, "not after what you've done. In our house. In the new home that we worked on so hard together."

I couldn't help it now. Tears were pouring down my cheeks, betraying the calm tone that I struggled to keep in my voice.

She slowly lowered her hand, a look of sympathy spreading across her face.

"Stevie," she said, "come here."

She cradled my head against her chest, stroking the tears as they fell down my face. I was suddenly filled with an incredible longing.

"Try to understand, babe. Carlo and I were meant for each other. We're soulmates. My relationship to you became impossible for me once I found out that there was still a possibility for Carlo and I to be together again. It's not about you. It's not about *you* at all. It's about me and Carlo."

"Is that supposed to make me feel better?"

She was silent for a long time, stroking my hair. The smell of their sex filled my nostrils.

"Stevie," she said, "let me make it up to you."

"How could you possibly do that?"

"Let's just be together for a minute," she said, "just you and me."

I turned to her, breathing in her scent. It was intoxicating. I couldn't help myself. Even after her momentous betrayal had been completely laid bare, I was still attracted to my wife.

I moved in for a kiss. She dodged out of the way.

"No, Stevie. That's not for you anymore."

She ran her fingers through my hair as I let out an agonized moan. The longing was palpable.

“You can still kiss me,” she said, pushing me down gently, “just not there. Kiss *these* lips.”

I slid down the bed, knowing what was expected of me. It was so humiliating, but so right. So natural.

She sighed as I buried my head in her wet cunt, already tasting the first thick gobs of Carlo’s sperm.

“That’s a good boy,” she said, “clean me out. The sperm I need is already inside my womb, impregnating me. I hope.”

I moaned into her lower lips as I lapped up Carlo’s cum, gagging a bit as some of it landed on my taste buds. I tried to hold my nose shut so the smell — pungent and a bit musky — wouldn’t be quite as strong.

“Don’t worry,” she laughed, “you’ll acquire a taste for it. I’ll make sure you get plenty of practice.”

I groaned in surprise, but she held my head down between her legs preventing me from asking for clarification.

“You didn’t think I was going to let you go, did you, Stevie boy? I need you here. *We* need you here.”

I mumbled a few anguished syllables into her wet, sloppy cunt as I continued to scoop her lover’s semen into my mouth with my tounge.

“Why would I want to get a divorce and have to sell off this lovely house to pay you off? After all the time we spent planning it? After all the effort I put into choosing furniture and decorations?”

I slipped a finger into her cunt now, teasing her g–spot with it.

“Oh, Stevie,” she groaned, grabbing a handful of my hair so hard that it hurt, “down here now.”

She pushed my head lower.

“I think Carlo got a little on my butthole. You’ll be happy to clean that off too, won’t you?”

Eagerly, I dove between her cheeks with my tongue, probing her tight backdoor and sucking out the last traces of Carlo’s cum. She had been right: plenty of it had spilled there, too.

“I *know* that Carlo will get me pregnant again,” she sighed, “and this time, the baby’s going to make it. I know it will. I’ll be under so much less stress at home. Carlo will be out of jail. He can take care of the house. He’s very handy. You’ll be making the money to support the three of us. Carlo and I can take a nice vacation this summer. If we’re lucky, I’ll be in my second trimester, which is the best time to travel. Heck, maybe we’ll make it back to the old country…”

At this point, I pushed a thumb into her pussy while I continued to tongue her ass. I may not have realized it consciously, but it was at least partially an attempt at getting her to be quiet for a moment, to stop twisting the knife that she’d already plunged into my heart.

It worked. Melinda began to whimper softly, responding to my touch.

“That’s it…a little lower…right there…don’t stop…”

Then, there were no more words at all. Only her cries of ecstasy as she approached another climax. Despite all that had happened between us, I was still incredibly attracted to my wife, and I still loved nothing more than bringing her to climax.

Just before I did so, however, I had another question to ask her.

I pulled my thumb away, waiting for her to say something.

“Stevie,” she pleaded, “what? Don’t stop, babe… be a good boy…”

I pulled my tongue away from her rosebud as well.

“I want to know something,” I said, “tell me the truth.”

“Steve. Come *on*.”

The tone in her voice was adorable. This was my compensation for being cucked, I guess: getting to watch my wife beg for me to eat her ass and finger her.

“How long have you known that Carlo was in Texas?”

“Wha–?”

She grabbed my hair, trying to push me back down, but I resisted.

“How long, Melinda?”

“A year.”

My heart sank. That was about how long we'd been working on the plans for the house together, give or take. Had she been hatching this idea the entire time? Was this ever supposed to have been a house just for the two of us?

"How long have you been visiting him?"

"No, Stevie," she said, bucking her hips up, trying to catch my thumb again.

"How long?"

"A year."

She let out a long moan.

"Please, Stevie. You had me so close."

"When did the turkey baster stuff start. When did you start trying to get pregnant with his baby?"

She shook her head and bit her lip. She wasn't going to tell me.

I went down and licked her ass a few more times, rubbing her gspot with my thumb as I did so. She began to tremble.

"Don't stop…" she gasped breathlessly.

I continued my efforts, moaning softly into her ass, letting her know how much I was enjoying servicing her.

Her cries were louder now, almost as loud as they had been when Carlo was fucking her. They must have been audible outside the room. Was he going to burst in and break us up?

For a moment, images of Carlo punching me out raced through my head. He seemed reformed, but he'd done hard time, and the old Carlo from the streets wasn't completely dead. I knew that.

At the same time, Melinda was still — technically, at least — my wife, so could he really be upset about me pleasing her?

Melinda's hips were rolling rhythmically into my mouth and hand. She was controlling the tempo. Prolonging her pleasure. Climbing slowly to the top of the mountain.

Was she thinking of Carlo? Thinking of how it had felt to finally have him inside her, the *real* him and not a turkey baster?

Was there any chance — any chance at all — that she still loved me, that I was still important to her sex life in some way?

I stopped again, pulling back from her completely.

She let out an angry grunt.

"Damn it, Stevie!"

She pushed a hand down over her pussy, determined to finish the job herself, but I stopped her.

"No," I said, "you're not getting off that easily."

"What," she moaned, "what do you want?"

"Tell me when it started. When did you start trying to get pregnant with his baby?"

"Ohh…," she moaned, fighting to escape from my grasp, "do you really want to know?"

"Yes."

I was firm in my determination to finally know the truth. To understand everything that had been going on in her life (and, by extension, my own) for the past few months.

"Last year. A few months before Christmas."

Right around that time that she cut me off from sex, in other words. She must have wanted to ensure that there was no way that I could accidentally be the one to get her pregnant, no matter how slim the chances.

I thought about the times since then that I'd gone down on her. Had I been eating Carlo's sperm the entire time?

I realized, with mounting disgust, that this had most likely been the case.

I felt my cock go instantly limp. It was as if it were surrendering, once and for all, finally accepting the truth of my place in the sexual hierarchy.

I was never going to be able to satisfy Melinda with my penis. That much was clear. But maybe I still had a shot at staying in her life.

"Thanks for telling me the truth," I said, releasing her wrist.

“Mm–hmm,” she moaned, reaching up for my head, which was already on its way back down to lick her cunt and ass once more.

“That’s it, Stevie. Right there. Oh God. Oh God. I’m…I’m coming!!”

Even though, given the circumstances, my accomplishment was bittersweet, I still couldn’t help but be proud of myself for triggering Melinda’s climax.

Maybe I was good for something after all. Maybe, by accepting my place in the sexual hierarchy, I could still fulfill some of her needs beyond just the financial ones that I knew she was taking for granted.

I still had a pounding headache and I was absolutely parched. I got up and went to the kitchen to look for a glass of water, and saw Carlo sleeping on the couch in the living room, snoring loudly.

At least he’s not in our bed, I thought.

I went back up to the room where Melinda was. She was fast asleep. I stared at her face in the moonlight for a few moments.

She was so beautiful. So lovely. Despite what she’d put me through, I loved her more than ever. I lowered myself to the mattress, gently putting my arms around her and spooning her as she slept. Soon, I was fast asleep, too.

Epilogue

The next morning, I awoke to empty arms. My hangover, unfortunately, had not diminished over the few hours of sleep that I'd gotten. I sat up, scanning the empty room, the details of the night before slowly coming back to me.

I felt a deep sense of shame for what I'd allowed to happen in my house. With my wife. But at the same time, I was once again aroused at the memory of Carlo and Melinda making love.

I stood up and walked down the hall. The master bedroom was empty. I stood for a moment at the foot of the stairs.

"Oh yeah, Mel. Just like that. God that's good…"

Carlo's low baritone came wafting up the staircase. I could only guess what my wife was doing to make him say those things.

"You missed this, didn't you? You missed my cock."

I walked down a few steps, and looked into the living room, where Carlo was seated on the couch, his legs spread apart as Melinda knelt between them, worshiping his cock with her mouth.

Her cheeks bulged as she took him between her lips, while stroking him with both hands at once.

"That's it, Mel. Get it nice and hard. I'm about to try to give you a baby again…"

She was sliding his shaft deeper and deeper with each stroke. Soon, she was taking almost the whole thing down her throat. It was absolutely obscene. I couldn't believe that she was able to do it. But there was the evidence: a sizable bulge in her throat.

I stood on the steps, rooted to the spot. Like the night before, I was filled with a sense of inadequacy. I was aroused, but also unable to get hard.

"Where's that husband of yours?" asked Carlo, "I'm hungry. Didn't you say he'd cook us breakfast?"

Melinda stopped sucking his cock long enough to catch her breath, then she called up the stairs.

“Stevie, can you make us something to eat?”

Coming to my senses, I managed to reply.

“Yeah,” I said, “I’m coming downstairs now.”

I hoped that my warning would cause them to stop, but I knew that it probably wouldn’t have that effect at all.

I paced down the steps slowly, still hearing the sounds of Melinda slobbering on Carlo’s cock. When I got to the bottom of the stairs, Carlo looked at me, grinning as Melinda took his cock down he throat.

“God she’s good at that. You didn’t teach her that, did you, Stevie?”

He winked.

I was defeated.

“I’m going to make breakfast,” I said, “do you want something?”

“Oh, hell yeah! Not only do you let your wife suck my dick, you’re also going to cook for me! This is the kind of service you can’t get anywhere else!”

“I think we’ve got eggs,” I said.

“How about some bacon to go along with that, big guy?”

“We don’t have any.”

He stared at me, as if confused, while Melinda’s head bobbed up and down on his pole.

“You’ve got a car, right, Stevie? Why don’t you go and get some?”

“Alright,” I said, “let me get dressed first.”

I walked back upstairs.

When I came back down, Melinda was squatting in front of him, bouncing up and down on his cock as he penetrated her from behind. It was a position that never would have worked with my endowment. Carlo sat there as Melinda did the work.

He looked at her butt as she slid up and down on his pole.

“God that’s tight. Fuck, that feels good, Mel.”

He gave her ass a playful slap.

“That’s just what I need.”

Then he looked up at me.

“Where’s that bacon, Stevie boy? Get outta here!”

I nodded, walking slowly to the door.

***

When I came back home, I heard the sound of water coming from the upstairs. Someone was in the shower. Maybe both of them.

I set about the task of preparing breakfast with determination. I realized that I had a choice to make, indeed, that I had already made it.

If I was going to leave Melinda, I should have done so long ago. I could still do it, however, and, if I had any self–respect left, I would throw the bacon on the floor and walk out.

But I just couldn’t do it. I couldn’t walk out of the house that I’d designed myself. The home that I’d saved for and dreamed of for years.

And more than that, I couldn’t walk away from Melinda. Even if she had made it clear that she didn’t have the same feelings for me as she did for Carlo, I couldn’t help the fact that I loved to see her happy.

I still wanted to be part of her life, even if that meant taking a backseat to Carlo.

In that moment, frying up the bacon for Carlo, I made my decision: I would accept my new place in the marriage. I would accept the fact that my wife was in love with someone else. I would stick around, if they let me.

***

And that was exactly what happened. Carlo moved in with us. We didn’t talk directly about the new arrangement, we just fell into a pattern that was remarkably close to the one that Melinda had talked about that first night in the guest room when I had performed “clean–up” duties after Carlo had inseminated her: I went to work early every morning. Melinda got up a little later, and (I have to assume), made love with Carlo. Then she went to work, too.

Carlo really was quite handy. In a few days, he’d arranged all of the furniture where we wanted it, and he’d fixed a couple of minor issues left

by the builders. I had to grudgingly admit, it was nice having him around, and he really did do his part to help out with the chores around the house. Except for earning any money at all or paying for absolutely anything. But that was perhaps too much to expect from someone who had just finished a lengthy prison sentence.

At first, we continued the fiction that Melinda and I were somehow still a couple. Melinda and I went to bed in the master bedroom every night, and Carlo slept in the guest bedroom. Sometimes, I'd wake up in the middle of the night and the place next to mine would be empty.

On those nights, I'd tiptoe out into the hallway and hope that they'd left the door to the guestroom open so that I could catch a glimpse of them in the act of making love. On those nights, those stolen moments when they were unaware that I was watching, I caught a glimpse of something absolutely wonderful.

The flame of a love that had been burning so long that it had overcome incredible odds and incredible distances. A love that was tender, intimate and soulful, even when the sex was hot, passionate and somewhat rough.

They never explicitly gave me permission to watch them make love, but they also didn't take precautions to make sure I didn't. It seemed that we had reached a silent agreement, a truce that would allow everything to continue more or less like it had before.

On very rare occasions, it was as if Melinda had known that I was watching. She would call me into the bedroom and tell me to clean her up.

These were the only truly intimate moments that we shared together, because Carlo clearly didn't like it when we were alone, and did everything he could to prevent it. He also made sure that Melinda covered herself when she was around me, which meant that seeing her in her panties (let alone naked) became something of a rare treat. Something that I longed for.

So those moments, when she lay there on the bed, spread, wet and swollen from being ravaged by Carlo's thick cock, were some of my favorite times that we were together. It was all that was left of all of the years I'd cherished with her, the years during which she'd been carrying a torch for Carlo.

I thought back to our wedding day (and our wedding night). How beautiful Melinda had looked. How bright our future together seemed.

Now, here I was: eating another man's cream pie while my wife writhed below me.

It was *exactly* where I wanted to be.

***

Three months almost to the day that Carlo got out of prison, I got a phone call from Melinda around 4:00PM while I was at work.

"Stevie," she said, her voice strangely giddy, "I just wanted you to know. You're the only one besides Carlo who knows it, but —"

"What?"

"I'm pregnant!!"

"Really?"

I couldn't help but get excited. After such a long time waiting and hoping, Melinda was finally pregnant. Carlo had managed to pull of the trick for the second time. Maybe it really had been me that was the problem.

"Yep," she said, "I just took the test. Actually, I couldn't believe it, so I took two. It's really true. It's really happening. Oh, Stevie, I can't believe it! You've got to come home early tonight to celebrate with all of us. I'm going to cook pasta alla Norma. Can you get a bottle of wine on the way home? I'm not drinking of course, but I know that you and Carlo will want to. Oh, Stevie. You're going to love having a kid in the house. I know you're going to do such a good job taking care of all of us…"

And so, once again, I found myself racing home in Austin's rush hour traffic. This time, I wasn't going home to make love to my ovulating wife.

This time, having accepted my place in the sexual hierarchy, I was headed home to help her celebrate the start of something new: the creation of a new life with Carlo, her old flame.

THE END

Thanks for reading!

Dear Reader,

Thank you so much for purchasing or borrowing this book! Every time someone buys my book it helps me support myself as a writer and allows me to produce even more of your favorite smutty size-queen, cuckold, BBC and hotwife stories. It is truly appreciated.

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— XX

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Also by Cynthia Sizemore

HER FIRST BULL: JESSICA

When Alan's beautiful, voluptuous wife Jessica takes a new job with a law firm in the city she grew up in, a mysterious man from her past suddenly reenters her life.

Mark Howard isn't just the same man who wooed Jessica when she was young and innocent, he's also her new boss. Not only that, he's the consummate alpha: a ruggedly handsome, successful attorney and war veteran. The perfect dominant masculine counterpart to Jessica's fragile femininity.

Alan, who harbors a secret hotwife fetish, presses his wife for information about her past connection to Mark. Jessica is reluctant to reveal the depth of her emotional attachment to her ex, but gradually some of the naughty details of their encounters begin to trickle out.

Specifically, one particular outsized detail that makes Mark an extremely memorable lover. Soon, all Alan can think about is the possibility of Jessica rekindling her romance with Mark, but this time with him watching as they go all the way…

As Jessica grows more intimate with her new boss (and old flame), Alan helps overcome every obstacle in the way of making their shared hotwife fantasy a reality.

But will Alan be able to handle the sight of another man turning his young, fertile wife into a size queen, and him into a cuckold? Will the three characters be able to balance their individual passions, or will Alan be simply swept aside and replaced by the better man forever?

HER FIRST BULL: JESSICA is a 50,000-word, explicit, raw and emotionally poignant wife-sharing cuckold novel. It is a stand-alone installment in the HER FIRST BULL series by Cynthia Sizemore.

HER FIRST BULL: REBECCA

After his seemingly innocent wife Rebecca relates an uncharacteristically hot hook–up story from her college days, Louis can't stop thinking about watching her with a well–endowed lover.

Rebecca is reluctant to entertain her husband's desires at first, but when her old flame Chris comes into the picture, she suddenly becomes much more open to exploring a cuckold relationship. It doesn't hurt that Chris is tall, handsome, dominant, and, most of all, incredibly hung. Before she knows it, Rebecca is a confirmed size queen.

After several hot encounters between Chris and Rebecca, the couple's marriage is put to the test. Louis finds himself torn between the pleasure he gets from watching his wife and her lover and the incredible jealousy he feels as the two slowly grow more and more emotionally intimate. To make matters worse, Chris and Louis strike up a friendship of their own. How can Lou resent Chris for taking his wife when he can see for himself what a nice guy Chris is?

HER FIRST BULL: Book 1 – Rebecca is an explicit, raw, and emotionally poignant 22,000–word novella. It is an exploration of the pleasures and pitfalls of cuckolding, the merits of large men and the emotional minefield that awaits couples who venture into unknown territory.

It is also a love story. A tale of two people who find their soulmates in the last place they expect…

HER SECRET BOYFRIEND

Chloe is an amazing woman: young, intelligent, beautiful, fertile and totally inexperienced.

So when Ben meets her, he knows he has to clean up his life. He stops drinking, finishes his degree, gets a good job as an engineer, and asks her to marry him.

To his surprise, she says yes! Ben is overjoyed: the woman that he loves loves him back.

There's only one thing standing between this couple and a perfect life together: Ben's fantasy of watching his innocent wife, totally unprotected, making love to a well-endowed, dominant man.

Even though he knows it's wrong, Ben can't help but encourage Chloe to indulge his cuckold fantasies. When Ben's old friend John enters the picture, Ben's wildest dreams come one step closer to becoming a reality. Soon, John and Chloe are seeing a lot of each other. But how far does their relationship really go?

Can Ben and Chloe's marriage survive HER SECRET BOYFRIEND?

HER SECRET BOYFRIEND (ca. 52,000 words) is an explicit novel for adults only, exploring the emotional and physical pitfalls of cuckolding and the hotwife lifestyle.

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