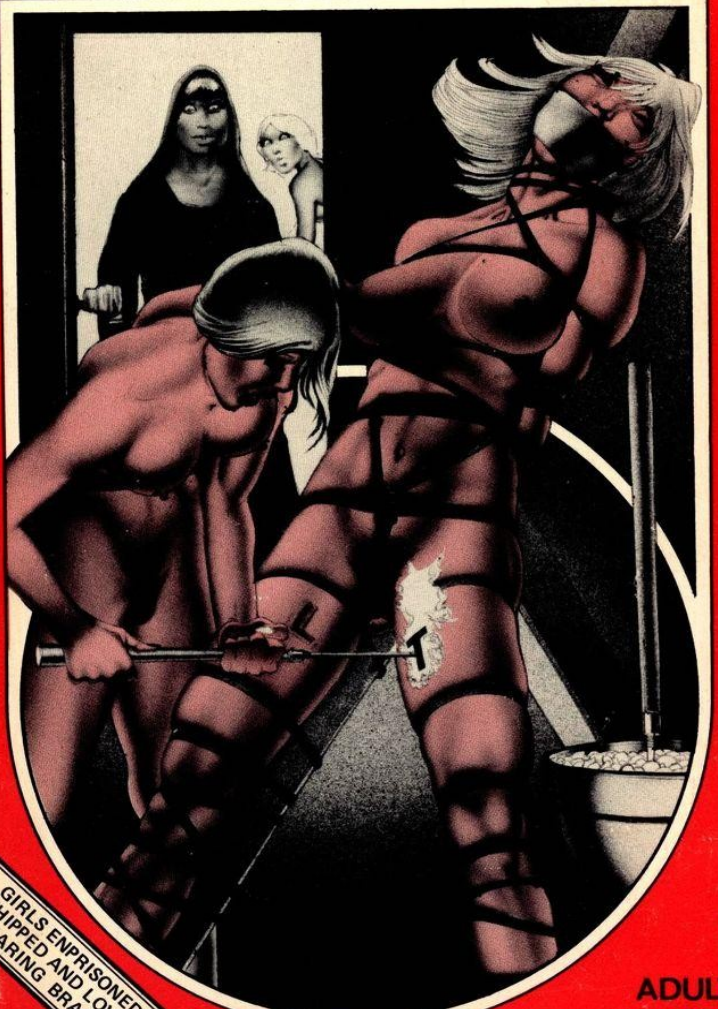
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CAPTIVE of the PRIORY



GIRLS ENPRISONED! WHIPPED AND LOVED BEARING BRANDS!

ADULTS ONLY

HIT 111

Captive of the Priory

by F. E. Campbell

Note: All the characters and events are fictitious. No resemblance to real persons is intended or should be inferred.

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Belinda fought hard to keep back the tears. That was one of Sister Serena's precepts, that since punishment was good for her soul a girl shouldn't weep over it. But it was hard to be brave. She had never been sent to Mr. Pennyfeather yet when it had not hurt terribly. A girl was never quite sure what that Tool Shed of his would provide. It was a versatile place, much larger than a tool shed needed to be. It did not have that many tools in it either… not garden tools.

She wished she had the stoic heroism of some of the older girls when they marched to where she was going or were sent upstairs to one of the sisters. Hyacinth was her favourite. Hyacinth was a sort of heroine who stalked disdainfully to Mr. Pennyfeather's tool shed, or rebelliously upstairs for a session with The Sisters. She never cried first, but sometimes when she came back her eyes would show the tell-tale signs. Hyacinth was quite different from Mignon. Belinda liked Mignon too. Mignon laughed a lot. Belinda found the difference between the two older girls quite puzzling. It only showed when they'd been caught out in something and had to go and visit Mr. Pennyfeather or maybe Sister Veronica. Mignon always stepped off jauntily with her hips swinging a bit more than usual and with a small knowing smile on her lips and very bright eyes. Only sometimes were her eyes red when she returned. Belinda sighed: there was so much to learn about growing up in The Priory.

Belinda wasn't sure about The Priory itself. It wasn't quite a Convent and it wasn't quite a school. Girls went to The Priory if they were orphans, or if their parents were far away, or if they hadn't been popular somewhere else. Sometimes they were there because they had been 'in trouble'. Belinda was not sure about that trouble. It was whispered in the lower school it meant The Law, the police, maybe prison! Terribly exciting, but probably not true. Hyacinth was much too lovely for anything like that…

The Prioress was infinitely remote. You saw her only when you needed a most serious talking to. At such times you addressed her as Mother Superior. She was very wise. It was The Prioress who used a strange word Belinda did not understand. It was in reference to Lady Hipple and her husband, old Lord Hipple that this word cropped up. The Prioress spoke of them as 'The Seigniory', which as far as Belinda could discover meant that they owned everything. The Priory saw a good deal of Lady Hipple.

Lady Hipple took an inquisitive interest in what she described as 'her girls'.

It was nice, Belinda reflected wryly, that she was going to Mr. Pennyfeather's Tool Shed during class. It was terribly shame-making when a girl had to traverse the halls and the garden with all the others watching and knowing. They weren't all unkind, of course, but there would be some rude suggestions and a lot of snickering. After all, why not. It was a bit laughable as long as it was not you yourself

who carried the shameful note that Mr. Pennyfeather would read and study as though it was a summons from the Queen.

As usual, Mr. Pennyfeather was not in the Tool Shed. It was part of her penance that a girl must search the Grounds to enlist the attention of the vehicle of her penalty. Being, primarily, the Gardener the object of her quest might be far afield. Today Belinda ran him to earth in the Formal garden where he was studiously plucking slugs from the Primulas and depositing them in a small tin can. He had the air of a man much beset upon.

Mr. Pennyfeather was lean, undistinguished, saturnine. There was about him something of a Basset hound minus the ears. He gave every thing he did a grave but faintly resentful attention as though feeling that caning a girl's bottom or de-slugging a rhododendron was ill befitting the dignity of an ex-sergeant major of The Imperial Forces. He performed a number of functions at The Priory and viewed The Prioress with much the same awe and deference he would have bestowed on a lieutenant colonel. He cultivated a number of affectations, most of which were recognised and giggled over by the damsels who were compelled to employ his skill.

Belinda always found this an awkward moment. It was never one that Mr. Pennyfeather failed to milk of any possible drama. He accepted the folded missive, read it as though not already aware of its message, then peered

down his long nose at the trembling child with the air of a man astounded by the iniquity of youth.

“A year in the Grenadiers is what you need, young lady.” He announced ponderously. “Smarten you up, so it would.”

Belinda shifted awkwardly and fell into step as best she could as they made their way through the pleasant garden to the fatal edifice. Her mind was active with but one interest. “How many this time, Mr. Pennyfeather?”

“That’s something you shouldn’t be asking. But I don’t mind telling you. It’s five with the cane. And lay ’em on hard, the note says.”

A girl never knew what was in those fatal notes. Undoubtedly much latitude existed for Mr. Pennyfeather to draw upon. But the salient fact was that you were there. The intent was inescapable.

“Free or fastened, young miss?”

This was a poser that Belinda had already considered. “I think I’d like to be fastened, sir, if you don’t mind. I did make such a fuss last time I was quite ashamed. If you remember, sir, you gave me two extra.”

“Aye, I ken it well. Self control is what ’ye need, lass.” He looked down at her shrewdly, “If it’s fastening ye wish then it’ll be a round half dozen well laid on.”

“Oh, thank you, Mr. Pennyfeather.” Belinda deemed it

politic to sound grateful. It was believed the ex-soldier was subject to flattery. “I’m really sorry to be all this trouble.”

“If it wasn’t you it ’ud be summat’ else.” The gardener affirmed without optimism. “Give ’ee a proper lacing, I will. Don’t you worry.”

Entering the Tool Shed, Belinda’s eyes immediately sought the altar of her contrition, a waist high pedestal with straps and a sparsely padded top. Mr. Pennyfeather’s features became more Basset Hound than ever as he contemplated the exercise now demanded of him. He sighed despondently. “Don’t have to tell ’ee what to do, do I?”

With the brave air of a Joan of Arc or Mary Queen of Scots Belinda arranged herself neatly with rear well outthrust. She hoped Mr. Pennyfeather would forget or forgive the most awful thing…

He did not forget. “What about them there drawers?” His tone was accusing.

He meant panties, of course. But panties or step-in’s were terms beyond his ken. In those latitudes in which he had fought and bled females had worn drawers or nothing. Mostly nothing Belinda suspected as she tugged away at her only armour and dropped the tiny object in a pathetic pile beside the scene of her martyrdom.

“Do you wish me to lift my skirt before I bend over, Mr. Pennyfeather?”

“I’ll attend to it.” The gardener assured her dourly as though unwilling to trust so sacred a function to juvenile hands.

Once more Belinda bent over the pedestal and arranged her hands and feet for Mr. Pennyfeather’s convenience. The arrangement of a girl’s skirt at this point was always a delicate matter. The girls much preferred to pull them up and over themselves, but were rarely allowed to. It was a perquisite of office he treasured and performed with ritualistic attention.

But first there was the matter of her immobility. With a sad sigh Mr. Pennyfeather knelt down and buckled the straps round wrists and ankles far tighter than Belinda thought needful. He then examined her skirt gloomily.

“Cause of half the trouble in the world.” He observed sagely, “Shorter than they orta’ be.”

He lifted the offending garment and peeled it up and back. He took his time, pulling up a bit of the front as well so as to achieve maximum exposure without actually taking it off. He even produced a safety pin so that it would stay well anchored. Having disposed of this important preliminary, he then moved to the next stage of Belinda’s embarrassment. He pushed a lever a couple of times so that the pedestal rose upwards thrusting the pad deeply into the hinge of the jack-knifed girl. Belinda gasped. She was always nervous about this bit. It thrust her into a position prob-

ably impossible without mechanical aid. She felt it pushing against her pubic hair. She envisioned her bottom blossoming up and out in outrageous flaunting. Another thrust of the lever and the tug on her wrists and ankles became alarming.

“Oh, Mr. Pennyfeather! Please, sir, it’s hurting. It’s awful tight.”

“Not half as much as it’s going to.” Mr. Pennyfeather managed the retort without either humour or satisfaction.

“Please, sir, let me down just a little bit.”

“No.”

The delinquent stole an upward glance. It was understood by his victims that Mr. Pennyfeather enjoyed this part of his work. He was, in short, a dirty old man to whom the caning of a girl’s bottom was a quiet ecstasy. Yet, looking at him now, Belinda saw only the sad Basset hound regard as though an ex-Grenadier’s duty must always be a painful thing. In their giggling afterwards the girls had agreed that his mournful manner did make their punishment easier to bear. He remained a Basset Hound to the end, without evidence of joy. It was possible the same technique that enabled an undertaker to evince a sorrow he did not feel as justification for tendering his bill.

“What have we got here!” Mr. Pennyfeather demanded as though startled.

Belinda knew what he referred to. In her strained exposed state it was understandable that some fronds of maiden pubic hair should protrude backwards to mar the virginity of the naked bottom. She suspected that more than her hair was demanding his attention. She kept a stoic silence as a callused finger thrust the offending wisps back between the tightly bound thighs. She even improved on the occasion by a bright: “Oh, thank you, sir!” As though genuinely grateful. It did no harm to butter him up a bit.

“A rag and a bone and a hank of hair.” Said Mr. Pennyfeather piously as though quoting scripture instead of Kipling.

“Yes, sir, I see what you mean.” Said Belinda breathlessly.

The time was getting close. Mr. Pennyfeather now performed a final inspection before advancing into battle. His hands roved.

Belinda gasped. She could not move, but she cringed inwardly. The dusty fingers cradled her bottom and the crease between its cheeks. One of them explored beneath and came up as much in front as the pedestal allowed. It felt all funny so that she was almost glad when her Inquisitor picked up the cane.

“Six… all hard.” He proclaimed in much the same tone used by the Duke of Wellington when he proclaimed: ‘Up Guards and at ’em!’

When being caned, Belinda always tried hard to think: to set aside and shut away the awfulness that was happening to her bottom. Her reasons were twofold: First pride, and then a genuine feeling of guilt at all the trouble she was putting poor Mr. Pennyfeather to. It seemed unkind to burden him with too many screams and too much begging to, 'please stop!' She was a thoughtful girl.

Belinda had been at the Priory only a year. During that time her visits to the Tool Shed had averaged two a month. the first of them had left her deeply shamed. The pain had been such a searingly new experience that it had devastated her utterly. At first she had shunned the bonds. The idea of being helpless under the cane was unthinkable. She had bent over and touched her toes, but under the explosive impact had leaped into screaming protest at an awfulness beyond her wildest ken. Mr. Pennyfeather had been both hurt and outraged at the manner in which her punishment had run its course. He had added stroke after stroke in an effort to improve behaviour. But each time the cane had scalded her rump she had dissolved into a mindless gyration of agony. Afterwards she was ashamed of herself. She was determined to do better. So now she elected the straps and immobility.

As the excruciating waves swept over her as the cane sought out and possessed her flesh she set her mind determinedly on Hyacinth. She must try and talk to Hyacinth and find out things. Did Hyacinth come to the Tool Shed to be caned! Or was there something worse that Mr. Penny-

feather did to her! Since she was older it would probably be worse. But what! Or when she went upstairs to The Sisters: what did they do to her! Hyacinth went often to one or the other, always with her head up high and the rebellious twist to her lips. If the pain she suffered was worse than this, what would it be! Belinda was intrigued. Surely there could be nothing worse than this! She gasped, then screamed as the sergeant cut her for the third time.

It was now intermission. If the punishment was six or more there was always an intermission. Mr. Pennyfeather produced a bottle of beer and sat sipping it where he could get a view of her taut bottom and her apprehensive features.

“And what brought you here this time?” He asked conversationally.

“I hadn’t done my Geography; and then when she wasn’t happy I stuck out my tongue at her.” Belinda admitted.

“Five’s hardly enough for that.” The sergeant mused.

“Miss Stacie’s very nice. I’m sorry I was rude.” Belinda hurriedly open every loophole to forgiveness.

“Ten would be closer to it.” One could almost hear the roll of drums.

“Oh please, Mr. Pennyfeather, not more than what I’ve got.”

The Imperial Army rose to its feet, almost regally. It advanced to where Belinda could, if she raised her head, look the gardener's flies squarely in the seam. "We could dispense with the rest." He declaimed as though offering amnesty to thousands.

This, too, was familiar. A part of the Holy Rite. Belinda had once, in total innocence, allowed Mr. Pennyfeather to unzip and produce the extraordinary object of which he seemed so proud. His suggestion that she take it in her mouth had, at that time, no greater impact on her maiden mind than the baring of her bottom or the agony of the cane. She later suspected that had he washed it first she would have gladly availed herself of surcease. But the Ex-sergeant was strictly a once a week bather and the aroma that clung about the rigid exhibit had proved such an insurmountable barrier that the old soldier had returned it to its hiding place obviously hurt by her sensitivity. In spite of the sage advice of other girls Belinda had never overcome her first abhorrence. She preserved her fastidiousness at the expense of her behind.

"No thank you, sir."

Old acquaintance elicited no surprise. "The usual extra, of course." He said affably.

"Of course, sir. Thank you."

Mr. Pennyfeather's 'extras' mounted up. She now had four to go. She wanted to cry. But it was a bit early. Tears had no

effect on the man with the cane. He sagely observed that ‘good soldiers did not cry’, and had been known to add one more or even two. Belinda longed to ask for mercy. She was on a rack. The pedestal had that effect. She was stretched and held in a way that was scary, When she was not actually being caned, Belinda had noticed often that the funny feeling bothered her cunny that was crushed against the pad. She felt sure it meant something was wrong, but she did not like to mention it,

“Would you sooner I used the riding crop, young miss?” Mr. Pennyfeather inquired lugubriously. He had resumed both his seat and the beer.

The bent over damsel quailed. The riding crop cut the skin. She knew. She had felt it. She knew, too, that regardless of her response it might be used on her. Such questions from Mr. Pennyfeather were rhetorical.

“No thank you, Mr. Pennyfeather.”

His sigh proclaimed the ingratitude of woman. “I’ll use it anyway.” He stated generously.

A few tears came now. Belinda could no longer blink them back. The riding crop was just too much! It was his response to her rejection of his tumescence. It would hurt so bitterly that she would howl. Her ‘Thank you, sir’ lacked heart.

Cringingly she watched him make the exchange. The riding

crop was a wickedly thin length to be used on horses, not girls. But it was going to be used on her! She was positive it would cut her in two. She would bleed.

It was hard to think and scream at the same time. But Belinda tried. She wondered if Hyacinth was ever strapped like this and whipped with the riding crop. It seemed incredible. She must ask. If she was to stay at The Priory it might be as well to know what she had to look forward to. The older girls seemed so remote. But if they got fastened like this and whipped the same as she was whipped it might be as well to know.

“Think you’ll stick your tongue out again?”

The Army had paused in its advance and stood surveying her cautiously. Belinda strove to prolong the relief.

“No, sir, never.”

“But it’ll be something else, won’t it?” He was caustically cynical of maiden frailty.

“I’ll try hard, Mr. Pennyfeather.”

“Would it help if I give ye a couple of extra now, just as reminders?”

He did this every time. A girl was never sure how to respond. Experience proved there was no right answer.

“Oh, thank you, sir! I’d be so grateful!” Belinda made a des-

perate gamble. He was a contrary man.

This time she lost. She was up to nine. “Sensible girl.” He approved with what might, or might not, be sincerity. “I’ll be happy to oblige.” He sliced her bottom with renewed vigour. Belinda screamed. “Ay!, ’tis doing you good.” He approved, and swung again with the full force of his arm. All Belinda’s defences crumbled.

“Please, sir, may I take your thing in my mouth?” She found breath to ask. Nothing mattered now but to stop the pain.

“’Tis too late, lass.” Mr. Pennyfeather took careful aim and lapped the previous wound.

Belinda screamed steadily until the end.

“Of course I get whipped!” Hyacinth’s hands played through Belinda’s hair lovingly. “You mean you don’t know! We all get whipped. Age has nothing to do with it, not here. That old Twerp really marked you, didn’t he! Stop crying, sweetheart. Tears don’t help us.”

Belinda stopped crying as though by magic. How wonderful it was to be alone with this creature she adored. She should have come before. Hyacinth was kind.

“Does he… does he, I mean, offer to stop if you’ll…?” Belinda could not find the words.

The older girl laughed bitterly. “He doesn’t offer any more, not with me. He makes me do it.”

“You mean… when I grow up?” Belinda was appalled.

“Maybe not with you. Maybe it’s just me… I’m a rebel.”

Belinda considered. The Priory was very much the limit of her world. But she had memories. “It isn’t quite… quite, nice, is it? I mean, sending us girls to Mr. Pennyfeather. I don’t think Daddy would approve… if he was still alive.”

Hyacinth smiled down tenderly at the worshipful face. She wanted to impart words of wisdom. But how to explain what was to herself a source of wonderment! A Mansion full of females captive to an archaic anomaly. Within the Law and beyond the Law. Immune. Immutable.

“I suppose if we behaved we wouldn’t get sent to him so often.” She admitted reflectively. “I honestly think the Sisters think he’s a good influence.” Amusement crept into her voice. “He scares us into paying attention.”

“But his hands… He feels…!”

“Oh, I know. But Pennyfeather’s only human. Push enough naked female bottoms at any man and he’s not going to resist forever.”

Hyacinth was so rational, so kind. She knew so much. Belinda thrilled. Here were new vistas.

“Shouldn’t I tell the Sisters?”

“Oh, they know. But there’s always been a gardener. Best to

just take the extra strokes, darling. With me I can just be thankful it's my mouth."

Belinda digested the implication and shivered deliciously. Such a possibility seemed not quite real. But just suppose…

She carried her fresh wisdom back to class, anxious to share… The riding crop was already forgotten.

Hyacinth never responded to a summons from the Prioress without mingled feelings of hope and fear that were about evenly balanced. As she mounted the stairs she wryly reflected on the appropriateness of the Mother Superior's quarters being the most nearly celestial in the Priory. The awesome figure had reserved to herself the entire upper floor, most of which remained an intriguing mystery to the girls who never penetrated beyond an austere office or a cosy study in which Tea might be dispensed. It was to this latter that the apprehensive girl directed her steps, not hopefully. Retribution could be pronounced in either room.

"You are a very beautiful young woman, my child."

The Prioress was ageless. She might be a bare forty or as ancient as The Priory over which she ruled. The Nun's habit was becoming to the slenderness and the ascetic features, the asceticism of which was partly denied by a wide mouth and lips almost sensuous. Hyacinth looked up from the rug before the fire, a privileged point for visiting girls, which also enabled the Prioress to gaze down upon them as from an eminence even while seated.

“Thank you, Mother Superior.” It seemed an inadequate response.

“You have been much punished in the past month, dear.”

Hyacinth cringed and looked up appealingly. Why belabour the obvious!

“Tell me why, dear girl.”

“I broke the rules, reverend mother.”

“Of course, of course! That goes without saying. But tell me why. There must be reasons?”

“It is not I alone who is punished.”

“We are not concerned with others now. It is you I ask?”

The girl on the rug shifted nervously. This was a skirmish she was not likely to win. She had best watch her tongue or she would be setting out in search of Mr. Pennyfeather. Yet she revered The Prioress. The truth was best.

“I do not wish to be a prisoner here, reverend mother.”

“In one way or another, child, we are all prisoners. You know this.”

Hyacinth took another plunge. “But I am young, I’m twenty. I want the world. I want to live. I need it…”

“How old were you when you came here, Hyacinth?”

“Eighteen.”

“I seem to recall that you had done an excess of living even then.” The older woman’s voice was slightly caustic.

“I was not guilty, reverend mother.”

“The Court thought otherwise. You chose our refuge rather than prison.”

“My choice was in ignorance. I should have elected prison. I would soon have been free. Here I do not know.” The lovely face looked up in distress. “Perhaps I am here for always…?”

“Is that so terrible, child?”

Hyacinth began to feel she would prefer the Tool Shed to this. How say the unsayable! The Prioress said it for her.

“It is the man hunger, is it not?”

The girl flushed. She searched for denial and found none. “I suppose so, reverend mother. There are… other names. Other ways of describing what I feel.”

The Prioress laughed. “Come, child, you and I need not fence or use pretty euphemisms. What you feel is natural lust. Nature demands you reproduce.” The old eyes studied the young scarlet face.

“Tell me now, and my curiosity in your answer is sincere, would you with gladness and relief be free of this urge?”

“Would I not be denying life?”

“This Priory is a lovely place. I have been here many years without sorrow, in fact with joy. Could you not be happy too if freed from your compulsion? You already find some happiness. I know.”

Hyacinth was choked with words. She could utter none.

“Does not the whip exercise your demon?”

“When I am whipped I think only of the whip and the pain and a wish that it stop. Afterwards nothing is changed. I am sorry, reverend mother.”

The Prioress smiled benignly. She pulled a bell cord. “We will have Tea, my dear. You are quite delightful.”

Hyacinth wondered why she was delightful. But dutifully sipped her Tea and waited to find out. She felt sure there must be more to this interview than the fluid in the cup and the bloater-paste sandwich that nestled in the saucer.

“You have had no penances, dear girl?”

“I have been caned and whipped… Are… are these no penances?”

“Of a sort. But one may reach penitence by many paths.”

“All of them painful, reverend mother?” Hyacinth quaked at her own temerity.

The Prioress chuckled. “So much aware of your flesh, arn’t you! The Spirit also can be mortified.”

“Oh please! I ask humbly: free me or send me to an ordinary prison.” The plea burst from her in an access of honesty.

The Prioress shook her head in remonstrance. “Let us consider.” She said kindly, “In prison there will be men who you can see. There will be a period set on your confinement. At the end a man will lay in wait. Or suppose I free you now: you will gravitate into copulation, debt and diapers. Is The Priory so bad after all?”

The girl on the rug considered while nibbling her sandwich. She sincerely admired this woman whose words she could not ignore. Other girls were happy in The Priory and would not leave even if they could. She knew how they found their happiness, of course, but if they found it why could she not find it!

Her companion read her thoughts. “In a world of women there need not be sorrow.”

In a surge of rebellion Hyacinth burst out: “You know what Mr. Pennyfeather makes us do?”

“Sergeant Pennyfeather provides something of value,” The Prioress stated reflectively. “His attentions engender humility and an awareness of the less agreeable aspect of The Male. I am not shocked. I condone something that would

not be tolerated elsewhere. But let us stop and consider the good Sergeant: When young he was darkly attractive. His success with women was the envy of his regiment. His life, mostly abroad, was not conducive to marriage. We see him now an ageing and embittered man who takes, by virtue of his authority, that which was freely and gladly bestowed upon his youth."

The Prioress gave a cynical sigh. "If he was thirty years younger and arrived with a dozen roses you might greet him with open arms. It is a matter of degree and of custom. It is a wise female who recognises the ephemeral appeal of Man." She stepped forward and patted her ward's cheek and smoothed the shining hair.

Hyacinth knew herself lost. She would never refute the logic of this woman who knew too much. She had been old enough when she came to The Priory to be able to recognise as unorthodox much that the younger Belinda was forced to accept as the norm. This strange woman who faced her now as the greatest anomaly of all. The Prioress contrived to combine the cynicism of a retired Madam with the penetrating wisdom of a sage. Hyacinth guessed the religious habit to be a convenient expedient to impress and to intimidate the very young.

"Reverend mother, I am not a Lesbian." She might as well be whipped for a sheep as a lamb!

"Do have another sandwich." The Prioress deftly dispensed

tea and ignored Hyacinth's outburst. "I think we might profitably return to the matter of your penance."

Hyacinth squirmed. "Isn't that just another name for more punishment, reverend mother?"

"The difference, my dear, is that none desire punishment but many ask for penance that they may reach penitence and peace. It is a matter of wish. Do you have the wish?"

Hyacinth felt shamed. She did not have the wish. What she did want might be construed as having her cake and eating it too. But she felt a great warmth for the woman who was being kind. She suddenly felt a great longing to be happy at The Priory. "I do not think I have the wish as you would want me to. But if there is happiness here for me I would like to find it." She said simply.

"You will not like the penances. Some you may not understand. But if you are to have them, you must ask."

"Please may I accept the penances, reverend mother."

"You are a girl of quality." The Prioress approved. "Tomorrow on rising you will fold your clothing in your drawer. You will spend the day naked following your usual routines. Your nudity will not excuse you from standard disciplines. Before bedtime you will report to Sister Thalia who will direct your penances thenceforth." The Prioress raised her visitor to her feet and kissed the cheek of the bewildered girl. "Thank you for trying, Hyacinth." She said

with deep sincerity.

Hyacinth got scant comfort from knowledge she was not the first. Shock might be mitigated by the fact that other girls had spent a day unclad, going about their accustomed tasks with varying reactions to their state. It was not a common penance. Nor was she clear as to what it was expected to achieve, other than a punitive directive to conformity. It would not hurt. But it would shame her bitterly. Perhaps it was the shame they desired. Would it lead her to a discovery!

The girl in the next bed was the first to recognise a fall from grace. The word spread rapidly. Hyacinth's nakedness became increasingly a contrast as more and more girls attired in the school uniform gathered round to condole, to jeer, but mostly to ask questions. The questions could all be summed up as to what had she done!!!

For a girl to be naked amidst girls should not have been too agonising. Hyacinth was not a shrinking violet. But she found her condition harder to bear than she had supposed. It was not so much that she was naked, as that she was being punished. The punishment made her an object of pity or of derision or of fun. She found that her presence among the younger girls evoked shocked furtive silences or else a storm of giggles. Her pubic hair attracted surprised attention from the very young who had not yet achieved so hirsute a glory. In Class or in the Dining Hall she knew herself the cynosure of every eye. The Mistresses and The Sisters

made no reference to her lack of clothes. But they, too, looked their fill.

It took the insouciant Mignon to get down to basics. “Wet between the legs, darling?” She asked cheerfully.

“No. Should I be?” Hyacinth was caught unawares.

“I was. Sister Thalia made me wash and dry four times. I was sopping.”

“You mean… you…?”

“Sure, it makes me horny. Doesn’t it you?”

“I thought it was just being whipped—” Hyacinth broke off in confusion.

Mignon laughed frankly at her embarrassment. “Well, if you know that much you can’t be so damned innocent. Don’t tell me being whipped doesn’t do something for you?”

“It hurts, that’s all.”

“You poor darling! Not much fun here for you, is it!”

“I just asked to be sent to prison: and look where it got me, no clothes! Goodness knows what I’ll get tomorrow.”

“You mean you’d sooner go to a real pokey than stay here!” Mignon sounded incredulous. “Good Gosh, kid, I wouldn’t leave here if they paid me.”

The two girls looked at each other as from different worlds. Each knew that which lay between them. They were friends, yet were confronted by the insurmountable. Even with the uninhibited Mignon it came close to being also the unmentionable. Yet she tried.

“Don’t you even enjoy Sister Veronica or Sister Nicole?” She asked diffidently.

“All they ever do is punish me.” Hyacinth said petulantly.

“That’s the name for it, darling. But… I mean, there’s a bit more to it than that…” She trailed off doubtfully. “Or isn’t there?”

Hyacinth took the hurdle. “For you, I think there is. But not for me…” She found herself hesitant. Rectitude dies hard. “Am I… Am I very much a prude? I’m sorry.”

Mignon grinned knowingly. “Not to worry, love. It’s not you but me that’s a bit odd.” Her smile broadened. “But the problem is all yours. I don’t have one. You see, The Priory’s like me. It’s a bit odd too. I fit. You don’t.” Her eyes became shrewd. “Ever think of escape?”

“All the time. But what’s the use!” Hyacinth was struck by a memory. “What happened to Aline? She tried, didn’t she? Nobody’s seen her in days.”

“Want to see her, darling?”

Hyacinth was startled. There was more to Mignon than she

had guessed. “Where is she…?”

Her companion gave a conspiratorial wink and beckoned.

Hyacinth followed nervously where she was led.

It was a sad little cell. Its occupant could never use the open barred door through which they entered. She stood, forlorn and naked, hands tied behind her back, big toes clamped by metal bands to the floor. Her tear stained face downcast lifted hopelessly, then broke into radiance at sight of the unexpected.

“The wages of sin.” Mignon offered cheerfully as introduction.

There were kisses and much female attention. Mignon produced the only available handkerchief. Questions and answers flowed in eager whispers. Hyacinth felt immensely privileged and very frightened.

“I can’t sit down.” Aline explained. “I’m scared I’ll break my toes. Besides, I’d never manage to get up again. It’s all very clever. I just have to stand and wait. I’m tired.”

They held her gently and eased her back to the floor. But, even then, she sat awkwardly haunched with bent knees so that her rigidly fastened toes should suffer no injury. She sighed with an immense relief that tore at Hyacinth’s heart.

“It’s different every day.” Aline said wearily. “But it’s always awful. Yesterday I had to stand on one foot. Don’t ever try

to escape."

"Well untie your hands and do them up again." Mignon offered.

"Oh no!" There was no mistaking the captive's vehemence. "Sister Thalia would know. Then we'd all be in the soup." She smiled wanly. "I think I'd die if you girls didn't steal down here sometimes."

"But, how long must you stay in this awful place?" Hyacinth was bereft at knowledge of The Priory's hidden depths and mention of Sister Thalia.

"They won't tell me. That's on purpose to make it worse."

"But they haven't whipped you?"

The sad lovely face grinned ruefully. "I don't think I get whipped with this little lot." She tossed her head disdainfully. "Sister Thalia explained that since I wanted freedom so bad, I'd be punished by a total loss of it. You know how good they are with nice kind explanations." She eyed Hyacinth's nudity. "You're in trouble too, eh?"

When they raised a grateful Aline back on her feet it was Hyacinth who wept as they crept back into the sunshine.

* * *

All the Sisters were different. Like The Prioress, they affected the habit of nuns. But each interpreted the costume in her own way. They were individuals. They taught as did Miss Stacie and Miss Imogene. But they also dispensed punishment which the two Teachers did not. In fact it was whispered in the dorms that Miss Stacie and Miss Imogene themselves did, on occasion, visit the upstairs rooms and receive correction. Delicious imaginings giggled awesomely over The Rack, The Iron Maiden, being branded on the bottom, or just plain whipped. Until today Hyacinth had taken it all with a grain of salt. Now, gazing attentively across Sister Thalia's desk, she was prepared to believe anything.

"Tell me, dear." Sister Thalia adjured earnestly. "Just what sensations have been engendered by your nudity."

Hyacinth groaned inwardly. She had no sensations save shame in the open and draughtiness in the darker corners.

"I have felt ashamed, Sister."

"Excellent!" Sister Thalia leaned forward. "And what else?"

Hyacinth felt insufficiently sophisticated to invent. "Nothing else, Sister."

"Come, come! A girl like you cannot go naked all day without some deeper reaction than shame at showing her skin."

The squirming culprit tossed out a tentative tid-bit. "I did not like having my pubic hair and my breasts looked at."

It was evidently the right note. The Sister beamed. “At the age of twenty I would suppose you had a keener awareness of those portions of yourself than that the girls should look at them?”

“There are no men in The Priory, Sister.”

“But let us suppose you had been sent to Mr. Pennyfeather…?”

Hyacinth’s head reared like a startled horse. “I would not go. It would not be right…!” Surely that had to be the proper answer.

It was not! Sister Thalia frowned. “There is no order you should not obey, child. Hold out your hand.”

Hyacinth hated having her hands caned. She was twenty. She was a woman. She remembered being strapped as a child. It had hurt a little and shamed a lot. This that she would receive now would send her into a paroxysm of agony with an awfulness no child had ever known.

She held out her hand.

“You look very sweet naked like that.” Sister Thalia approved as she selected a shockingly cruel cane from a rack, and flexed it with satisfaction.

Hyacinth was blushingly conscious of being doubly naked. She had been unclothed all day and had known shame and a desire to use her hands to cover herself. But standing like

this with one hand stretched out to its limit left her strangely defenceless, frighteningly vulnerable. She thought of Aline, naked and fastened in her small cell.

“You find having your hand caned distasteful, my dear?”

“Yes, Sister. I hate it.”

“Really, Hyacinth, you do use the most positive terms. I think perhaps in this small prelude to our talk I should require something more than a little discomfort. After the stroke you will stand erect and attentive and allow your arm to hang limp at your side. None of this squirming you girls love so much. After all, at the age of twenty…”

Hyacinth longed to express her opinion that it was the age of twenty that made it hurt so much. But settled for a meek: “Thank you, Sister.”

The fire exploded and consumed her utterly. It possessed not only her hand but her whole being. It was sickening and not to be borne. It was beyond bearing…

Several moments passed before the hurt girl realised that she was bent double, her wounded hand tucked beneath an armpit, choked gasps of protest escaping from her lips. Sister Thalia’s injunction forgotten. Thought of straightening up and striving to recapture lost ground was instantly rejected. It was too late. She must ease her pain and take fresh medicine.

When, at last, she did bring herself under control and raise

hurt appealing eyes, she found Sister Thalia surveying her with undisguised amusement. “Really, my dear: for a twenty year old…”

What did age matter! What did anything matter! “It hurts so much, Sister. I can’t bear it.”

“I am sure your other hand will have more courage.”

Hyacinth realised miserably, and with a tinge of fear that the woman with the cane was enjoying herself. She had gloated in satisfaction at the writhing reaction to her vicious stroke. Standing erect, once more, her agonised hand and arm hanging limply at her side she looked for pity where none was. Only the quiet smile and an inclination of the head that told her clearly what she must do.

Hyacinth held out her other hand.

They stood thus some time. The naked girl obediently offering her flesh in sacrifice to an ancient lust. Exposed, in pain, and in suspense. The woman savouring the delicate moments of power and submission, her strong hands fingering the smooth cane that was her instrument of agony.

“Perhaps this time, my dear? I am sure neither of us wish to prolong this trifling matter.”

All things are possible! The naked girl with hand outstretched repeated the simple words to herself again and again as they locked eyes and the shining length began its preliminary searchings of the taut palm. All things are pos-

sible… Hold on!

Men have walked through fire. They have stood against a wall that they be shot. They have held motionless while a rattlesnake slithered between their feet. All things are possible! Hyacinth absorbed the pain of all the world. When she opened her eyes afterwards her bruised hands hung limply at her sides.

“You have tremendous possibilities, my dear.”

Hyacinth wondered what possibilities she could hold save as a receptacle for pain. Fighting down the rebellion of her arms she stood and watched as the cane that had cut her so cruelly was replaced upon its rack. “Thank you for caning me, Sister.” Her utterance of the required ritual was an even monotone.

“And now to business, dear child.” Sister Thalia said briskly as she resumed her seat. “Our beloved Prioress tells me you have accepted penance.”

“Yes, Sister.”

“Try and sound more hopeful. Surely your first day has not discouraged you. Or was it the cane, dear?”

“The cane, Sister. I’m sorry I find it so hard to bear.”

“You bore it well, child. The cane gives little help. It has no erotic overtones.” The shrewd eyes searched the young pain drawn face. “You understand my meaning?”

“I’m afraid not, Sister.” Hyacinth suspected she understood all too well. But that was an uncharted Sea on which she had no wish to embark.

“Each day you will report to me and we will decide on the instrument of your mortification. Just before bedtime, as now.”

“Thank you, Sister.”

“Go and use the bathroom. Return here.”

Dazedly Hyacinth obeyed. She found herself trembling. The caning just past. Now an unknown that she feared. Why, oh why, had she elected The Priory when she might have gone to prison!

“Attention! Hands behind your neck, feet well apart.” The Sister held something ugly dangling from her hand.

Once more the captive girl knew herself more naked than naked as she struck the shaming pose. The something ugly was strapped round her waist and buckled very tight so that she found it hard to keep quiet. It held some protuberances upon its inner surface. They hurt. They would hurt more.

She blushed as the other thing was passed between her legs back to front. It, too, was studded. It was round, not flat. It divided her cheeks and almost entered her at the rear, but in the front was utterly shaming. Experienced fingers parted the lips of her sex and thrust within some part

of the harness she could not identify. Something that was thrust intimately within her as the buckle was tugged and tugged until she was cleft and parted and sundered and the round belt itself parted the lips within her pubic hair.

When Sister Thalia stepped back and surveyed her work Hyacinth was almost afraid to move. But her imploring look received a kindly nod, so she essayed a return to normal. But nothing was normal. The harness was designed to hurt, and hurt it did. Her loins were gripped by a vise with a thousand small gritty teeth that buried themselves gleefully within her skin. Her sex burned with a sensation she had never known. She longed to explore with her fingers, but dared not.

“Much more practical than a hair shirt.” Sister Thalia suggested affably.

Its wearer voiced the thing uppermost in her mind. “It’s terribly tight, Sister. Is it… Is it supposed to cut into me?”

“Of course, dear girl. It’s called a reminder belt. As you wear it through the day you will be constantly reminded of your human frailty.”

“I don’t think I can walk.”

“Nonsense! Try.”

Hyacinth’s first step brought a small frightened gasp shock. Everything was wrong! It wasn’t just the pain which was awful, but her hips did not respond as the should. They re-

sponded far too much! She felt all hips as they thrust from side to side, forward and back under an impetus all their own. The harness imposed upon all the motions an influence that might have amused had it not been so painful. Before she was half way round the room she knew herself in the grip of a new experience and a new sensation. She had expected the pain, but the sensation placed its own question mark within her mind. She looked at the watching woman pleadingly. “When must I wear it?”

“You are wearing it now.”

Hyacinth’s heart dropped. “But it’s bed-time, Sister.

“Of course. Then you’ll be all ready for tomorrow.”

“Tonight and tomorrow, Sister?” It didn’t seem possible.

The older woman nodded encouragingly. “That’s right, dear. Tomorrow evening at this time we can discuss the next.”

“But I can’t sleep—”

“Yes you can, dear. You’ll surprise yourself. It’s most beneficial in what you are striving for.”

Hyacinth was quite certain that whatever it was she might be seeking, it most certainly was not this horror upon her loins.

“But, tomorrow… how…?”

Sister Thalia was ready with the answer. “Simple, dear child. Just take it off.”

The victim’s start betrayed her surprise. Where was the catch! There had to be one. It came.

“Just do it up nicely afterwards, Hyacinth. Any of the girls will help. Some of them have worn it themselves. You’ll wear the school tunic so it won’t be in full view. But you’ll be checked at unexpected moments. If you are not wearing it, or if it is not buckled as tightly as now, your punishment will be severe. You see, dear, in these penances there is often an element of trust. That trust must never be violated.”

The wearer of the strange harness went wonderingly and painfully to bed. Sister Thalia kissed her warmly before she left.

The word had got around. Girls of all ages clustered round to examine her and the thing she wore. It was a greater attraction than her nudity had been the previous day. Hyacinth was faintly piqued. There was even some competition in the offers to help when she went to the bathroom. She accepted Mignon’s in the certainty it would be more experienced. But the taking off and the putting back on of what Mignon knowingly described as the crotch strap was an ordeal she had no wish to repeat. During the night it had become a part of her. Taking if off was to remove a portion of her most intimate being.

“Did it give you a wet dream, darling?” Mignon asked ex-

pectantly.

Hyacinth wished her helper was less knowing and less curious. She had indeed suffered strange phantom dreams and sensations. She was not naive enough to doubt their origin.

“I had seven orgasms the first time they put it on me.” Her companion volunteered in comradely candour. “D’you want it up another notch, or just the way it was?”

“Don’t tell me you liked the damn thing!” Hyacinth was aghast.

“Not those beastly spikey things, but the rest is gorgeous.”

“I’ve got to wear it all day… and walk around as though it wasn’t there.”

“Wearing it, you know, the heat and the moisture soften it up so it’s not quite as bad as you expect. Worst part about it is trying not to come at the wrong moments. You know: when you’re up before the class or talking to one of the Sisters.”

“But that’s horrible! Surely they must know…?”

“Oh, they know alright. You can be sure they are quietly enjoying watching you find out. But it has to be clothed in decorum and all that nonsense. So, stiff upper lip, pal.”

Hyacinth was glad to be covered again. Yet the straps that

clutched her seemed more obscene beneath her tunic than when she was naked. Besides, every girl knew it was there. Quite apart from the pain of it her own awareness of what it was doing to her never faltered. She became increasingly apprehensive of a hazard, shaming and hitherto unknown. Mignon had been right. The tearing flood of sensation might rend her at the wrong time. She was without the immunity she always took for granted. The harness used her in its own way. When it happened she found herself without will, without control. She was positive she was, at such times, a revolting sight. She was deeply troubled and quite helpless. Had it not been for Mignon's carefree acceptance of a fact of life, she might have fled in panic to the Sisters. She wondered, ruefully, how they would have dealt with her.

Sometimes she wept. Even in Class the tears would come unbidden. The attrition on her loins was cruel and unremitting. It wore her courage down to nothing. It was so unkind. She had done nothing to deserve it. Her penance offered her no gift of grace at all.

Miss Imogene watched her tearful pupil thoughtfully and with commiseration. She condoned faults that, on some other day, might have sent the sufferer to the Tool Shed. Miss Imogene approved the cane and the whip, but was dubious of the virtue of penances. She viewed them as an usurpation, by the Sisters, of her own prerogatives. She was only a few years older than some of the girls she taught. She felt for them, and sometimes with them.

Without consultation with the harnessed girl, she sought out Sister Thalia during intermission.

“I think it’s bad for the poor kid.” She ended a vehement harangue. “I don’t like what it’s doing to her. Hyacinth’s not… not, like that. It’s giving her too much too soon.”

Sister Thalia viewed her subordinate dourly. “Hyacinth has been with us two years. She is twenty. I would hardly say we were precipitate. She has, in that time, earned herself more than normal punishment. Thus her penance…”

“But, isn’t it best to whip her! Arn’t penances best reserved for a… for, a… a latent Mignon?”

“What are you trying to say, Imogene?”

“She’s clean. She’s a nice girl. I don’t believe she was guilty of anything when she was sent here. She ought to be released.”

“You are playing God, my dear?”

“No, Sister. But have we the right to turn Hyacinth into a Priory girl! That thing she is wearing now between her legs is doing shattering things to her consciousness. I’ve been watching it.”

“Perhaps you would prefer wearing it yourself?” Sister Thalia’s tone was icy.

Miss Imogene squirmed. Too often these interviews ended

like this. Why did she always stick her neck out! Miss Stacie refused to get involved, thus seldom got embroiled or punished. “The Reminder Belt can’t teach me anything. It just hurts. But it’s teaching Hyacinth something nasty.” She maintained defensively.

The Sister sighed gently. “Really, Imogene, I do wish you would eschew nobility. As one of our Sisterhood it ill becomes you. You have a guilt complex, I suspect.”

“Yes, with girls like Hyacinth I have.”

“Perhaps we can help you.” The older eyes traversed the slender body from toes to hair. They joined the curling lips in a disdainful amusement. “You do need help… constantly.”

“I came to help someone, not to be punished.” Imogene knew herself lost.

“The two can be synonymous. Go. Take your protege aside. Remove her belt. Bring it to me.” Sister Thalia’s words held a stern authority.

For moments the angry eyes held, each reading the others thoughts. Then the younger woman shrugged hopelessly and went upon her errand.

For Imogene these moments were always bitter. There were far too many of them. And they were always her own fault. She was of The Priory. Why must she forever transgress its codes! Was she a happy rebel! She would never

leave. Yet she constantly invited that which was happening to her now. She reflected wryly that perhaps she was a masochist. She would examine the premise… But not now.

Carrying Hyacinth's belt, discreetly concealed, back to the Sister's quarters, she was momentarily comforted by the gratitude of the girl who had worn it. It had been so real, so sincere, so vast a relief from the unbearable, that perhaps what she herself must now suffer was well justified.

"No one will know, my dear. Your integrity remains intact." Sister Thalia said gently as she tugged at a buckle.

Stripped naked and standing in the shameful pose to receive her punishment for nobility, Imogene reflected bitterly that, whilst no one might know for sure, there would be some knowing eyes that would guess. The Reminder Belt and its effects upon the female were all too familiar to certain of the pupils and to herself. She did not relish her need for equanimity before the afternoon class with its all too discerning scrutiny.

Imogene stood quietly without protest as the hateful harness was made a part of her, a most intimate part! It was still warm from its previous intimacy with female flesh. She reflected ruefully that she had sinned against the Code. Now she was punished. Very simple.

"I will make it very tight upon you, Imogene." Sister Thalia said kindly. "It is some time since you wore it last. Perhaps it is no more than timely."

Dressed once more, Imogene limped slowly to the door. There was no need to hide her misery from the older woman who understood it all too well. Time for fortitude and calm features when, she was back among her girls. With hand on door, she turned. “When should I report to you, Sister?”

“Ah, yes!” The Sister agreed amiably. “You are thinking of release. I have decided on an amendment.”

A chill hand placed itself upon Imogene’s consciousness. She recognised something in the voice. “Yes, Sister?”

Sister Thalia enunciated with great clarity exactly what the amendment was…

It struck the hurt girl like a blow. All the tried and true clichés of protest and appeal rose to her lips in a flood. She bit them back. She must have offended deeply. Her mind roved but found no help. Bleakly she put her heart into the simple words: “Must I?”

“You must.” Said Sister Thalia.

The turmoil in Imogene’s mind was such that she was half way down the stairs before she remembered the pain.

The status of the two teachers at the Priory was ambiguous. Both were Graduates. The Sisters contrived to clothe them with a dignity sufficient for their station and their duties, whilst at the same time exerting upon them the same disciplines by which they had been governed as pupils. The

system worked only by the wish and compliance of the two girls themselves. They were not ordinary, any more than The Sisters were ordinary, or for that matter, The Prioress herself. The Priory was a World made possible by the will of those who inhabited it. The pupils giggled and guessed. But they could not be sure. The Status Quo flourished.

Thus it was that, in respect and preservation of her image, Sister Thalia's amendment imposed itself on Imogene after dark when the girls were safe indoors. Her shameful walk to Sergeant Pennyfeather was witnessed by none. She walked briskly. But each step took her deeper into a cringing distaste for what lay ahead. Sister Thalia had devised the penalty with shrewd knowledge.

Imogene sent her girls to Mr. Pennyfeather often enough. She had found the punishment salutary and effective. She approved. But it was some years since she herself had walked the fateful path. It had been the gardener's predecessor who had wielded the cane on her behalf so long ago. Since promotion to the Faculty her corrections had been dealt with by the Sisters and even, in extreme cases, by Lady Hipple herself. Imogene was sufficiently aware of Mr. Pennyfeather's proclivities to suspect she would find little comfort on the hour ahead. The Reminder Belt nagged and cut at her with every stride.

She prayed that she would not blush as she handed the demeaning missive to the man who would punish her. But nature was not kind. The sergeant noted her flushed

cheeks with the same attention he gave to the contents of the note.

“Inked your blotter, eh!” He exclaimed jovially. “Never expected either of you two to come visiting.”

Imogene felt small and naked and juvenile standing on Mr. Pennyfeather’s doorstep while he found his hat. A visit to the Tool Shed was implicit in the situation. It was a short walk.

“Ever been caned, Miss?” The gardener queried pleasantly.

“Not since I was a girl.”

“Only a slip of a girl now, y’know.” He assured her expansively. Then, with a quaint paternalism, “It’ll hurt like billy-o, Miss. You sure you want it?”

“Do I have a choice?” Her voice was bitter.

“Well, not rightly, I suppose.” He admitted as he ushered them into his holy of holies, switching on the light, pulling down the blinds and locking the door. “But I’m a reasonable man, I am. Some of the little dears do like to come to an arrangement…?”

“I’ll take the caning, thanks.” Imogene had no illusions.

Mr. Pennyfeather sighed glumly and bestowed his most lugubrious Basset hound scrutiny on his victim. “It does hurt something shocking?” He observed hopefully. Getting

no response, he added: “Of course a girl can always change her mind…”

“You wish to fasten me, I presume?”

“Oh aye. Much the best. Take your things off.”

Imogene stiffened. She had reached a hurdle, the height of which she did not know. Theoretically she need remove nothing. But she shrewdly guessed the gardener would have his own ideas. Miserably, but with a tinge of humour she wondered if this absurd man had any previous acquaintance with a Reminder Belt.

“Isn’t it customary to just raise my dress?”

“Look damn silly! Big girl like you. Off with it.”

Imogene shrugged resignedly, and handed Mr. Pennyfeather a shock by shrugging out of her dress and casting it aside in one sinuous motion. Sensing the absurdity of bra’ and belt she discarded the bra’, and faced him clad only in her punishment.

“I don’t believe it!” He exclaimed fervently after a moment’s thunder-struck silence. Then, struck by a sudden horrendous thought, “You wear that thing every month?”

“It’s a punishment.” Imogene said stiffly.

“I’m sure it is, lass! But them ad’s in the magazines…? Surely—”

Imogene wondered if her blush reached her toes. “What you see has absolutely noting to do with what you are thinking.” She stated firmly. “This contraption has been fastened on me as a punishment. It hurts. It makes me ashamed. It must not be removed. I would be grateful if we did not discuss it.”

“Reminds me of that story about the old mare with her breeching on.” Mr. Pennyfeather said meditatively.

“I don’t wish to hear it.”

“Isn’t it damn uncomfortable?”

“Couldn’t we get on with whatever… must be done?” Her voice was icy.

“Don’t rush me. Deserves dealing with proper, this does. Don’t recall anything this good since that time in Cairo—”

“I don’t wish to hear that either.”

“Hoity-toity! I’d be minding my P’s and Q’s a bit if I was you, young woman!”

Imogene was close to tears. But she did not wish to shed them yet. There would be time and occasion enough. “Very well, if you wish to humiliate me I will answer politely.”

“I’d have given a recruit ten days C.B. for that one.” Mr. Pennyfeather said darkly. “But, all else aside, you mean I’ve got to cane you with that on?”

“It will not impede.”

“’Spose not. S’matter of fact it improves. Plumps your cheeks out nicely. But don’t it hurt when you bend over?”

He sounded almost solicitous.

“It is intended to hurt. May we…?”

“Oh, very well. You know the drill, I expect.”

The pedestal had impinged itself on Imogene’s awareness from the start. She draped herself over it. Old memories flooded back. He had been right. Bent like this the hurt doubled. When the tension came it would be worse still. She placed her wrists and ankles where required. He buckled them brutally.

When he had her raised and taut he stepped back and admired her impotent discomfort. “Not sure I approve of caning a teacher.” He said unexpectedly. “Not that I’ll object.” He added hastily. “Bit of a privilege actually. I know chaps ’ud give a lot to stand where I am right now.”

His victim eschewed tart rejoinders. She was in no position to be pert. “How many strokes am I to receive?” She asked meekly.

“Ten.”

She drew in a quick breath of dismay. Ten from a male arm would be horrendous. She could never take them in si-

lence. Yet to scream in front of this ridiculous creature! She cringed.

“You think ten’s a lot?” He asked inquisitively.

“It’s murder. I don’t know how I’ll behave.

“Doesn’t matter, miss. You won’t be running away.” He paused for effect. “Of course you my have second thoughts…” He left the sentence hanging in the air.

The second thought was almost instant. Imogene choked it back along with her scream as her being was shattered by the first blow, delivered with military force and precision. The pain was unbelievable. It mocked memories. Nothing like this had ever happened. It could not be that a girl’s bottom got more tender. She knew the cruelty came from a man’s desire for her body. He would hurt it until she gave it to him. A simple equation.

She screamed vividly. It was her only weapon. Surely no decent man could bear to hear a girl scream like that!

But the screams came now without volition as the second, third and fourth cuts were ruthlessly laid on. Mr. Pennyfeather was not a man to trifle with. The vulnerability of her up-reared bottom was frightening.

“Oh, please don’t! Not so hard.”

The cane was lowered to the ground. “Were you complaining, miss?”

“No. Oh no! But I can’t bear it. Must you hit so hard?” Her words were little more than sobs.

“You wouldn’t expect me to dangle it over your rump, would you?” He inquired caustically.

“Perhaps it’s the belt.” She ventured timidly. “I only know I can’t stand it.”

“Would you be having a suggestion?”

“I can’t have intercourse with you. Surely you understand that.”

“I’ll put your harness back on for you afterwards.” He offered cheerfully. “Worked a bit with horses once.” He snickered.

Is that what her stretched hind quarters reminded him of! A horse! Her tears came in earnest. He delivered his hardest blow where it hurt her the most. She moaned in abject desolation. A naked girl delivered to her torturer. She was not a Teacher, not Miss Imogene. She was nothing but a bent and naked female whose bottom was being deliberately cut to bits. As the sixth stroke burrowed into her flesh she asked humbly. “What do you want me to do?”

“A bit o’tail, lass. Not asking much.”

If only he had not denigrated her most precious gift! Pride rose in rebellion against the uncouth male. “Cane me.” She said the two words almost with indifference.

When the awfulness was done, neither spoke. Panting and gasping she waited for release. It did not come. She longed to move, but could not. She hung bent upon the pedestal. A naked statue of ravaged innocence. Perhaps it was only justice. She had sent enough of her charges to this very place. But none had been savaged like this! It was her woman's breasts, her woman's sex that inflamed. She raised her eyes and beheld a pair of dirty shoes. Following up the trousered legs she knew what she would find. It stared her in the face, arrogantly awaiting her surrender.

"Kill me." She said hopelessly, "And be damned to you."

She screamed and screamed and screamed.

"The sergeant seems to have been in good fettle." Sister Thalia observed with satisfaction.

Imogene said nothing. Instead, she braced her feet apart and bit her lip to keep back the moans as the strong fingers unbuckled the awful belt from her welted and swollen loins. But as the leathers were peeled from within her flesh they escaped in small sounds of pathetic agony. When it was done she looked down in horror. The straps were gone, but they had left a vivid imprint deep in her skin, a scarlet badge of punishment she would wear for many days.

"Most attractive, my dear." The Sister said admiringly. "I have never ceased to wonder over the aesthetic quality of a girl's punishments. They enhance."

Imogene let her skirt fall. Gingerly she tested this new freedom by bringing her legs together and taking a tentative step. The pain was almost as bad as when the belt was upon her.

“One more task before bedtime.”

She turned to find the belt being offered to her. The Sister’s eyes were enigmatic, amused.

“I am sure you know what to do with this.”

Imogene did not know. But assumed the obvious. With a hopeless shrug she accepted the hated thing and once more lifted her dress.

“Come, come, my dear. I am not that unoriginal.” The smile was now benign. “You simply replace it from whence it came.”

For a moment it did not register. Then, with horror, the Teacher knew her task.

“You see, dear girl, you have changed nothing. Your nether regions have suffered much. But to no purpose. Having enjoyed your nobility we all now revert. The Bolt belongs on Hyacinth. Put it there.”

It was the hardest task. The stricken look on Hyacinth’s face as she was led to the Teacher’s own room had the same shock as Mr. Pennyfeather’s cane. Yet it was Hyacinth herself who clasped the older girl and kissed her again and

again. “I know.” She said. “You tried.”

Hyacinth uttered no word. Simply held up her dress while the thing she hated was cinched into her secret parts. The last buckle tight, she fell to her knees beside the chair into which Imogene had gingerly lowered herself. “Why can’t we escape?” She demanded. “They are wrong, wrong, wrong to treat us so.”

The Teacher played with her pupil’s hair. “You know why.” She said gently. “You cannot because of the wall. I cannot because I’m me. I don’t want to escape. If I could just be like Stacie I wouldn’t get into these scrapes.”

“You did it for me, I know.” Hyacinth hugged the bent knees. “You know how beastly this thing on me is.” She looked up in earnest curiosity. “It’s about sex, isn’t it? I’m not that innocent. I’m being made to wear the belt because it will stimulate feelings I don’t want. Are all the girls when they get about my age made to wear it? I mean the ones who haven’t… haven’t already…”

“Become Lesbians?” Imogene asked bitterly. “Yes. I suppose that’s about the size of it.”

They stared bleakly at each other in stark knowledge. “I know about orgasms.” Hyacinth said matter of factly. “I’ve done them myself, and this damn thing did it to me again and again. It’s awful. I can’t control it. I went all over the place in class. I bet you saw. It will be the same again tonight. I can feel it starting now.” Her voice became piteous.

“All girls get themselves orgasms, but why do we have to be lesbian? It’s not right, I’m sure it’s not.” Imogene looked down in pity at the lovely troubled face. “What else is there, darling!” She said wearily. “There are no men in The Priory.”

“There’s Pennyfeather.”

“He’s just a horrible example to show us how damn lucky we are. If that’s a man, who wants ’em!”

“I have to do this Penance thing.” Hyacinth interrupted. “Is it all going to be sex? I mean, will all the things they do to me make me what Mignon calls… horny? What a silly word.”

“It’s a male word. We stole it. The answer is yes. Most of the penances will make you horny, or at least emphasise your femaleness.”

“Can I bear them?”

“Oh, you’ll bear ’em alright. Half the girls get to like it. It’s erotically exciting… not knowing what’s going to happen next.”

“But those of us, like me, who don’t want to conform. Who just grin and bear it… What do they do to us next?” Hyacinth had a great need for communion. “It’s a bit obvious, isn’t it! They can make me say yes to anything if they whip me enough. Why don’t they do it that way?”

“Isn’t this better, darling?”

Hyacinth knew the logic unassailable. “I don’t think I can go the way… the way they want. If I don’t after the penance is over, is that when the whipping starts?”

“The whipping never stops.” Imogene, in a sudden overwhelming candour, lifted her dress and turned.

Hyacinth gasped in disbelief at the ridged and wealed cheeks neatly quartered by the bright indentations of the straps. “You did that for me! Oh darling.” She buried her face in the lap of the punished girl who had befriended her.

“Don’t let it throw you.” The Teacher counselled gently. “You are in a bad time. I can’t even tell you what to do. It’s such a personal thing. Each girl meets it in her own way.

When I was your age I didn’t even want to fight the system. I longed only to join it. So here I am. As Sister Thalia says: all I have to do is forget nobility.” She laughed ruefully, “After tonight I’m really going to try.” She got stiffly to her feet and raised the kneeling girl. “Run along to bed. Think about it. We are really both of us prisoners so we have to think about it. Have all the orgasms the belt forces you to. Have ’em without guilt. It’s just your glands at work. Don’t try and find significance. And remember, I’m here.”

They kissed. For a moment Imogene wondered… Hyacinth ran from the room as though she was wondering too.

“You have found the Belt beneficial, Hyacinth?” Sister Thalia asked interestedly as she removed the strictures.

The naked Hyacinth was gasping with pain to a point in which an answer was difficult. “I… I don’t know, Sister.” She admitted honestly.

Sister Thalia produced one more deep sigh. “The nice thing about your Penance, Hyacinth, is that we don’t have to rely on just one thing.” She said encouragingly, as though offering comfort to a battered heavyweight after the twelfth round. “I have something for you now that I’m sure will be a great help.”

“Isn’t there a little rest in between, Sister?” The victim of benevolence asked wanly.

“Nonsense, my dear. We are exorcising demons, are we not! We must give them no rest.”

Always an answer! Hyacinth reflected bitterly. Demons! What nonsense! Her thoughts fled to The Wall. Surely there had to be a way!

“You are thinking of escape. I can tell. I can always tell by something on a girl’s face. Really, Hyacinth, I’m disappointed. Bend over.”

Visions of the wall dissolved. How could a naked girl fight such perception! Without protest, Hyacinth bent over and touched her toes. Once more her world exploded in agony.

Sister Thalia left her bent and squirming. She left her so long that the punished girl finally had to ask: “Will that be all Sister?” In a small grateful voice.

“Do you think it should be all?” The Sister asked grimly. Hyacinth knew the question to be another that she could not win. Should she curry favour by asking for a repeat! Her whole being cringed at thought of uttering the words that would get her skin sliced again. Besides, Sister Thalia was no fool.

“Thank you, Sister. I think it has taught me what you wish it to.”

“If one was that helpful, I am sure two will be better.” Sister Thalia slashed heartily so that the girl to be helped wailed in agony and snapped upright clutching her bottom.

It was almost with relief that Hyacinth watched her companion go to a cupboard. Nothing was worse than the cane. Words always got her the cane. Best get on with her Penance and get to bed. But she gasped apprehensively at what she saw.

It was a beautifully fashioned bra’. Held for her inspection by an amused Sister, Hyacinth saw that, like the belt, its inner surface was designed to chafe. There were also two small orifices for her nipples that she eyed with distrust.

“Clasp your hands over year head, dear.”

The naked girl held her breath suspensefully as the means

of her new punishment was carefully, almost lovingly, positioned. The familiar blush came back to work. Her breasts were her own. They should be inviolate. But no part of her was inviolate any more.

“You have delightful breasts, Hyacinth. I do like nice firm breasts on a girl. Lovely nipples. Do you play with them?”

Hyacinth squirmed. “Yes Sister.”

“I’m so glad. Silly to be prudish about nipples. By the way, along with the surface irregularities the cups have been chemically treated to invoke a harmless but quite distracting irritation. I will get it locked on you quickly, dear, before it starts to work. Expel your breath.”

Hyacinth obediently deflated. The straps were drawn very tight so that, looking down, she could see her nipples thrusting themselves through the small orifices, like pink fingertips exploring a new freedom. Taking a normal breath, after the firm snap of the padlock, she was shocked by the constriction. Yet the cups were so designed that, instead of being compressed, her breasts seemed to have grown, filling the cups themselves and bulging against their limits, perhaps in protest against the myriad gritty particles already finding lodgement in her softest skin. A slow burn was beginning to make itself felt.

“The nice thing about this, dear, is that it doesn’t have to come off. You could wear it for days.” Sister Thalia said comfortingly. “And having a padlock makes it nice, too. You

don't have to worry yourself about whether you could steal a little respite. It will stay on you until I use the key. Run along, now. Bedtime. Take your dress."

Hyacinth supposed, grimly, that with penances there could always be something worse. Lying in bed, unable to sleep because her breasts were a fiery torment, she found herself wanting back the belt rather than the agony of the torture bra'. She could not keep still. No girl could have the fortitude to cope with enemies attacking her breasts. She turned back and forth, fearing to betray her condition to those who slept close. She wanted no prying eyes that could not help. She even spent an awkward and fruitless half hour tugging and pushing in a determined effort to rid herself of the infliction. She knew, for sure, that no matter what the consequences she would tear the burning atrocity from herself if only she could.

But the prisoning cups held a shrewd surprise. Her free nipples, as though in thankfulness at their escape, blossomed and flowered in continual ecstasy. To even touch them was to travel half way to orgasm. When she turned, their points would magnify the friction of the sheets to a point at which would stiffen and catch her breath. She remembered her talk with Imogene: always there would be sex. Always she must know she was female. Finally, in desperation she allowed friction and her finger to give her release from the only torment from which she had the power to escape. Sleep claimed her.

It was a bad day. The girls soon found out. There were questions and curiosity. She answered good naturedly between gasps, and allowed her person to be felt and prodded. Eyes shone. Some with sympathy, others with obvious envy. Hyacinth observing these diverse natures of the female was lost. But concerned herself little. Her whole attention was on herself. Her breasts… her breasts, her breasts!

Class was torment. Imogene knew and was kind. Hyacinth longed for nakedness. The fabric of her dress was a constant stimulation to her nipples until she saw them as small mischievous enemies provoking her. They gave her no rest. Sometimes they took her over the brink into a momentary peace. But they soon returned to battle with an increased vigour. They were insatiably demanding. The surface within the cups steadily burned and itched and itched. Her eyes were always filled by tears of frustration. The padlock was like a malignant genie at her back.

The evening interview with Sister Thalia was not going well. Hyacinth sensed bad news. Certainly not from anything said. The good Sister was all smiles and admiration for her fortitude. But she had been standing before the desk a long time. The hoped for removal of the burning bra' had not happened. She succumbed to panic.

"Could I have the bra' off now, please Sister?" She asked respectfully.

Sister Thalia evinced surprise. “Isn’t it hurting any more, dear?”

“I think it hurts worse than ever.” It was hard to keep resentment from her voice.

“I’m so glad! I was sure it would.” Sister Thalia enthused. “Why then would we remove it?”

The tears took over. When they were past Hyacinth sniffed. “I’m sorry, Sister. I thought every evening…”

“Of course, of course! But we won’t be hasty. I am sure another twenty-four hours…”

The tears flooded again. “Oh, please Sister! Take it off. Please…!”

“Excellent! Such a positive response. Tell me, Hyacinth, are there other sensations besides the pain and the burn?”

“Yes there are! They’re beastly.”

“Are you quite sure?” The voice was all too knowing.

“Oh, very well then!” In desperation the tortured girl abandoned diplomacy. “Of course there are sensations. I have to drive myself into an orgasm before I can sleep. Is that what is required of me?”

“Come, come! Don’t spoil things. You are a delightful subject for Penance. I have just thought of a helpful improvement to your costume. Take off your dress.”

The naked Hyacinth watched the opening of the drawer and the appearance of the shining handcuffs in dismayed fascination.

“We are quite up to date at The Priory, you see.” Sister Thalia admonished as she dangled the gleaming bits of steel for her victim to see. Please turn round and put your hands behind your back.”

Unbelieving that this was actually happening to her Hyacinth did as bid. The cold metal closed tight about her wrists. There were small quaint clicking sounds. When they were done she knew she was captive. She had lost her hands. There would be no wriggling out of the tight grip of the implacable bands.

“You may remain naked for tomorrow.” Sister Thalia said, as though bestowing a boon. “The girls can help you where necessary. Good night, dear. Pleasant dreams.” Was there satire in the kind voice!

It was even difficult to settle in bed. She would not wake someone to help, but wriggled and used her teeth to get the covers up about her shoulders. Then the torment.

It was the same as the night before. But the virtue, or cruelty, of The Sister’s handcuffs became instantly apparent. With hands locked behind her back she could do nothing for herself. Her loins or her nipples could demand excruciatingly, but she would be powerless to give them surcease. She tore angrily at her pinioned wrists until they

hurt. It was from the exhaustion of tears that she finally fell into sleep.

The handcuffs were a sensation. They must have been a recent addition to the facilities of The Priory. None of the other girls had ever worn them. The youngest regarded Hyacinth with awe. Even Mignon was impressed and curious. It was generally agreed that she would never get them off. Once more there was competition to aid her in what must be done. From the touch of many female hands Hyacinth realised that, even in this new affliction, there was a purpose. She was a girl among girls. More and more she was to be made dependent on female hands and female lips…

For Hyacinth that day Class was a farce. But it was understood that it was a farce she must endure. She sat there with more than the burn of her breasts to keep her company. Her cheeks and her consciousness burned from an incident in the Dorm'. Several of the girls, shrewdly divining her state of mind and the urgings of her flesh, had held her on the bed while busy and eager tongues had done for her, again and again, that which she could no longer do for herself. When they had fled giggling away, she had dragged herself to her feet, hot, red and damp, she had never felt more shamed or more afraid. In honesty to herself she admitted the young seeking tongues had taken her to a land of ecstasy. A land from which she could now never be free: at least in memory and perhaps in desire. How insidious it was! But she had been taken there by force. The anger stayed to keep her company too.

* * *

Miss Stacie was just as beautiful as Miss Imogene. But she was not impetuous. She knew what she wanted and used reason and diplomacy to obtain it. She also used such authority as was invested in her position as a Teacher. Mostly it was all she needed.

“Undress me, Libby.” She demanded as she stretched erect, her eyes seeking those of the younger girl who watched her in evident worship.

The nimble fingers sped to a happy task. The few garments were speedily set aside, neatly folded. When the Teacher was naked she indulged in such sensuous writhings that the young voice was husky in its plea. “What must I do, Miss Stacie?”

“What do you want to do, Libby?” The voice was hotly female.

“I thought you were going to whip me?”

“You want me to?”

“Oh, yes please! Oh, please, Miss Stacie!”

Stacie laughed. The young ones were so eager, so satisfyingly adoring. They were small feasts of heated flesh. They

exuded a perfume beyond price. “Off with your clothes then, little Libby. I want to see your bottom.”

“I’m not that little, Miss Stacie. I’m fourteen. My bottom’s healed nicely. Besides, I’ve got breasts.”

Stacie pealed laughter. The child was a delight, a self perpetuating nucleus of eroticism. She was still discovering… The first discoveries were shattering.

Absorbed in joy the two of them examined the pert round bottom with its weals now scarcely discernible. “See, I’m all ready. You can whip me simply to bits.”

Stacie laughed tenderly. “You like me to draw blood, don’t you?”

“Yes, please. It’s wonderful. It… It, it does something wonderful here.” Libby put a small hand on a flourishing crop of early pubic hair.

“Of course it does, Minx! That’s the purpose of the exercise, that and the gorgeous marks.” She replaced the child’s hand with her own on the pubic mound with its neat slit. “How would you like to be tied so you couldn’t move and have me pull all these out with tweezers?” She asked mischievously.

For a moment it was as though the girl had beheld some promised land. “Oh, would you! How simply, simply, gorgeous!” Her voice was awed, but full of laughter. “What a scrumptious idea.”

“And are you going to whip me?” Stacie asked archly.

“May I? You mean it?”

“You know I do.” Stacie’s eyes twinkled. “I might let you whip one of my breasts. Which one would you choose?”

Libby was breathless with possible delights. “They are both so lovely.” She breathed. “May I feel?”

The Teacher thrust out her chest invitingly. The twin cones with their rampant nipples offered themselves to the child. There was heavy breathing from both female lips as the young fingers roved in reverence. “This one, please.” Libby kissed the left nipple hungrily.

“My left breast it is, then. That’s a promise.” Stacie said gaily. “Do you want to tie me?”

Libby blushed. “I say… I mean, should I? Doesn’t seem quite proper…?”

“Silly! When we are alone anything’s proper. If I say so.”

The younger girl’s eyes sparkled with a thought. “But suppose I had you all tied up so you couldn’t even wiggle and then I did things… You know, things you did not like…?”

“You couldn’t do anything to me I didn’t like.” Stacie assured her.

Libby pretended to consider. “I might, y’know. Suppose I pulled all the hairs off your—” She paused and giggled. “I

say, Miss Stacie may I call it…?"

"You may call it a cunt, child. That's what we both have. Standard equipment. Most girls have 'em. By the way, drop the Miss in here."

Libby hugged her Teacher ecstatically. "May I pull all the hairs off your cunt?" She cooed.

"Of course, dear child. Or shave them if you prefer."

Libby's mind was still active. "Supposing after I'd plucked your cunt all bare I tied little bows on each of your nipples: you know, play with them until they were real hard and then tighten the knots so you couldn't get 'em off… Wouldn't you be real angry?"

"I'd adore it. Let's get started. Who's first?"

They tossed a coin. Neither cared who won. It was Libby. "Where's the rope, Stacie?" She was glowing with excitement.

Miss Stacie's small apartment sprang alive. Chairs and tables displayed ingenious dualities and versatilities. A small arch between two rooms revealed heavy iron rings when the curtains were withdrawn. It took only minutes to have Stacie spread-eagled so she was delightfully framed and could be dealt with from either side. She stood, gloriously naked, stretched and expectant. If she was also a little apprehensive she did not show it.

“Where are all the lovely things?”

Stacie watched her youthful owner find and sort out the whips. One was obviously different. She chose it. “This is for our breasts, isn’t it?”

The captive acknowledged the guess with laughter. “You can’t wait to get at me, can you! Don’t forget, you chose the left one. By the way, how many strokes does it get?”

“Oh, simply heaps and heaps!” Without warning, hot lips and eager teeth were feasting on Stacie’s left nipple. She squirmed deliciously within her bonds. But she could scarcely move. She was secretly surprised by the competence with which she had been bound. She managed to kiss the soft hair on the head that was so busily employed.

“There! I bet you’ve never seen it stick out like that!” Libby proclaimed triumphantly as she withdrew her lips and stood back to survey the scarlet bud that was now in an arrogant prominence. She swished the whip with zest and laughed at the involuntary flinch from her prisoner.

“You can watch it as it comes.” She exclaimed gleefully as she raised her arm.

Stacie did indeed watch the flying thongs. How strange to watch oneself whipped! Incredibly exotic that one of her breasts should be treated as though not a part of her. She would watch the thongs curl upon the tender skin and fee., the pain. But she was a spectator, powerless. When her

sensitive sphere recoiled from the indentations of the thongs she almost screamed. Her breasts had never been whipped. The whip was a new purchase made on impulse. She fought Libby's cords, but managed no more than a quiver. She raised loving eyes and said simply. "We'll have to watch noise. Please gag me."

Libby wriggled joyously at the innovation and looked around with speculative eye.

"Really only one good way, darling. A wet rag in my mouth. Then tape my lips."

Eyes met eyes in happiness as the deed was done. Stacie opened wide and experimented with the wet wad she was forced to accept. She didn't have much room to experiment. It filled her mouth. She nodded brightly and forced her lips tight together. Libby had found the three inch tape, cut off a strip and welded it upon the willing mouth with deft forceful pressures of her fingers. Stacie tried a word or two, but could manage nothing. She blinked approvingly.

She was looking down inquisitively at her pink breast when the next blow fell. She threw back her head and tried to scream. But she had become no more than the lovely flesh upon which the glowing nymphet was finding a paradise playground.

The younger girl was intent. She bestowed a grave concentration on her task, measuring each infliction, making sure that when the thongs lapped the sacrificial breast they did

not trespass beyond. The deal had been for the one on the left, and that is what it would be! Stacie was torn between joy for her discovery and an urgent question mark as to what that discovery might do to her. She had never been more helpless in her life. The pain was a different pain than she had known. It touched a wickedly waiting chord. She watched in quivering suspense as the child who possessed her changed position. She had whipped the innocent breast from one angle, now she would try another. Under her attention it became a fine red on which small striations soon began to appear. The captive found herself pleading mutely: 'How many? How many, how many...?' She hoped Libby knew where to stop.

Libby knew when to stop! The ecstatic child stood back, fingering her whip, gloating at sight of its work. Never had a girl's breast been so firmly and neatly decorated. It glowed. Stacie was equally proud. The pain now seemed so immensely worth while. She looked with love at the girl who had wrought it. It was quite some time before she remembered that she was still gagged and still tied. She struggled futilely and made a mute query with her eyes.

The naked nymphet laughed. "Remember! I told you." She taunted. "You're all mine. I can do what I like with you."

The captive eyes were equally bright. Stacie was finding it an exquisite experience to be so owned. In all her affairs with her pupils, and there had been many! she had never found so sentient a creature as this. Libby vibrated with in-

tent. The child emanated a compelling aura of sexuality that enveloped them both. The captive Stacie wallowed in it, fear vanished, whatever was done to her would be worth while.

“Want the gag off?” Libby asked obligingly. “But remember you’re going to hurt.”

Stacie shook her head. At that moment she would change nothing. She was a miser who would part with no penny of her gold. She treasured every shred of the emotions that swept over her wave after wave. The gag was part of them. She suspected it would still have to fill its original practical need. There was something in the younger girl’s eye.

Libby held up the whip she had already used. “Doesn’t this have a dual purpose, Stacie?”

For the tied girl it was a moment both fearful and wonderful. Strangely it had not occurred to her that the new acquisition might be used for other than the thing originally in mind. But it was too obvious! Useless to deny. She nodded emphatically.

“I suppose I could use any of them except a cane.” Libby mused aloud. She picked up and balanced a single leather thong. Her eye sought that of her captive. “It would wrap around or up and under nicely, Stacie, don’t you think?”

The bound Mistress shook her head decisively and did her best by jerkings of her head to indicate a preference for

number one. Being gagged did make things difficult. She believed she was being teased. But she could not be sure. The not being sure was absolutely cringe-making. She loved it with a shivering fear.

This time the girl in charge selected a three thonged beauty to swing back and forth. She watched amusedly the play of emotion on her captive's features. "I'm going to whip your cunt, Stacie." She said liltingly.

Even for Stacie, this was another first. She had done it often enough to others, but never allowed the intimacy of her own sex to be punished. It would happen now. She had no doubt that it would happen, I and she was glad: Glad save for the one awful query: Which whip! Some of them would be too awful.

Libby played a pretty game. One by one she gathered up the whips that she might use. Then, slowly, she discarded them singly. The first to go was the one already used. Seeing it fall, Stacie knew she was in for the whipping of her life, on a place not of her choosing. She drew a sharp breath through flaring nostrils in the certain knowledge of what would happen to her. Each whip followed the other to the floor until only the single thong remained, the wicked length of leather most ideally suited to the youngster's purpose. It searched most intimately and hurt the most. Eyes sought eyes and exchanged promise and acceptance.

With Stacie the acceptance was fearful. She could not speak. The gag held her silent. She could neither ask or counsel. Her role was simple. She must bear what the nymphet chose. She closed her eyes. Libby elected to stand in front of that she would punish. Her captive could not bear to watch.

For the next minutes Stacie lived more intensely than she had ever done. Perhaps each, in their own way, excelled all previous sensation. The lovely thong snapped and cracked and cut. Mostly it bedded itself deep with an almost silent impact. But it cut the air with a whine of triumph. The spread girl tore madly at the cords she herself had provided for her martyrdom.

The gagged Stacie longed to cry halt. Yet she knew with certainty that if her lips were free she would use them only to scream and to moan. She would not cry an end to an experience that was setting her aflame. When she felt the naked slenderness crawl between her legs to take fresh stance at her back, she opened her eyes. There was now no whip to see. It would cut her from the rear with even more deadly intimacy, but she would not witness its flight through the air to implant its wound. She looked down in wonder at what she could see of herself. She was bathed in sweat. Her body shining, exuding its own pungent perfumes to mingle with the girl's. The lash curled up between her legs and kissed her belly. She screamed marvellously, but made no sound.

Libby was ageless. She was female. In her was all the knowledge of her sex. When she cast aside the whip she sank to her knees and fed hungrily on that which she had punished. She drank deep and long. The bound girl moaned and moaned and tossed her damp hair back and forth, but could not get free. She would never be free…

“Did you like having your cunt whipped, Stacie?” Libby asked as she extracted the wad from her victim’s mouth. “I loved every moment of it.”

Stacie looked at her tormentor with glowing eyes. “Kiss me.” She pleaded.

Their kiss lasted as long as had that of those hungry lips below. When it tapered away, the nymphet made the same demand: “Did you like having your cunt whipped, Stacie?”

“Yes.”

“Say it properly.”

“Yes. I loved having my cunt whipped.”

“Would you like it whipped some more?”

“Yes, darling, I would like my cunt whipped again.”

It was a magic monotone, a catechism with responses known and understood. They played it as a game, loving every nuance they placed upon a word. When they had lusted enough the whipping re-commenced. But now there

was no gag. As her sex was cut so Stacie moaned. But she did not scream. She was now so drowned in the shared eroticism that screams no longer served. She moaned more beautifully. To the girl who slashed the whip her loved one's moans were the music of life itself.

It was a long time later when the youthful Mistress said: "I'm not going to untie you, y'know."

Her captive gave a convincing display of struggling against her cords. The gesture was symbolic. She wanted no freedom. She longed to stay bound thus forever.

"You make me catch fire down below when you struggle like that. Do it again."

Stacie obeyed. "I never, never could get free." She admitted. "You're damn clever with the cords."

"Now, do you want to be gagged again?"

"What for?" Stacie asked, startled and on guard.

"Can't you guess?" Naughty giggle!

Stacie guessed. She had met her match. She had spoken of things: not dreaming… Now they were happening, happening to her, and she could not stop them. "Please don't gag me," she pleaded meekly. "I know what you are going to do. Maybe I can handle it with just a plain 'ouch.' I'll try. If I get too noisy, you can always gag me then." She paused and looked at her Mistress appealingly. "I say, darling, do you

have to?"

"Don't you want to lose your lovely cunt hairs?"

"Not really. I'm sort of attached. Sorry, didn't mean the pun! I'd originally thought of plucking yours."

"I'll stand still while you do it." Libby offered.

"Don't tease. You know you've got me helpless. Look." The captive girl flung herself against her bonds with all her vigour. "See!"

Her captor grinned gleefully. "Where are the tweezers hidden?"

"I don't have any."

Libby thoughtfully picked up the leather thong.

"Oh, alright. They're in the middle dresser drawer."

When the girl returned with the small metal objects she chose a stool and positioned it close to the main exhibit. With a puckish smile she seated herself and went to work. Selecting a single shining hair she slowly pulled until it stretched tight dragging at its anchorage, then held it taut. Stacie peered down helplessly at what was happening. "You're teasing." She complained. "That hurts. Pull it out or let it go."

She watched, panting and fascinated as the tension increased. The cone of skin stretched and stretched, so did

the pain. Finally the tweezers were held up in triumph. In their grip one single silky hair. “Hope you’re proud of yourself.” Stacie said with mock petulance.

The operation was repeated three times. Then, very carefully, the three fine hairs and the tweezers were laid upon a table and two wildly loving arms enveloped the captive. Eager lips sought eager lips. “I don’t want to.” Libby wailed. “I thought I did. But I love your hair. You can keep it. We’ll put those three in a box so as to have them always. But the rest should stay all round your nice cunt. You can pull mine out instead. They’re not as nice as yours. Want me to untie you now?”

“No.”

“But, Stacie, I’ve got to get back to the dorm’.”

“Stay here all night. Leave me like this.”

“Tied like that! Doesn’t it hurt?”

“Yes. It’s beautiful. You tied me. I belong to you. Keep me.”

The younger girl’s eyes glowed. She knew fulfilment. “Oh Stacie.” She said in a hushed glad voice. “Is it that good for you, because I did it?”

“You’re all I’ve ever wanted. I’ve found you. Come every evening and tie me.”

“Don’t I ever get tied?” Libby asked plaintively.

“I’ll tie you first and I’ll be so cruel to you you’ll hardly be able to wait to get at me. Then, when you do get free, you can have me all night long.”

“I don’t think we are going to get much sleep.” Said Libby joyously.

* * *

Sergeant Pennyfeather was expecting visitors. His dress was hardly formal, but it was clean. His shoes boasted a fine military shine. He regaled himself with a Scotch and soda. Actually he preferred a gin and tonic, but it was less in keeping with regimental status. He downed it at a gulp and poured another. One could imagine the guns warming up at Alamein. The knock on his door was timid but timely.

They were known as the twins, but were unrelated. They simply shared a perky impudence that everyone enjoyed. Mr. Pennyfeather thought of them as ‘The Regulars’. They might have been thirteen years old. “Good evening Mr. Pennyfeather.” They chorused in unison. It was a greeting they had perfected from long practice, and which pleased their host immensely.

“The usual, I suppose?” He inquired expansively.

“Yes please, Mr. Pennyfeather.” Once more they spoke as

one. Also, no doubt, from ancient custom.

With great solemnity, but a quite wicked enjoyment, he poured hefty slugs of his second best Scotch into two glasses and filled to the brim with ginger beer. Even before they were presented with this shocking beverage the twins began to giggle. Their host carefully switched bottles and poured himself a third.

“We haven’t been caned for a long while, have we, Mr. Pennyfeather.” Further giggles punctuated the observation.

“Keeping your slates clean, I expect.” The sergeant said sagely.

“We will get caned tonight, won’t we?’

“Aye, that you will! Two ripe little arses when I’m done.” He took a swig. “But that comes afterwards, of course.

“Oh, of course, Mr. Pennyfeather.”

One nice thing about the twins was that even when they spoke singly the effect was as though each had said the same thing. “Getting two girls for the gab of one” was the way the sergeant thought of it. He carefully noted the disappearance of their drinks before he produced the cord. Giggling happily one held out her right hand, the other her left. Mr. Pennyfeather tied them tightly together. “Can’t have one of you running away, now, can we.” He observed jocularly.

It went very smoothly, punctuated only by giggles that could have been prompted either by the beverage imbibed or by the task in hand. Either one was advanced for such tender years.

The sergeant stood to attention, his gaze fixed far away on some distant battlefield. The girls, joined by their bound wrists, knelt before him. Using their free hands with the same unity that united their voices they unzipped the military fly and extracted a rigid member. Its resemblance to a four point five howitzer in no way daunted their enthusiasm. Almost instantly the exhibit was engulfed by avid lips. The accompanying giggles were provided by the unemployed member of the pair. At quite short intervals the prize was passed from mouth to mouth. It was almost a precision drill.

The sergeant's behaviour was exemplary. His stance remained unaffected by the attack on his lower salient. His eyes were clearly focused on the horizon. He briskly hummed the tune to "Rule Britannia." One had the feeling that had Britannia herself been present she would have doffed her helmet and entered into the fray. The engagement was concluded in a manner worthy of the best traditions of the Military Manual. It needed only the services of a trumpeter to play "The Last Post."

"Wasn't that lovely!" Said the old soldier manipulating the bottles. "Now how about getting out of those clothes?"

The suggestion was met with both alacrity and giggles. The twins held out their bound wrists to be relieved of the binding, then tossed clothes far and wide before doing a small dance round the room. “You will tie us up, won’t you, Mr. Pennyfeather?”

“And how would you like it?”

“Something different, please.” There was a wistfulness in the request.

“That’ll need the Tool Shed.” Mr. Pennyfeather decided.

“Oooooooo! Can we run over like this?” More giggles.

“Don’t see why not.”

“And leave our clothes here?”

“Come along,” said Mr. Pennyfeather.

The ex-sergeant showed a creative instinct. The twins were absorbed and enraptured, giggling happily as they were secured. First, the wrist of one was tied to an upright. Her other wrist was then bound fast to the wrist of her twin. This left but one free hand between them which was speedily looped and tied to another upright so that the two girls stood with arms outstretched forming a living naked link between the two roof supports. They made such a pretty picture that Mr. Pennyfeather found it desirable to return to his quarters for sustenance to celebrate his achievement. It was a tribute to the effect of his youthful

guests that he returned with a bottle of his very best. Each damsel sipped prettily from his proffered glass. They were far too tautly stretched to perform any function for themselves.

“Are you going to fuck us, Mr. Pennyfeather?”

It was an awkward question. The sergeant was no longer young. He found himself in the position of a General who, having fought and won a battle, is suddenly confronted with the demand that he fight it all over again. His Basset hound look deepened as he mentally considered logistics and the question of supplies. “Later.” He said gruffly.

“Mr. Pennyfeather has a limp dink.” Said one maiden sagely.

“We could straighten it out for him.” Said the other.

There were more giggles and a quite distinct hiccup. “I’ll straighten you out.” Mr. Pennyfeather promised darkly. A loop circled an outside ankle and was drawn up to the same post to which her wrist was tied. The same service was performed for her twin. This left each girl standing on one foot, her other high to her side cinched tight to the post. It was a vertical split which the host proceeded to enhance by tying their supporting feet as closely together as balance permitted.

“Open for inspection.” He laughed jocosely.

“Oh, Mr. Pennyfeather! We’ve never been tied like this be-

fore." The twins were ecstatic, but there was a trace of anxiety in their giggle.

"Lace into you right proper, I can, like that."

"Ooooo! Are you going to whip our cunts?"

"Like me to warm up your twats, eh!"

The twins exchanged glances. "Yes please, Mr. Pennyfeather. But please not with the cane."

"Wouldn't think of it." He assured them. "But first a few on those nice little rumps."

Two pairs of youthful female eyes followed his selection of a weapon. Two gasps greeted his choice. It was indeed a limber length that would lap their flesh. "It's ever so funny, Mr. Pennyfeather, the way you've got us fixed. Its like having two separate bottoms each."

"Good! I'll attend to all four."

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Pennyfeather! But while we are nicely stretched like this would you please shave our cunts."

The sergeant stopped in his tracks. "What's all this business about cunts?" He inquired suspiciously.

"We enjoy them, Mr. Pennyfeather."

The Army considered this new challenge to its expertise. "Come to think of it I like 'em myself." I admitted

grudgingly. “Half a mo’, I’ll get the kit.”

It was a labour of love, punctuated by many sips of the finest quality and a good deal of giggling. In spite of their strained postures, each twin was able to get a good look as the other was lathered and scraped. The passage of the brush sent them into paroxysms of erotic sensation and gales of giggles. Their barber breathed gustily.

“I bet his dink’s up straight now.” Said one.

“I claim first go.” Demanded the other.

“That’s not fair! It’ll go limp again, and we haven’t any more cunts to shave.”

“I’ll shave your pretty heads if you don’t stop being so rude.” The sergeant threatened. “All this talk about cunts: not nice, it isn’t.”

“Oh, would you do that, Mr. Pennyfeather! Oh please…!”

“Randy, that’s what you are.” The barber laid down his tools and picked up the cane. “Let’s see if your little arses match your mouths.”

He delivered two shrewdly placed cuts across each raised and parted cheek with its outstretched thigh.

“Ooooo! That was lovely, Mr. Pennyfeather. May we have another drink?”

He diverted the next strokes to the little chubbies above the

supporting legs, He alternated back and forth until the 'thank you's' became less spontaneous and were replaced by small gasps and moans and finally: "We'll be ever so good, Mr. Pennyfeather, if you'll please stop caning us."

The soldier laid down his arms and returned to his lather. "See, I told you." He said with satisfaction. "But lovely little arses you have, to be sure."

"We feel terribly hot, Mr. Pennyfeather. Please fuck us."

"What! In that position, don't be silly."

"Couldn't you kneel on a box or something?"

In the absence of The Royal Engineers, the sergeant felt inadequate. The effect upon his libido by the pleasant task on which he was engaged left him wishing he had bound the two girls in a more convenient position. But there was another worthy task ahead. Thoughtfully he washed off the cleanly depilated areas with a damp cloth, evoking gasps of ravishment in the process, then gave his full attention to the selection of a whip.

"Will it hurt more now our cunts are shaved, Mr. Pennyfeather?"

"That's something you'll have to tell me."

"Supposing we scream?"

"I'll gag you now if you like."

“No thank you, Mr. Pennyfeather. We love to tease.”

“How’s this for teasing.”

With some skill, the sergeant sent the lash curling into the wide crevice exposed by the tractioned feet. One each he gave them, then stood astounded at what he saw.

With a pealing moan of pain and joy, each twin went into orgasm. It was a wild tumultuous tossing of two heads, two slender forms writhing and heaving against the tight cords. They became one in their strange agony, wrists and ankles striving, but unable to move. They tugged frantically at the single cord which united them. Their moans went on and on. It was explosive, unexpected, incredible. Mr. Pennyfeather watched entranced.

“Just what I expected.” Said Sister Thalia.

You have heard of the dropping pin: the pregnant silence. We have them now. All motion was frozen. The whipper and the whipped stood transfixed by horror. The pause in time and space lengthened, to be broken by a fateful sound.

It was a dual hiccup.

“You have plied these girls with alcohol, Mr. Pennyfeather!”

“They complained of indigestion.” The Army prepared itself for a full scale retreat.

“Nonsense!” Sister Thalia’s declaration sent casualties reeling in all directions.

“Medicinally, like.”

“Nonsense!! What are these absurd girls doing in this lewd posture?”

The Army vanished over the hill, utterly routed. Mr. Pennyfeather’s next words may well have been influenced by his bottle of the Special Blend. “Training for the Ballet, so they tell me.” He offered hopefully.

“Nonsense!!!”

The newcomer circled the shed, and came into view of the full enormity of what had taken place. Her eyes flew from the denuded lips to the discarded brush, mug and razor. “And what fatuous explanation have you to offer for this?” She demanded.

Mr. Pennyfeather did his best. “All that hair’s a bit warm in Summertime, so I’m told.”

All three delinquents braced for the inevitable: “Nonsense!!! Those girls had not enough hair to warm a hamster.”

She fixed the bound and quaking twins balefully. “This is your doing, isn’t it?”

“Oh no, Sister! He made us.”

“Nonsense!!! Remember what I saw when I entered. I am well aware of your proclivities. Why did you not come to me?”

“Mr. Pennyfeather whips ever so nicely, Sister.”

“It is part of his duties. Get dressed.”

Mr. Pennyfeather fumbled with knots, but the Special Blend defeated his fingers. Sister Thalia imperiously swept him aside and freed the quaking girls. “Get your clothes and come to my office. On second thoughts you can carry them. No need to put them on. Hurry.”

The twins fled in pure fear, small buttocks twinkling their scarlet stripes. Sister Thalia followed them regally. Alone in his Tool Shed, Mr. Pennyfeather wiped his brow with a dirty handkerchief and made a thinkful retreat to his Bottle of Special Blend.

It was beastly in the dark! Hyacinth had always supposed the heavy door in the wall of Sister Thalia’s office hid a clothes closet. When it was unlocked for her benefit she had cringed from the small stone cell, without windows, without even a stool, it spoke bleakly of punishment. A dismal daunting little dungeon in which a delinquent girl could be thrust to await the Sister’s convenience.

Hyacinth hoped that was her fate now. The idea of inhabiting the tiny stygian prison throughout the night terrified her. Time had vanished, panic hovered. In such confine-

ment a girl might envisage the passage of hours in a few minutes and the passing of days in a couple of hours. Hating the thought, she knew she would be very obedient and respectful when released.

The hateful bra' was still locked upon her breasts. It seemed as though it had been there forever. The misery of what the two wicked cups did to her breasts had become a part of her consciousness. The pain and the itch was still there, but she had adjusted to them. A girl could adjust to anything, it seemed! It was on this premise that The Priory flourished. The handcuffs, too, were now a part of her. Apart from the shame of nudity and need of help they exposed, her real distress had been unaffected by them. When her hands were free she had used them only to seek release from the biting straps and torturing cups against which they were powerless. So what did it matter if they were chained behind her back! Yet, even so, she wanted those hands. They would fend off the demons of the dark, the unseen imaginary things against which her nudity was vulnerable.

She was close to tears and panic when the door opened. She looked out, fearful and uncertain and blinking in the sudden light, and beheld a strange sight. The twins stood naked before the desk. One held an untidy bundle of clothing. Both wept. Sister Thalia's face was a thundercloud. "Come out, Hyacinth."

The handcuffed girl stepped thankfully into the light. "Put

those clothes on a chair." The Sister said testily. "And both of you get in here." She held the door open invitingly.

Obedience was instant. Sobbing, the twins disappeared into the blackness. The door slammed, the lock turned. Sister Thalia subsided into her chair as though exhausted. Hyacinth meekly placed herself before the desk of judgement.

"I sometimes despair." The Sister shook her head in mock hopelessness. "Really, these girls!" She pondered a moment. "An infinite variety, I suppose we can call it. Little demons! Endless Exorcism! Sometimes one tires…"

A small silence fell. At its end Sister Thalia looked with affection at the captive across the desk. "I am tired, Hyacinth, so I will tell you something. You are a nice sensible well balanced girl. You are no longer a child. I would like to see you become one of our Teachers. Your Academic standing permits."

The handcuffed girl threw back her head, startled. She had never felt less authoritative in her life. Here was something she had never even dreamed of. To be a Teacher at The Priory was akin to being a prisoner for life. Privileged perhaps, but still captive. Pleasurable or bearable according to a girl's dedication to the Cult. The Priory Cult, she reflected ruefully.

"Have I a choice?" It was her first reaction.

"Not an encouraging response, my dear."

The potential Teacher twisted in her bonds. “I want to be set free when my sentence is done.” She said uncertainly.

“And when will that be, child?”

Hyacinth squirmed again. If The Sister did not know, who did! Or was this a kindly way of hinting that for her there would never be freedom! Her Penance had made release seem frighteningly remote. Look at her now! Punished, handcuffed! How could she ever be a Teacher! As always, when her freedom was denied, she became angry. The meekness generated by the dark seeped away. “If I said, now, that yes I would use my tongue to bring to orgasm other… other… females, would it get me free of these things that hold me now?”

“Yes.”

There was nothing to say. The exchange of words had disclosed nothing not already understood. But they had been enough to make the captive wonder why she fought. It would be so easy to give in. So easy to become a Teacher. So easy to love Mignon or Belinda or, for that matter, Sister Thalia herself. In a world of women they were all one. But surely, surely, someone must free her sometime! Surely her name was on a list somewhere.

“Officially you do not exist, dear girl.” The Sister had read her thoughts.

Hyacinth wept. “What is my next penance?” She asked

between her sobs.

It was a renunciation. A decision. Taking it, Hyacinth knew she had crossed a boundary she might later regret. Her breasts and her nipples cried their agony at her abandonment of their hurt. The handcuffs upon her wrists jeered at her nobility. She was a masochist, they laughed, who found joy in their bite upon her flesh. She deliberately sought that which she deplored. Hyacinth looked across the desk at Sister Thalia in supplication.

“I think I understand, child.” The voice was unexpectedly tender, “I know this is not easy for you. Let us say nothing has happened. You continue your Penance.”

The meek captive could have howled in frustration. As a concession to feminine indecision she was to go back to agony! What a choice! There had never really been one. “Please, Sister, take this bra’ off me.” She pleaded without pride.

Sister Thalia pursed her lips thoughtfully. “I am going to use a word, Hyacinth, from which I used to shrink. I do not utter it now without solemn purpose. It is a word that you must become increasingly accustomed to, perhaps use yourself.” She paused, her eyes searching the girl who stood across the desk. “Your next penance has to do with your cunt…! Yes, your cunt! Expressive, vulgar, vital! It had been my intention to whip your cunt in various shaming ways, all of them painful.” She allowed herself a fleeting

smile. “But I have just been embroiled in a ridiculous incident that leaves me disinclined. It can be done later. Yes, I will remove your bra and your handcuffs. You will not like what replaces them.”

Hyacinth strove to quench thought. It was painful. No conclusions could be happy. She stood, yielding and compliant as the locks clicked. She gasped in both pain and consternation as her breasts emerged from their cone shaped prisons. They were angry, red and scarlet, yet also beautiful. The nipples laughed in glee at their immunity and stuck out as though in pride. She massaged the chafe marks on her wrists where the metal bands had held her. Then tentatively probed her greatest treasures to test their tenderness.

“My poor child.” Hyacinth looked up, startled. Sister Thalia was holding a strange object. Whatever it was, Hyacinth passionately did not want it yet.

“Must I? So soon.” All her despair was in those few words.

“You must.”

The naked girl made a gesture of bafflement. “I’ve only just been released. I’m so tired. I hurt. Please, Sister…”

“That is the nature of Penance, child.”

“Then may I please stop? Withdraw? I did not know…” Her eyes messaged their appeal. “I thought I was stronger than I am. I did not know a Penance was so awful. I thought per-

haps I would be whipped…”

“Are the things you have suffered worse than the whip?”

“They go on and on, Sister. They never let me rest. The other girls look at me with pity.”

“That is Penance.”

Hyacinth looked miserably at the thing in Sister Thalia’s hands. She divined its purpose. It would be hateful!

“Come, child.”

Defeated, she opened her mouth to accept the metal that would depress her tongue and render her mute. It was a cleverly fashioned instrument of silence. “It will become you.” Sister Thalia said gently as she pushed home the bit and gathered the leather across the passive cheeks.

Hyacinth stood still, tensioning the muscles of her neck against the tug of the Sister’s hands. Like all else that had been placed upon her this would be tight. There would be no escape. Soft leather closed upon her lips, her mouth seemed filled with metal. Her hair was lifted so that the straps could exert an unimpeded pressure. When the buckle had been drawn to its last hole there came the snap of the inevitable padlock. Another penance had begun.

She slept. Nature claimed a girl even in torture. Alone in the night she repeatedly explored the horror that was fastened upon and within her. There was no shifting it. Yet,

having the use of her hands, she could not forbear to seek release. It seemed impossible and unjust that the thing within her mouth and its lock behind her neck could mock her mind and her strength. Yet she was impotent against it.

Once more she was a delight. It was demeaningly frustrating to be the centre of attraction, yet mute. She was able to don her tunic, but found it strangely inappropriate. The gag had looked more natural upon her nakedness. As usual it was the younger girls who clustered and asked the questions she could not answer. The older inmates of The Priory simply winked or shrugged: they had worn the gag themselves and knew her feelings.

Breakfast was a shock. Hyacinth found herself blushing in mortification. She had, thoughtlessly, gone with the rest to the dining Hall. No Teacher and no Sister made a move to unlock her punishment. No girl could! From habit she sat in her usual seat, but when it became evident that this particular penance inhibited eating, she rose in shame and stalked to the classroom.

But there, too, she was an object of pity. She could not speak, so she was ignored. Ignored with kind intent, but still a pariah. She wept. At least she had her hands to dry her tears.

By evening, all Hyacinth could think about was food. Lunch and dinner were denied as had been breakfast. She hated the thing in her mouth with a bitterness beyond even the

bra'. The gag robbed her of personality and communion as well as food. She was thankful when evening came and she could once more stand for judgement before the familiar desk.

The gag was taken from her without comment. Her bruised lips and tongue managed a pale 'thank you' which was sincere. She was without hope, but thankful for any mercy. Sister Thalia was in taciturn mood. The girl in Penance stood, working her mouth and her tongue gratefully. She looked down at her breasts. They were still pink.

Sister Thalia picked up a small bag. "Come along." She ordered brusquely.

It was a Summer evening. But it was dark beneath the trees. It would get darker. The shadows cast a ghostliness where, in day, all was innocent. Wonderingly, Hyacinth followed the purposeful strides of the woman with the bag.

"Undress, child."

For a moment the girl thought she had not heard aright. But there was no mistaking the older woman's intent. Hyacinth rendered herself naked. It was not a heavy task. Visions of whippings with willow switches filled her mind.

"This tree will do nicely." Sister Thalia said judicially. "Back up against it, dear."

Hyacinth was in a 'what does it matter' mood. She was sure she would not like what was about to be done to her, but

she was as helpless here in the huge garden as she was inside the building. With a cautious shrug she did as she was bid.

The tree was not large. When told to put her hands behind the trunk Hyacinth had no difficulty. She winced as Sister Thalia bound them there. She winced again and again as cords pulled her back against the trunk. At ankle waist and shoulders she was cinched back by shrewd cunning bands. It did not take long.

“See if you can free yourself, dear.”

Hyacinth made a genuine struggle and only stopped when the pain got too bad.

“That will do nicely, child.” Sister Thalia kissed the captive gently, and turned to leave.

The tied girl was horrified: “But Sister! What about me?”

“What about you, child?”

“You arn’t going to leave me, are you?”

“To spend a night like this is one of your penances, dear.”

Hyacinth was aghast. It was dark. Already she could see the ghosts and sense the night things on the prowl. “Oh no, please.” It was the old familiar cry.

“There are worse things than standing here, Hyacinth.”

“But I’m naked, and I’m so helpless. You’ve tied me so I can’t move.”

“Are there other ways, child?”

“I’m frightened.”

“What of, the dark?”

“Yes.” She knew it sounded childish. But naked! Alone!

“Good night, my dear.” Sister Thalia walked off into the shadows.

For long minutes Hyacinth rested within the grip of the cords that, already, were nestled hurtfully within her skin. Her mind was a turmoil. She felt utterly lost and abandoned. The Priory defeated her with its sudden changes of mood, its plethora of penalties designed to guide her to conformity. It was not cold, but it was night. She shivered. She scarcely dared think of standing thus as the hours plodded on and on until she was released in the morning… If she was released! In sudden panic she tore at the cords upon her wrists. If she could only get her hands free…! But the good Sister’s knots held firm, her fingers could not even reach them. Hyacinth wept.

What can be told of a naked girl tied to a tree in the dark! There is nothing to tell save her thoughts. With Hyacinth thought was chaotic. Punishment! Penance! To be a Teacher! Escape! Tied now to a tree! Impression beat upon impression, fear upon fear. But soon she surrendered to

the inevitable. She would stand as she was until someone had the will to lose her cords. She might even sleep since the tight bands held her firmly and would support her weight when she slumped in slumber. Her night would not be pleasant. It was not intended to be.

She tried to doze, thinking wryly of the twins in the black hole she had hated. Were they getting their bottoms tanned! What of Imogene! She sensed all was not well with the lovely Teacher. But, more immediately, what of herself! Would the penances change her! Would she return to The Prioress a different girl! She doubted it. The Penances were only pain. Sexually oriented pain, but in the end not much different from the whip. The whip was quicker and cleaner, that was all.

He loomed out of the blackness, heralded by a broken twig beneath his foot. Hyacinth could tell only that he was not old and that his clothes were of quality. He had an air. They stared at each other in disbelief.

“You’re not really true, are you?” His voice was public school.

“Go away.” Said Hyacinth horrified.

“Do you want me to go because you are naked, or for some other reason?” He inquired pleasantly.

She had not thought of her nudity. It had been the authority of The Priory that had spoken. She changed her plea. It

was suddenly desperate.

“Please help me. Help me escape.”

He moved closer so that each was visible to the other.

She was thankful he could not see her blush. Each liked what they saw.

“Care to put me in the picture?” He asked amusedly.

“Can’t you see! I’m a prisoner. Untie me… Oh please!”

“Why should I?”

She longed to stamp her foot in vexation. “Well, why shouldn’t you?” She demanded hotly.

“A lot of people love being tied up. I wouldn’t want to intrude on fun and games.” He advanced reasonably. “Maybe your husband tied you.”

Hyacinth was absurdly flattered: A husband!

How good it sounded! She suddenly wanted a husband very much. The world of women faded.

“I don’t have a husband.” She said testily. “Would you care to marry me?”

“Are you quality crumpet?” He was laughing at her.

“I’m a virgin.” She flung at him. “Any inducement?”

“There’s no such thing.” He sounded like fun.

“There is in The Priory.” Hyacinth affirmed with certainty.

“Ah yes, I’d forgotten the holy ground on which I trespass. You’re all Lesbians, arn’t you?”

She could have wept. How could a captive of The Priory convince anyone about anything! She was suspect before she opened her mouth.

“That’s not true. I’m not.”

“May I put my hand on it?”

She knew he was playing with her. But she was desperate. She had to make him believe.

“I can’t stop you.” She retorted tartly. Then added in a softer tone: “Please do. Go on! I’d like you to.”

When his assured experienced fingers inserted themselves between her legs, she knew The Priory could never claim her. Here was The Male, and she was Woman. When his hand firmly cupped her sex she threw her head sideways and moaned in happiness.

He was startled. “You must be starved.” He exclaimed incredulously.

“I’m sorry I’m tied.” What a silly thing to say! “I… I can’t open my legs for you. I would if I could…”

“Damned obliging, old girl. Sure you haven’t had one too many?” His cupped hand was too wise. It was setting her aflame.

He would never believe! How could he? “I’m being punished.” She said. “Please untie me.”

“I say, old girl.” His tone was faintly patronising. “I don’t want to get in trouble with the Abbess or the Mother Superior or the local Vicar or whoever runs the place. They’d have me up in Court for kidnapping.”

She moaned in genuine distress. “I’m kidnapped now. Look at me!”

“And very nice too.” He conceded warmly. “Mind if I bite your tits?”

“Help yourself.” It was a concession on ice.

His lips and his teeth inflamed her, Hyacinth was ashamed of the surge of fire through her loins as his mouth took possession of her nipples. “Think.” She urged him through passionate gasps. “Untie me and I belong to you.”

“You’d run like Hell.”

“I wouldn’t! Keep me tied so I have to do what you want.”

He backed away and scrutinised her lined and pleading face. “You mean that, don’t you?” He said as though realisation of her sincerity had just dawned.

Once again she longed to destroy his male complacency. “You silly twit,” She said through clenched teeth, “Don’t you understand what I’m offering? Take me. Use me. If you’ll get me out of here I’ll be your slave. I’ll do anything.”

“The Priory that bad?”

“It’s worse! Oh, please untie me!”

“Would you let me whip you?”

Him too! Did the whip rule the world! She did not care. “Of course you can whip me. I’d love it.”

“You’re pulling my leg.”

“I’m not! Honest. I get whipped all the time here. I’m not afraid of being whipped.”

“You said you loved it. Bit of a masochist, are you?”

“I suppose so. What does it matter? You’ll love whipping me. That’s all that matters, isn’t it?”

“I suppose it is.” He said seriously. “But I’d like it a lot more if you liked it too.”

“I’d like it. Please untie me.”

“You mentioned that before.”

“Well, do it. Then I wouldn’t have to keep asking.”

He withdrew his hand so that she suddenly felt cold. He

placed it against her nose. “Smell. You’re better than Chanel.”

She inhaled luxuriously. A sudden vista of male joy opened before her imagination. She smelt wonderful! She was sure he would too. “Untie me.” She begged.

“You become tedious.”

“Don’t you want me? Think: two breasts, two nipples, a lovely cunt that smells good, and all the rest thrown in as a sort of bonus. All you have to do is untie a few knots.”

He laughed. joyously. Then went behind the tree and began to tug.

Hyacinth stood, rubbing the chafed parts of her anatomy. She did not run. She kept her eyes upon her deliverer. She knew herself closer to freedom than she had been in two years. “I now belong to you.” She said simply. “Use me.”

But he was a nice young man. Chivalry forbid. The same chivalry that has defeated a million suburban maidens through the years.

“You want to escape.” He said urgently, “Come along.”

“Don’t you want to ravish me?” Hyacinth was determined to pay her debts.

He laughed at her choice of words. “Later.” He assured her. “Now, best get over the wall. I am trespassing, y’know.”

She was suddenly eager as he. Freedom! It seemed impossible. Yet, if he could get in, he could get out, and she with him. She followed blindly where he led.

The wall was a monolithic challenge. She quailed at sight of it until she saw the rope. It was strong and reassuring. Her companion went up it like a monkey. “I’ll pull you up afterwards.” He told her blithely.

She watched him climb. Her heart swelled. He was male and thus omnipotent. In minutes she would be free. Perhaps within minutes he would have possessed her. She longed hungrily. Her loins burned. She stepped happily to one side to watch his ascent.

The pain was impossible! Awful beyond words. The metallic sound accompanied it as an integral part. She screamed. It took moments before she realised what had happened to her. She had stepped into a trap, a steel horror designed for unwary or guilty feet. She sunk to one knee, her whole being crying out against this thing that held her. Even in the darkness it was easy to see the twin jaws that closed upon her ankle. They were serrated with teeth. Perhaps to hold her more securely. Perhaps simply to inflict pain on the trespasser they were designed to foil. They had captured her. She who had but minutes ago escaped captivity. Frantically she tugged at the metal in which her foot was helpless. It would not budge. It hurt, it hurt! She knew she could never free herself. Pathetically her eyes flew to the wall. The boy had gone. So had his rope.

Hyacinth was alone, her foot in a metal trap. As much a prisoner as she had ever been.

* * *

Lady Hipple liked to be present at what she jocosely referred to as “The Opening”. The girls were neatly and discreetly delivered from The Priory in a large heavy wicker hamper originally designed for laundry. Their comfort was of little concern since they never made such a journey unless heavily delinquent.

Hyacinth struggled to her feet unaided. The opening of the hamper lid ushered her into a new world in which she was quite sure there would be nothing but pain and more pain. Standing erect was not easy. She was naked, she was cramped, her wrists were handcuffed behind her back. Lady Hipple was aware of a very lovely unintentionally posed picture as the captive looked about her bemusedly.

The best description of Lady Gertrude Hipple could be that no one, even Lord Hipple himself, ever called her Gertie. Her other identification might be described as Heavy Tweed. “Inked your blotter, they tell me.” She greeted heartily.

Hyacinth stepped out of the hamper, certain that everything she did and said before this august presence

would be wrong. She managed a polite: “Yes, Lady Hipple.” And waited for the headsman’s axe.

“Call me Madam. Title sounds like one of the larger inmates of the Zoo. Never cared for it. All you could expect from Hilary. You’re expecting a sound thrashing, no doubt?”

“Yes madam.”

“Sensible girl. Nothing like a sound thrashing at your age. I was thrashed regularly, and look at me now!”

Hyacinth suppressed a desire to giggle. The Hipples, Lord and Lady, though viewed with awe, were also the butt of much coarse humour. “I’m sorry to be such a nuisance.” She offered meekly.

“And you’ll be much sorrier, m’dear.” Lady Hipple assured her cheerfully. “Sad and sorry! Make a good motto, eh! I say, girl, have you had breakfast?”

“I’m afraid not.”

“If you are going to be thrashed you’d better eat. Come along, m’dear. Follow me.”

Hyacinth wondered. No Headsman! No dungeon. No rack, pincers or hot irons! At least not yet. But Lady Hipple was going to take some getting used to. Surely this bonhomie could not last! She followed, her spirits faintly rising. She supposed her handcuffs de rigueur.

It was a truly noble breakfast. One such as the captive had not seen in the past two years. Her mouth watered. But there was a hitch. The hostess perceived it instantly. “Where’s the key to those handcuffs, girl?”

It seemed a silly question. A naked girl could hide or carry a key in only one place. Hyacinth refrained from mentioning this. Instead she said: “I expect The Priory thought you had one.”

“Damn and blast!” Lady Hipple turned to the butler, who seemed to find nothing odd about the guest’s condition. His manner was bland and attentive. “Crabtree, send someone over. Girl has to have her hands sometimes.”

It is not every captive girl who is fed her breakfast by the hand of nobility! Hyacinth had never found herself in more intriguing circumstances. The tweed clad woman plied her with massive chunks of sustenance as though feeding chained and naked girls was a daily occurrence at The Castle. Perhaps it was! It tasted, oh, so good!

“Just to get the record straight.” Said Lady Hipple briskly, “You’d better tell me if you enjoy being whipped or not?” She proffered half a grilled kidney that inhibited Hyacinth’s reply.

“I don’t like it at all, Madam. I’m sorry.”

“Nothing to be sorry about.” The hostess said cordially. “Means there’s some point to flogging you. There’s been

some of the little bitches they've sent over here that got hotter than a firecracker after the first half dozen." She mused quietly: "Sort of envied the little baggages…" She mused quietly while handing her enforced guest a rasher of bacon.

"Heard the Legends about this place?"

Hyacinth found the sudden changes of tempo disconcerting. She had indeed heard the legends! But how to say so! "I was told we were sent here when our behaviour offended beyond The Priory's tolerance… I tried to escape."

"It's the ultimate crime."

Hyacinth shrugged her pinioned shoulders and opened her mouth for toast. "I've been a prisoner for two years. Isn't that enough? Why can't I be set free?"

Lady Hipple eyed her with approval. "Sensible question. Don't you know the answer?"

"Is there one?" The food gave Hyacinth courage.

"Of course, you little idiot! Can't you guess! You're a tasty morsel. Why would anyone let you go!"

"They want me to be a lesbian."

"That's right. Give the Sisters clits a good tonguing and one day you'll be the Prioress." Lady Hipple guffawed.

"I don't want either."

“Some are born to greatness. Others have greatness thrust upon them. Wiser man than me who said that.” There was tolerance in Lady Hipple’s voice.

“It will be thrust upon me by the whip, won’t it?”

Lady Hipple shrugged. “I don’t know. We are all different. You girls surprise me endlessly. One who would die under the lash will surrender because of a kind word. Those of you who are sent here suffer the damndest things. But I never know… I look at each new arrival and wonder. I wonder, now, about you. By the way, I’m not averse to fun and games. So if you find the pain too hard to bear you can start your reformation immediately. I’ll provide the facility.” She chuckled, “Good synonym for cunt, eh!”

Hyacinth’s blush and reply were lost. An elderly gentleman wandered in and looked absently around.

“What are you after, Hilary?” Lord Hipple’s wife asked sharply.

“Ah, there you are, m’dear.” His voice was as vague as his appearance. Curled up at the edges, Hyacinth thought. His eye lit upon her with evident pleasure. “Why, Mildred, dear child. How nice to see you. And how is your dear mother?”

“Silly old bugger thinks you’re his great niece.” Whispered the Viscount’s spouse. “Play up to him.”

Hyacinth had never felt more foolish. “We are all well, uncle dear.” She ventured hopefully.

“Lovely tits.” His Lordship approved. “Wern’t you third from the left at the Alhambra?”

“Go away, Hilary. We’re talking.” Lady Hipple’s voice was sharp.

The ancient nobleman fumblingly produced a wallet from which he extracted a five pound note. He dropped this in Hyacinth’s lap. “Lovely evening, m’dear. Never enjoyed m’self more.” He ambled from the room.

“Dirty old man.” Said his wife, nimbly retrieving the currency and tucking it away. “He hasn’t been to the Alhambra in fifty years. Or anywhere else either.” She added bitterly.

Hyacinth was amused and curious. “But Madam, surely his niece wouldn’t be naked and handcuffed?”

“Old fool never sees anything else but your tits, love. Dressed or naked, it’s all the same to him. If you’ve got a good pair you’ll remind him of someone.” Her voice drifted into nostalgia. “I had a damn good pair once. Got me a title and damn all else.”

The captive munched steadily. Lady Hipple would no doubt be very cruel, but at least she was human. The little man who had gone was even more so. Hyacinth’s heart went with him.

Crabtree returned with the key. Lady Hipple tucked it safely within an intimate recess. The wearer of the handcuffs watched its disappearance with disappointment.

“Go away Crabtree.” Lady Hipple said testily. “We want to talk.”

The perfect butler vanished as though by magic.

“Swings a lovely whip, Crabtree does.” The tweedy woman mused. “I’m not a dog in the manger type, dear. If you’re starved for a man I’ll let Crabtree have a go at you. He’s well hung and has staying power.”

The naked girl could not believe her ears. Seeing her bafflement, her companion laughed. “Shocked? Don’t be. It was me who was third from the left at the Alhambra. I’m no lady. With Hilary a girl just has to have a hobby. Mine’s cocks and cunts. I suppose I could say the world’s been very kind…”

Hyacinth was touched by a basic sincerity in the woman. She took a chance. “But then… why? I mean, why me?”

Lady Hipple was unabashed. “Pure lust, darling. I told you: you’re a tasty morsel. I can hardly wait to hear you scream and watch you wriggle while I whip you.”

It was frightening, but honest. “Why must you whip me?” The naked girl asked sadly.

“Because you’re beautiful.” The older woman laughed bitterly. “I was beautiful. That was why Hilary married me. He wanted my breasts. He’d call ’em tits now. Then, he called them pomegranates of desire. I could never keep him away from ’em. Now he hasn’t sucked one in years.

Lost his teeth, of course. There was Napoleon and Caesar and lots more silly bastards who tried to conquer the world so they could get a hard on for a pretty girl. Used other names, of course. But that was the game. Beautiful women have a lot to answer for. Their effect on men's cocks and women's cunts scares you." She looked at the eager girl. "I'll make it even simpler for you: If you can't fuck 'em, whip 'em! That's what the Yanks call 'The name of the Game'. Sorry, Kid. You're for it!"

"But I could have been whipped at The Priory?" Hyacinth was still trying to put things in their place.

"So you could, dear. But there are other facilities here that they don't have. May never use 'em on you, but we'll see." Lady Hipple produced a companionable grin. "Fact is I take advantage of a quaint situation. Hilary and I and The Prioress are the sole Board of Governors, so all I have to do when I want a girl is drop the word. The Hamper shows up regularly. I expect I've whipped more little bottoms that any other woman in England."

"But… But, isn't that cruel?"

"I used to feel a bit guilty." Lady Hipple conceded. "Selfish, y'know. The pleasure all mine. But nothing's the way you expect. As I told you, some of 'em loved it. The I others were surely better girls when I was through with 'em. Not boasting. It's just a fact. Girls need their bottoms attended to."

“Does his Lordship approve?”

Lady Hipple’s laughter was genuine. “Hilary approve! My dear girl that’s why I’m here. Hilary wanted to whip me. Not my bottom, but the lovely breasts I used to have. I told you he was a tit man. He looked after mine pretty thoroughly for a good many years. I’ll admit that, with a bit of persuasion from me, he did divert some of his energies to my bottom, I had a good of those too. Spread the pain around a bit. Three places is better than one, I always told him. Finally we started bringing girls over. It amused him until he got too absent minded. Took out his favourite cane one day when The Prioress was here to Tea, wanted her to bend over. After that I sort of continued where he left off. Have you done much whipping yourself?”

“But, madam, I’m a prisoner, a sort of convict. It’s me who gets whipped.”

“Sorry, girl, I forgot. But you never know what goes on in that Hen House.” Lady Hipple studied her guest with a kindly eye. “I like you. How’d you like to whip a girl…? Make a nice change.”

Hyacinth’s face must have mirrored her bewilderment. Suddenly both of them were laughing in a shared recognition of the absurd. “Go on.” The older woman prompted.

“Have a go at it.” She reached out and pulled a bell rope.

“Madam?”

“Ah, there you are Crabtree. Young Sally’s turn, isn’t it?”

“An impressive list of demerits, m’lady.”

“Good! Fix her up and leave her. We’ll come down when we’re ready.”

“Of course, m’lady. I’m sure she will be grateful for the attention.”

“I doubt that very much.” Said Lady Hipple as he vanished. “Proper little baggage she is.” She cast a kindly eye on her nervous guest. “We do have a Priory girl here you could have practised on. But thought you’d be happier with a bit ’o skin you’re not acquainted with.”

“You are being terribly kind to me…”

“So you’re waiting for the hidden kicker, eh! Well don’t! It may show up. I won’t promise you it won’t. In the meantime be thankful for a bored County wife with a special kind of hobby.”

What would the Priory think if it knew! The Sisters would not approve. The rest would not believe. “I’m not sure I’ll be very good at it.” Hyacinth tendered slowly.

“Don’t make me laugh.”

“I’ve never tried. I’ve never wanted to.” Hyacinth groped for the right word. “But I do want to please you…”

Lady Hipple retrieved the key. “Turn round, you lovely

creature. You can't do much whipping like that." There were clicks and an incredible sense of release. "Come along now, we'll give you a bath and make you even more lovely than nature intended. It will make it more of an occasion for young Sally than if you're a bit grubby. A girl likes to be whipped by her betters."

Hyacinth doubted that young Sally wanted to be whipped at all. There was nothing in the apprehensive eye that looked back over a strained shoulder to support such a premise.

"Delightfully whippable, wouldn't you say." Lady Hipple suggested pleasantly.

Delightful and whippable without a doubt! Hyacinth agreed. The slender blonde stood naked, her arms spread, her hands high, her wrists firmly strapped to an over head bar. Sally made a charming and inviting picture. She was also very, very scared. The appealing face she turned to them reminded Hyacinth of the wild thing in a trap. "I'm terribly sorry, m'lady." She quavered in a thin small voice.

"I'm sure you are, my dear." Agreed Lady Hipple heartily.

"Please don't whip me. I'll be ever so good."

"Are you trying to say that you will now be a good girl if I refrain from striping your pretty hide?"

"Oh yes, m'lady. Please…"

“Then why wern’t you a good girl before?”

Hyacinth’s heart went out to the culprit. Sally was fighting without weapons.

Sally fell back on tears and quite pitiful wails.

“Stop that absurd noise. Time enough for that later.” Lady Hipple commanded without rancour.

The absurd noise stopped.

“Tell you what.” Lady Hipple turned to Hyacinth magnanimously. “I’ll leave you two together for thirty minutes. Then I’ll inspect.” Her eyes twinkled. “I’ll expect to find Sally very completely marked. Good solid scarlet stripes is what I’ll be looking for. If they arn’t there, you’ll both wish they had been.” She turned to the tied girl, “Understand me, Sally?”

“Oh yes, m’lady.” The acknowledgement was instant and without hope.

The tweed clad woman motioned to a table on which Hyacinth’s practised eye had noted an array of whips and canes. “Take your pick, dear. The main thing is to use ’em. Make her yelp.” She imparted a broad and knowing wink, then swept grandly through the door.

From rags to riches! Nothing made sense. Hyacinth found herself torn. Yet, when she considered, she did not have much in the way of alternatives. She had no wish to whip

another girl's bottom, but the pleasantly curved nudity of the bound girl was a demanding reminder of a duty unfulfilled. She looked up at the two slender wrists held tight by their two tight straps. It was almost as though she herself stood there waiting for the whip: so familiar was the pose. How often she, too, had looked back over her shoulder in fear as Sally was doing now.

"Don't hit me too hard, Miss." Her victim pleaded. Then, sensing a social inferiority: "Why ain't you got no clothes on?"

"I'm from the Priory."

"How come you get to whip me then!" Sally sounded indignant.

"Don't look at me like that." Hyacinth retorted irritably. "I'd pack up and go home if I could."

"Fat chance! I say, is that true you girls take turns sucking off the Sisters?"

Hyacinth had a sudden inspiration. "If I undo those straps, will you lead me out of here?"

"What, and get flayed alive! Not bloody likely! I'm going to tell the Old Girl what you said."

Sally was beginning to pall. "In that case I don't feel so badly about what I'm supposed to do to you." Hyacinth said tartly. She went to the table and made a shrewd selection.

“I’m going to start with the cane.”

Sally was suspended on tip-toe. She shifted unhappily from one foot to the other. “Didn’t mean no offence, Miss. I won’t tell, honest I won’t.” Her face showed puzzlement. “This really the first time you’ve whipped a girl?”

“Of course. Up to now it’s always been someone else who whips me. I think this is only happening because it amuses Lady Hipple. D’you mind if I start?”

“Help yourself.” Sally obviously felt imposed upon.

Hyacinth had to admit it was a sensation like no other.

You picked your spot, you swung so that the cane made a fine snickering sound before it thunked solidly into the soft white flesh waiting without welcome. There was the sudden indentation, the line of white that began to change into colour instantly. The weal that sprang into being was an embellishment for any girl. But it was Sally’s contortions that stole the show.

“You rotten bitch!” The blonde maiden lifted herself off the floor by her bound wrists and kicked frantically at nothing. “You don’t have to hit me like that.”

“I didn’t think it was all that hard.” Hyacinth said truthfully.

The kicking girl and the scarlet stripe were fascinating. Hyacinth wondered if this was how she looked to others. She

was both repelled and excited by what she had done. She struck again with greater vigour.

“Wow! Oh damn you, damn you!” Sally was nothing if not vocal. “You’re hurting me on purpose.”

“That’s a silly thing to say. You know I have to.”

“If I spread my legs and let you tongue me, will you go a bit easy?”

Hyacinth sighed. Here was the old recurring theme again. She swung harder still. Sally’s strapped wrists seemed in danger from the strain their anguished owner flung upon them. When the noises subsided, the caned girl uttered angrily: “Alright you stinker. Let me down and I’ll do whatever you want. Then I’ll let you strap me like this again. Honest, I’ll behave.”

“Can’t you understand I’m not a Lesbian?”

“Aw, come off it. Everybody knows about the Priory.”

Hyacinth was suddenly glad she did not have to rely on words. She used the cane once more, and was ashamed of how good it felt to do it. She was glad it was Sally, not some girl she knew. But her reactions were unexpected. Why, oh why, should the thunk of the cane in flesh and a girl’s cry of agony be ambrosia. She knew herself shameless and without pity for this wildly dancing and complaining girl thing strapped tight for her delectation. It was fun! She knew herself what Mignon called horny. So be it! She sud-

denly felt closer to reality than she had ever been. With a strange fire surging within her she slashed again and again at the dancing chubbies of the captive girl, and listened to her plaints with a tremendous awareness of wellbeing.

When the gyrating bottom was beautifully striated with crimson wounds, the caning stopped. This time Hyacinth took much time with her selection from the table. When she casually sauntered round to where the suspended girl could see her comfortably she was holding a beautifully tapered length of black leather, at sight of which the captive uttered what might have been a cry of despair.

“Not that one! It’s a beastly, rotten, awful thing to use on a girl.”

“But it’s not heavy.” Hyacinth pointed out reasonably and with private amusement. “It won’t bruise. It will curl beautifully: perfect for your breasts.”

Sally flew into further contortions. She was an energetic girl who evidently believed that actions spoke louder than words. As she punished her strapped wrists she also made injudicious use of her tongue. “You’re a rotten sadist, that’s what you are. You just wait ’till I get you like this sometime. I’ll cut your tits off.”

“Then you won’t mind me cutting your’s first?” Hyacinth was shocked by her own enjoyment. The knowledge of power that freedom from bonds plus possession of the whip gave her was heady stuff. Two years of The Priory

and Mr. Pennyfeather: now this! Sally might, quite truly, cut her to pieces some other time. But right now Sally belonged to her. She was almost scared to acknowledge, even to herself, her longing and her intention to whip more than Sally's bottom and back.

"Don't you dare!" Sally stormed without conviction. "I'll tell."

"Please do." Hyacinth invited as she curled the whip back for its first forward stroke. As Sally screamed wildly she struck again and again and again. She owned the world. The crimson welts sprung into being and saluted her. The beautiful crimson welts…

Lady Hipple chuckled. "Make a discovery, didn't you?"

Hyacinth's blush told clearly that she had indeed made a discovery.

"Couple more like this and you'll be as far at Sea as I am." Lady Hipple's voice was sardonic. "Now, let's make a little inspection."

"She hurt me something cruel." Sally accused between sobs.

"Excellent!" Lady Hipple was counting stripes.

"Wanted me to help her escape." Sally panted pathetically. Then added in a voice that oozed virtue: "I refused."

“I’d have been disappointed if Hyacinth hadn’t tried.” Lady Hipple acknowledged absently. She was engrossed.

“She whipped my cunt.”

“So I notice. Quite charming…”

“And my tits.”

“I’ll count them there in a minute, dear. Don’t be impatient.”

The naked Sally lapsed into hurt sniffles. Hyacinth spared her a little sympathy. It was not her day. But how beautiful she was, standing there with her arms high and every part of her bearing the gaudy kiss marks of the whip. Yet in with Hyacinth’s sympathy there was fear. It would be quite in character for this quixotic woman to reverse the roles of these two girls who were so utterly within her power. How cringingly awful, now, to be delivered naked and tied into the hands of this blonde vixen she had whipped. Sally would be vindictive and merciless.

It was as though the older woman had read her thoughts. “I have to be off. You can let Sally free, love. And Sally! You then strap Hyacinth the way you are now. Understand?”

“Oh yes, m’lady.” Sally’s voice was triumphant.

“Needn’t sound so damn happy, child. Put a single mark on Hyacinth and you’ll be for it properly. Understand that too!”

“Yes M’lady.” Milton’s Paradise Lost was no more sad than Sally’s voice.

Lady Hipple had made certain that neither girl should emerge victorious. Hyacinth, her glory gone, shrank from changing places with her erstwhile victim.

“Come on. Undo these damn straps!” Sally had the assurance of now being on the side of authority.

Standing on a box, Hyacinth tugged the buckles free. The wounded wrists brought a lump to her throat. Each bore a neat but angrily inflamed band. She longed to soothe them. Her feminine sympathy welled. But was quenched by an ungracious: “Took your time, didn’t you. Just you wait, I’ll get you yet.”

For a few moments each girl was busy with her own concern. Sally massaged vigorously and viewed, as best she could, her decorations from whip and cane. Her face showed little gratitude for release. Hyacinth was grappling with a compelling disinclination to place her wrists where they would be strapped. She was frightened of being again naked and helpless. Lady Hipple’s admonition to Sally might, or might not be respected. But whether Sally refrained from hurting her or not, the position itself, in which she would be tied, could be designed for no other purpose than that she be whipped… or worse! How entrancing the thought of flight! To take her chance and run before she was helplessly fettered. But she had left the

thought too late. She should have followed the instinct while Sally was still helpless. Now, the blonde girl would raise an instant alarm.

“Well, I don’t have all day, y’know.” Sally was eyeing her without love.

Resignedly, Hyacinth positioned herself and raised her arms. It was a bitter moment. She was aware of guilt. She had been cruel. Perhaps crueller than she should have been to the girl she had whipped. She was still perturbed by the joy she had found in the act. Her longing, now, that she might repeat it another time. Not necessarily on the same girl, but on any female flesh. Standing on tip-toe she looked up the line of her stretched arm and watched the strap circle her wrist. She winced as it was buckled, tighter than it need have been. But that was to be expected. By the time Sally stepped down from the box and kicked it aside the new captive had never felt more vulnerable.

Sally surveyed her work with obvious pleasure. Without speech or warning she gripped Hyacinth’s nipples and pinched them cruelly. “These can’t be counted.” She said bitterly.

It was no more than Hyacinth had expected. She uttered no word, but made no effort to choke back the sounds of pain or to refrain from the fruitless struggle that seemed inseparable from agony. Sally watched with intent eyes the effect of her fingers and thumbs. She did not quickly release

the bitter pinch on the buds of flesh. When she did it was only to transfer the same biting hurt to the lower lips within the captive's pubic hair. The change evoked fresh and satisfying moans.

"So you're not a lesbian, eh!" The pain stopped. She who controlled it looked up inquiringly.

Hyacinth shook her head. She did not want to talk.

"We'll see about that." Her enemy taunted. "Kick once and I'll hurt you so bad you'll beg." Her mouth avidly buried itself in Hyacinth's sex.

The captive girl tensed with shock. To be so helpless while her body was violated! She could have wept. But to what end! Why even struggle! Certainly not to kick! No more pain... Oh, please, no more pain! The words were in her mind, but she did not utter them. Instead, hating herself, she settled her feet as far apart as her bonds allowed and gave herself to the inevitable. After all, it was not the first time. Since the act held such allure for others it was not likely to be the last. She began to pant.

Sally was highly skilled, and obviously proud of her prowess. She sent her victim into one moaning spasm after another. She did not desist until her tongue was utterly weary. By then Hyacinth was hanging from her wrists, oblivious to pain and to all else. Thus it was that Sally left her. She felt it a small revenge. But it had been most sweet.

The suspended Hyacinth made no effort to struggle back into the world. What had she to return to! It was the protesting demands of her wrists that finally made her straighten up and take stock of herself and her plight. She felt soiled and shamed. She longed for a bath. She was angry with her inability to refuse or fail to respond to what had been done. If only she could have stood motionless and mute! It would have been a small victory. Yet, deep inside, she knew gladness that she was female, she was woman. Frigidity won nothing.

Hopelessly she went through the usual motions of standing on this foot or that, of tossing back her hair, of twisting a wrist to strive to ease the bite of the strap. All useless save as a buffer against frustration. She fell to wondering what her fate would be. Tied like this it could be anything or nothing. But either way she was captive.

It may have been an hour before Lord Hilary Hipple ambled in and looked expectantly around. He did not notice her at first, but when he did seemed inordinately pleased. “Why, Gertrude, my dear, what a pleasant surprise. Enjoying yourself, I see. I’m looking for that Prospectus on the new Company of Raeburn’s. Left it here somewhere.” He poked around ineffectually and then headed for the door. It was at that moment inspiration struck the captive in a wild impossible gamble.

“Darling!” Hyacinth cooed in her most dulcet tone.

It stopped Lord Hipple in his tracks. He had probably not heard such an endearment in years. He turned and looked back as though doubting his ears.

“Darling Hilary!” This time she made it even sexier. Lord Hipple shed at least twenty years.

“What can I do for you, m’dear?” He enquired cordially.

The captive cunningly contrived a coy urgency. “I need to go to the lavatory, Sweetie.”

Lord Hipple gave the matter his full attention. He seemed a bit lost as though she spoke of a facility he did not patronise. Fearful of losing him, Hyacinth tried again.

“The Loo, darling. I have to go to the Loo!”

“Of course, m’dear, naturally… You know where it is.”

“But darling, I’m all tied up.”

Lord Hipple came closer and peered. “By George, you are, arn’t you! Jolly good show! I bet the Butler did it.” He seemed disinclined to take the matter further. Chivalry was at a low ebb.

Hyacinth could have killed him. Silly old coot! Yet he was a hope, her only one. It was a case of ‘so near and yet so far’. Two straps around her wrists… surely she could prevail upon him!

“I have to go real bad.” She simulated motions with her

hips, twisting from one foot to another. “Please undo these straps.”

Her false production of the agonies of stomach cramps must have been convincing. The aged Peer came to life. “I say, that won’t do, will it old girl.” He looked around as though for a weapon: or more probably a chamber pot, but remembered the operational word. “Strap! Ah yes. Frightful bounder, eh! Never did like him.”

Hyacinth could not follow his rambling, but could have cared less as he placed the box where it enabled him to play the knight errant. Her heart thumped as he made several unsuccessful arthritic assaults. But by using her arm as a support the noble Peer of England attained the eminence required for his task. “Sure it wasn’t burglars, m’dear?” He enquired without interest as he tugged.

Pulled back from the brink! Clutched from the abyss! Familiar quotes flooded to the captive’s mind as, breathlessly, she watched the gnarled fingers fumble at the strap. When one arm fell free it seemed like entry into Paradise. It was then that Lord Hipple fell off the box. He landed with a sizeable thump, and sat looking around with hostility.

“I say, old girl. Some frightful bounder pushed me.” He seemed unhurt.

Hyacinth wasted no time. Hooking the box with one foot she dragged it close, stepped up, and had her other wrist free within seconds. What glory! She was free… free, free.

She headed for the door. But before she went she stooped and kissed the top of Lord Hipple's bald spot. His parting words followed her down the corridor: "Third to the left, old girl. Third to the left…"

Hyacinth leaped towards freedom.

It took a good deal of eighteenth century masonry and parquet to show the fleeing girl that it is one thing to enter a Castle inside a hamper, but quite something else to retrace those steps without being seen. The place was either inundated with servants or else possessed an unusual number of cul-de-sacs. In desperation she was forced to open doors. Finally one of them introduced her to a final absurdity. Sticking her head inquiringly within, she was greeted by the urbane voice of Lady Hipple: "Do come in, child. There's someone here looking for you."

Deflated, and in a dream of the impossible, the fugitive walked into the lounge. Lady Hipple was comfortably ensconced beside a cheerful fire. Across from her sat the young man who had untied her from the tree.

There are times when life leaves us neither actions or words. One stands and allows things to happen. Thus it was with Hyacinth now. She looked from one to the other of the amused eyes and longed to cry.

"Do sit down, child." Lady Hipple admonished. "Don't stand there thunderstruck. Young Terry here did a bid of trespassing and wants to apologise."

“It was a couple of Bobbies.” Terry said as though that explained everything.

“You went away and left me.” Hyacinth accused. A single tear began to form.

“Young and impressionable.” Lady Hipple explained.

“I just told you.” Terry insisted. “When I shinned down that rope there were a couple of the boys in blue waiting. Had the Devil of a time convincing them. When I shinned back over you’d gone.”

“Terry belongs to one of our better County families.” Lady Hipple imparted with deep meaning.

Hyacinth suddenly realised her nakedness. It was an awful moment. “Use a tablecloth or something.” Said Lady Hipple testily. A large doily affair saved the day. It barely covered what Mignon referred to as ‘The three Ts’. Clutching it, Hyacinth sat own. All she could think of was that she would now get the whipping of her life.

“I’m so glad I found you.” Said Terry.

At some other time Hyacinth would have been glad too. Now, her stricken eyes sought, not him, but Lady Hipple.

“Yes child,” Said Lady Hipple correctly interpreting the glance, “You may rest assured you will.” There was an infinite significance in the words pleasantly spoken. Another tear formed. Hyacinth tried desperately to blink it back.

“I say, you’re crying!” Terry was concerned.

“She has a tender heart.” Lady Hipple explained hastily. “She cries easily.”

The room was pregnant with unspoken thought.

“You were telling me of your interest in this young woman.” Lady Hipple continued pleasantly. “Just exactly what is it?”

“I wish to marry her.”

The silence, too, was pregnant.

“I think we had better have Sherry.” Lady Hipple pulled the rope.

“I suppose we did hear you correctly?” Lady Hipple sarcastically enquired as they sipped the vintage Crabtree had brought.

“Love at first sight, y’know.” Terry offered brightly.

“I accept.” Hyacinth affirmed without enthusiasm.

“You are both ridiculous. Really, I’m ashamed of you.” Lady Hipple looked from one to the other, she settled a fierce eye on the male. “You, young man, have seen your first naked girl.” She turned on the quaking Hyacinth. “And you, young woman, want to escape custody.”

Terry stuck out his jaw. “What do you mean, custody?”

“She’s a convicted felon.”

He digested the charge. “I don’t mind.” He said simply. “I still want to marry her.”

Hyacinth’s heart swelled with a sudden flamboyant vision of freedom and someone to love. She was sure she could love Terry. Just give her the chance!

“What about the rest of her sentence?”

“Couldn’t you let her off: probation or something?”

“She deserves punishment. She shall have it.”

“I’ll wait. But could I see her sometimes?”

Hyacinth felt like a domestic animal discussed in the market place. “I’m not guilty of anything.” She said hotly to Terry. “I’ve already been held for two years. Please get me out of here.”

“You see!” Lady Hipple said triumphantly. “She’s using you.” A glint of amusement came into her eyes. “Stand up, child, and throw away that absurd doily.”

Hyacinth did not want to obey. Centuries of custom dictated that this young man should see her nakedness only on her wedding night.

“Come on, girl! After Pennyfeather and all the rest, a spot of nudity shouldn’t bother you.”

Angrily Hyacinth got to her feet and threw the precious doily to one side. If she was to be on display she would make it good. She stuck out her chest.

“Have a good look, Terry.” Lady Hipple ordered kindly. “Here you have the female of the species in all her glory. Examine, prod, ask questions. If she can’t answer ’em, I will.”

It took all of Hyacinth’s fortitude to refrain from using her hands. But that was a shame she hated. She deliberately posed.

“I used to do it like that.” Lady Hipple said nostalgically.

Terry’s eyes bulged. He had entered a new world. Avidly he drank in the loveliness of this girl he had found tied to a tree.

“A couple of prostitutes and a scuffle in the dark.” Lady Hipple guessed shrewdly.

He flushed. She had been too right! He gazed at Hyacinth in reverence. “She’s beautiful.”

“So you want to put your sperm in her and make her swell up and burst into an array of filthy diapers!” Lady Hipple had a gift for metaphor.

The boy was oblivious. He was drunk with beauty.

“Better take note of a few of the more important points.”

His hostess suggested caustically. “Give him a full frontal view, dear, and spread your legs a bit. That’s right! You see, young man, that thing you are staring at in the bush of pubic hair is her cunt. You got out of there once. Now you want to get back in… Some sort of psychological nonsense about that. But anyway it’s quite practical. That thing pushing at your flies will penetrate her there and cause you both to need a bath. That’s the beginning of the end. If you look at her cunt too closely afterwards it will seem faintly disagreeable. So will that pathetic organ you carry around between your legs. But by then it’s too late.”

Terry looked uncomfortable. Hyacinth blushed furiously. “I’d love to have his baby.” She interjected rebelliously.

“Then I want you to look at her breasts.” Lady Hipple continued blandly. “They’re those two nicely curved items sticking out of her chest. She’s protruding them now especially for your benefit. The small knobs are called nipples if you attend the Church of England, or tits by the rest of the world. They are potent erogenous zones. Men love to suck them. Takes ’em back to infancy, I suppose.”

She allowed her voice to trail away, but eyed her victim’s obvious embarrassment with enjoyment. “The breasts are important, Terry.” She continued in the same level voice. “You see, after you have inserted your penis into her cunt and pumped away a bit her breasts fill with milk and have to be either sucked or relieved mechanically. When it’s all over the glory is gone. The best description I know of the

result is a couple of fried eggs. The whole transformation from beauty to dugs only takes a few months. Leaves a man a bit cheated. Still interested in orange blossom?"

"Yes." But his voice was uncertain.

"Get up close to him, love." The voice was inexorable. "Shove your cunt in his face so he can have a good look. Now use your fingers and pull the lips apart so he can see inside."

Hyacinth wanted to rebel. But, again, it was too much too soon. In any case how could she be sure of this young man! Already Lady Hipple had made him uncertain. With a feeling of 'do or die' she marched nakedly to the man who wanted to marry her, thrust her sex as close to his face as she could manage and parted its lips with trembling fingers.

It was a strange tableau, reminiscent of Victorian pornography. Hyacinth steeled herself to stand there exposing her clitoris for as long as it took to embarrass one of her companions.

"Want to stick something in there?" Lady Hipple asked jovially.

For as long as she lived, Hyacinth would remember what happened then. Terry looked and looked. It was as though he could not see enough of the folds of flesh and what they concealed. Then, quite suddenly and without a word, he

rose and made for the door. It slammed behind him with finality.

“Best cure for a stiff prick I know.” Chortled Lady Hipple complacently.

Hyacinth wept.

“Are those tears for him or your hide?” Lady Hipple asked after a long time.

Hyacinth did not know. She made the frank admission.

Lady Hipple sighed. “Only one thing for you, young lady. Take your mind off these ridiculous men.”

“So now I get whipped!” Rebellion was in every word.

“What else can you suggest?” Lady Hipple asked reasonably.

Hyacinth was angry with herself. She had behaved absurdly. If she had had any sense she would still be standing with her wrists strapped above her head waiting for a punishment that might have been nothing at all. Now, Lady Hipple could scarcely forgive what she had done.

“How the Devil did you get loose?” The older woman was intrigued.

Unhappily Hyacinth explained. The explanation evoked gales of laughter. “I’ll bet he’s still sitting there.” Lady Hipple offered.

He was. When they re-entered the compartment he looked up at them in surprise. “Must be drunk,” he said, “There’s two of you.”

“Run along and play games.” Lady Hipple told her spouse brusquely.

When he was gone, muttering something about The Alhambra and lovely tits, the two women stood and faced each other. Hyacinth was unashamedly trembling. Her companion was grim.

“I’ve tried to escape twice. I suppose it’ll be awful.” Hyacinth felt she might as well take the bull by the horns.

“You are absurd, y’know. You force me into it.” Lady Hipple was annoyed. “Get yourself into position.”

Once more her wrists were strapped. Once again her nudity implored the whip. Hyacinth quailed. She would probably be flayed.

It was a thrashing. That was its best description. A thrashing was what Lady Hipple called it. Hyacinth twisted in her bonds, she screamed, she pleaded, she suffered. But it was just a plain old fashioned thrashing. No subtleties of cruelty, no concentration on her sex. A great deal of good honest pain. At the end of it Hyacinth hung sobbing and thankful.

“Don’t think that’s the end of it, darling.”

It was a dungeon. Hyacinth supposed they were all much alike. It was the time you spent in them that counted. She felt quite sure she would be in this one for a long time.

“So you’ve got a thing about freedom!” Lady Hipple said tartly. “Now have a look at the other side of the coin.”

The other side was a set of stocks. So innocent, so quaintly archaic that Hyacinth took hope.

“You sit on the bench and put your ankles in those holes, dear.” The older woman explained equably.

Without thought of disobedience Hyacinth sat herself down. She blushed at the screamingly obvious facility on which she was forced to plant her bottom. It was a round hole.

“For pee-pee.” Lady Hipple explained kindly. “And anything else you have in mind. It’s a lovely idea. You could stay here for weeks.”

Hyacinth felt numb. Obediently she placed her ankles in the slots that seemed tailored to her size and watched as the bar was lowered and the padlock snapped. She could never move from where she sat. She tugged at her ankles. They were held firm. The wood gripped them with a frightening intimacy. For the first time she became aware that they were very widely separated indeed. The inevitable result was to expose her pubic hair and that which it normally concealed.

“Your cunt shows up beautifully, darling.” Lady Hipple said kindly.

Realisation hit Hyacinth suddenly as a blow. She was going to be left like this, naked and alone. Unable to move from where she sat. No pain, simply a devastating separation from life. She was now a part of these wooden stocks that held her feet. She was not a girl. She was an object. “How long must I stay like this, Madam?” She asked politely, but with pounding heart.

“How does a week sound to you?”

The hand of fear tightened its grip. “But sleeping! I don’t think I—”

“Yes you can. Cat naps perhaps, but enough. That’s the punishment, loss of what you seem to treasure so much. No pain. Just to sit and think.”

Lady Hipple was of The Priory. Perhaps she was The Priory! Both of them lived beneath its shadow. What was being done to her now was without animosity. The face that looked down at her now was kind, there was sympathy there. Even the thrashing had been kind: A mother dutifully chastising a recalcitrant child. As an authority on being whipped, Hyacinth knew the stripes she had just received could have been far worse. Surely somehow she could touch a vulnerable spot in the armour of this woman’s authority.

“I’m frightened.” She admitted frankly. “Please don’t leave me like this.”

Lady Hipple did not reply. The two women examined each other as though reading minds.

“I suppose I’ve been foolish.” The girl in the stocks twisted in frustration. “Can I make amends? I know I’ve nothing to offer… But can I do something? I don’t want to sit like this for a week. Oh, Madam, I’m scared.”

“Are you trying to say you wish to join the Club?”

The captive knew the thought had eroded her courage. Such an easy way out. Or was it! She looked up in search of help. “Please, Madam, I’m lost, I hurt, I’m afraid. I don’t know about…, well, things… If I said I would do that… thing. Be as others desire me, what would be my life?”

“Damn pleasant.” Lady Hipple said heartily. “There’s a Teacher’s job waiting for you and a lifetime supply of little girls.”

“Could I be unlocked now if I said yes?”

“You’re bargaining, love. Mustn’t do that. It’s naughty.” Lady Hipple produced handcuffs. “Hands behind your back, dear.”

Hyacinth obeyed, her shocked eyes seeking kindness to which she could still appeal. There came the familiar clicks and the cold grip of metal on her wrists.

“I’d say those handcuffs double the severity of this punishment.” Lady Hipple said meditatively.

“Please whip me instead.”

“You see, you’re beginning to like it too.” The older woman chuckled.

“Oh, I’m not. I’m not!”

“It’s only a week, dear girl.” Lady Hipple bent and kissed her prisoner. Then marched purposefully from the room.

Hyacinth’s gaze followed her in despair.

Only a week!

It was eternity.

* * *

“I think I’ll brand you, Stacie. Isn’t that a super idea?”

“We don’t have an iron.” Said Stacie comfortably from where she stood naked, her wrists corded at eye level to a pillar of the central arch.

“I bet I could get one.”

Stacie tensed in her bonds. Libby was not teasing. If the

darling nymphet wanted to brand her, it would probably be done. Libby had a way with her, a small potent irresistible force. The idea was new, it was frightening, it was delicious. “I don’t want to be branded, darling.” She protested untruthfully.

“You haven’t anything to say about it.” Libby told her imperiously. “And anyway, you do want it. I can tell.”

Stacie sighed happily, wallowing in her adoration of the eager teen-ager who held her captive, not only with cords, but with a special kind of love. “Where on Earth would you get a branding iron made with your initials?”

“Mr. Pennyfeather, that’s where!” Libby proclaimed with certainty.

The naked Stacie suddenly realised that she could indeed soon have a brand burning in her flesh. The darling child must already have made the first moves. She should be terror stricken. But she was not. “What did Pennyfeather say?” She asked curiously.

“He’s all for it.” Libby giggled happily. “Usual terms, y’know, plus a special bonus.”

Stacie knew what the usual terms would be. The darling child had probably paid the first instalments with her lips. “What’s the special bonus?” She asked doubtfully.

“You!”

Stacie might have guessed! She wished she felt angrier than she did. “You mean you’ve promised my body to that ridiculous creature in return for a bit of iron?”

“That’s right, darling. You won’t mind, will you? Don’t suppose he’ll pant on top of you all that long.”

For a moment Stacie wished she was not tied. She longed to cane the pert bottom until the nymphet howled. The incredible impertinence…! Taking her for granted. But a sudden shocking thought intruded. “Thanks a million for selling me.” She snapped sarcastically. “But what about you and the usual terms? Better bring me up to date?”

Libby was visibly embarrassed. She came, and from the rear, circled her captive Teacher with her arms and began to tenderly play with the defenceless nipples.

“Stop that!” Stacie demanded. “You’re only doing it to soften me up for bad news.

“Of course, Stacie dear. If I tickle your tits long enough you’ll agree to anything, you know that.”

Stacie did know it. She tried to be angry, but failed. She twisted against her bound wrists to show her displeasure, but failed to dislodge the busy digits that were dissolving any resistance she might have wished to express. “Oh, very well.” She agreed with simulated petulance. “Go ahead and tell me you’ve been letting the retired military do a bit of panting on top of you.”

The fingers stopped. “How did you guess?”

“Don’t be silly. We can’t hide anything from each other. What about the pill? I don’t want you swelling up like a balloon.”

“I pinched some from one of the girls in the kitchen. She gets to sleep with a delivery boy… Not exactly sleep, they do it in the Pantry.”

“Do you deliver me to the gardener bound, or am I supposed to walk over, lay down and open up?”

The younger girl giggled. “I guess you sort of walk over, darling. He does it very politely. I’m sure you won’t mind.”

“If I wasn’t tied up tight, you’d be doing a bit of minding, you pert minx!”

A nimble hand found the bound girl’s sex. “Do you want an orgasm now, Stacie dear, or after the details?”

“You’d better brief me first.”

Libby giggled in delight. “You are super, y’know. Just the two initials: ‘L’ for Libby. ‘T’ for Thatcher. You’ll look gorgeous. Where would you like them?”

“You mean I get to say something about this?”

“Don’t be sarcastic, darling. How about one on each breast?”

Stacie flinched. The nymphet's shocks were coming hard and fast. Her breasts! Could she bear it…

Libby posed judicially: "The obvious place is one on each cheek of your bottom. They'd look gorgeous. But you couldn't see 'em unless you backed up to a mirror, and I expect sitting down might be sort of bad for awhile."

Suddenly Stacie was ashamed of knowing exactly where she wished to be branded. Her subservience to this glowing child was total. "One on the inside of each thigh up close to my cunt." She decided with finality. "You'll see a lot of them there."

Libby clapped her hands. Slipping under the raised and captive arms she clasped Stacie and showered her with kisses. "You'll love them. I know you will!" She effervesced. "Oh, darling, it's going to be wonderful."

"I must be out of my mind." Stacie declared ruefully. "I suppose you have an appointment for me to be fucked, and another for me to be burnt with a hot iron?" She failed to infuse anything but excitement into her voice.

"Mr. Pennyfeather's expecting you this evening." Libby admitted. "I didn't see any sense in waiting. He's got the irons all ready made. They're simply super. He'll give them to you after… after you've had a good time."

"Good time! Darling, don't lay it on that thick."

"It's rather nice really." Libby giggled reminiscently. "He

does it frightfully well. You shouldn't complain. You just go over once. I had to go six times. He wouldn't budge below that." She paused and eyed her captive mischievously. "There is one thing though…"

"I have to crawl in on my hands and knees?" Stacie was faintly piqued by her beloved's casual disposal of her person.

"Well, not quite that bad, Stacie dear. But Mr. Pennyfeather does insist on you being… well, sort of polite. He said if you acted hoity-toity the whole deal would be off."

"It really is fortunate for you that I'm tied up." Stacie said dreamily.

"That's why I did it." The nymphet said complacently. "I'll give you the pill now too."

Stacie could not fail to be flattered by her reception. Mr. Pennyfeather shone. Mr. Pennyfeather's house shone. Other gleams came from the bottle of Special Blend and the two glasses noticeably prominent on the table.

"Kind of you to come." Mr. Pennyfeather acknowledged as though announcing the opening bars of the National Anthem.

"Nice of you to ask me." Stacie found it hard to expunge all sarcasm.

"You do indulge, I hope?" Mr. Pennyfeather motioned invit-

ingly towards the Special Blend.

Nice to know the old bastard was nervous too. Stacie reflected. He probably needed a drink worse than she did. “Thanks, I’d enjoy one.” She admitted. She was about to add: and make it a double. But checked in time. No man could be flattered by a girl’s need of an anaesthetic.

“Would you like me naked?” She inquired affably.

The gardener’s reaction was proof of the theory that the best defence is to attack. He recoiled from her question as from a blow. “Perhaps after a drink.” He suggested primly.

Stacie was prompted by an imp of mischief. He was nervous, she would use the inevitable to make him more so. She stripped. “So much more intimate, don’t you think.” She offered demurely.

“Awfully nice of you, I’m sure.” The host downed his drink and poured another. His eyes focused up and down from breasts to pubic hair. He was perspiring slightly.

Stacie found an armchair and comfortably sat sipping. “Please do sit down.” She invited.

Mr. Pennyfeather had lost the initiative, but saw no grounds to complain. He sat facing his guest, taking three sips to her one.

“Would you like me to open my legs so you can see my cunt, Mr. Pennyfeather?”

No hoity-toity, eh! She'd show him! Stacie was almost happy.

The sergeant felt ambushed. He sought to re-group. "Do all you young ladies at The Priory talk like that?"

"I'm afraid not. Most of them are quite rude. But we do our best to improve them." Stacie threw one leg over the arm of her chair, thus providing a starkly staring view of something generally hidden. "There, that's better! Can you see O.K.?"

Mr. Pennyfeather took one startled look then, like an officer and gentleman, hastily averted his eyes.

"Oh dear! You don't like my little quiff." Stacie mourned and brought her leg back down to normal. "How about breasts? Maybe you're a tit man."

The sergeant breathed heavily. He was being hard pressed on both flanks. He brought up his heavy artillery. "I think we should have another drink." He suggested brightly.

Stacie accepted her refill. "Are you going to tie me up when you fuck me, Mr. Pennyfeather?"

"Now why would I do that?" But his eyes glinted.

"Well, it enables you to place me in whatever position you prefer."

"Ah!" Exclaimed the sergeant, nonplussed.

“I suppose you’ll whip me if I don’t do it just right?” Stacie kept her voice pleasantly conversational.

“Do what just right?” He sounded suspicious.

“Oh, Mr. Pennyfeather, don’t make me say it. I’ll blush.”

“And so you should, young lady.” With coyness the sergeant could cope.

“You’d like to whip me, I’m sure.”

Mr. Pennyfeather got heavily to his feet and tottered to the Special Blend. But whatever reply he might have made was killed by the bursting open of the door and the whirlwind entry of a pair of breathless bright eyed moppets.

“We’ve come to visit you, Mr. Pennyfeather,” announced the twins in unison. “Good evening, Miss Stacie.”

For several moments both adults were speechless “What are you two doing here?” Stacie finally demanded.

“We’ve come for ginger beer.”

“Very fond of ginger beer they are.” Said the gardener bringing out his reserve bottle.

The watching Teacher sensed something in the wind. The twins were unpredictable.

“Isn’t Mr. Pennyfeather sweet, Miss Stacie! We love to do things for him.”

Without further ado, both twins pounced. One embraced their host's middle, the other unzipped his flies and captured his erect organ with her mouth. "Yum, yum, yum, it's lovely." She took time to say before returning to the attack.

Stacie was enraptured by the tableau. The sergeant was unquestionable surrounded and captured. Surrender was his only course. He stood, glass in hand, at first horrified and indignant, but soon seeing vistas on a distant horizon. He downed his drink and stood passive for the coup de grace. The twins delivered it without mercy.

"Thank you, Mr. Pennyfeather! Good night, Miss Stacie." The twins disappeared as quickly as they came, their glasses empty. They left a defeated army and an entranced young woman.

"Dratted kids." Said Mr. Pennyfeather, doing up his fly.

"I think they're charming."

"Mean well, I expect." He conceded.

"I do hope they haven't exhausted you?"

It was a question he was loathe to answer. He was painfully conscious that the twin's sudden assault had indeed been a contretemps. He was an army that had fired its last round. Considering the amount of Special Blend he had imbibed it seemed probable that fresh ammunition might be long in arriving. "Took advantage of me." He said lamely. "Proper little baggages, they are."

“I’m so sorry.” Stacie lied charmingly. “Perhaps there is some other small service…? How about the dishes?”

Mr. Pennyfeather disposed of the dishes with a four letter word. “Not that I’m not grateful.” He said gallantly.

“Perhaps then I should be running along. Are there any bits and pieces of me you’d like to examine while I’m still naked?”

“You’ve been very kind.” The depleted host said in a tired voice. “Think I’ll turn in early myself.”

While Stacie dressed, she went to a cupboard. “This is something I’d like to do or like to watch. Proper caution, and that’s a fact! Hurt like blazes, y’know.” He handed her the treasure she had not earned. They were surprisingly beautiful. From somewhere he had even contrived chrome handles. They were the work of a Craftsman. “Five years in the Royal Engineers: Rangoon and Singapore.” He said wistfully. “A man don’t forget.”

Stacie kissed him and ran. For a moment he was loveable.

“Was it very terrible, Stacie dear?”

Stacie recounted her deliverance.

“The twins got there on time?”

“It was almost as though they knew.”

“They did. I sent them.” Said Libby with immense compla-

cency.

They hugged and giggled themselves into bed.

It was a large and expensive roast. The two girls eyed it portentously. Libby giggled. Stacy shivered. “Don’t laugh.” She admonished. “This is going to hurt.”

Mr. Pennyfeather’s creations were glowing in the gas jets on the cooking range. With an air of terrible discovery, Stacie picked one up and applied it to the inoffensive chunk of beef. It smoked, it steamed, it sizzled. When she withdrew it the resultant imprint was not impressive.

“Not hot enough,” said Libby with interest.

Stacie cringed. It had looked very hot indeed to her. The soft sensitivity of her inner thighs cringed with her. So secret a place for a glowing iron! She put the instrument back in the flame and offered Libby the other. She watched while the intent and glorying teen-ager synthetically branded her. The smoke rose high. This time the letter ‘L’ was more distinct.

“Oh, Stacie dear, I’m going to have to hold it on you and press for at least five seconds. Oh darling…!”

“Serves you right.” Stacie was sure that flippancy was her only weapon. “See how it works on the fat side.”

The fat side was better. The unprotesting roast began to appear decorative. “Darling.” Stacie pleaded, “I think you’d

better tie may hands or something. I'm getting scared. I don't want to let you down at the last moment."

Libby kissed her. "You really want me to?"

Stacie nodded, "I'm a cry baby. But every time we burn that roast I see me. I can almost feel."

"Off with your clothes then."

Stacie stripped, turned and crossed her wrists. The dedicated child tied them very, very tight.

"Darling! Now with my hands tied like this: can you handle me if I get awkward?" Stacie was genuinely scared.

Libby was contrite. "Am I a beast! You do want it just as much as I do, don't you, Stacie dear. It must be awful for you. I know. I'll fix you so I can handle you easily. But tell me you want me to."

"I want you to, darling. Tie me tight. Brand me no matter how I struggle. You'll have to gag me. I'll scream, and someone might hear."

Stacie stood, loving and fearful while her ankles were tied, and then the most disabling of all: the cruel bands about the elbows drawing them tight together. She gasped, but knew the pain was good. It would occupy her consciousness and dilute the suspense. It would not be long now before the letters 'L' and 'T' were on her thighs for life.

Happily, with a tremendous absorption, Libby plied the iron. As the roast cringed and smoked so her technique improved. The sergeant's irons were going to be used by capable hands. The watching Stacie cringed and flinched, and knew it wise that she was bound. Human flesh is not heroic before a glowing iron.

They had borrowed a bench. When the time came for Stacie to place herself upon it, their eyes locked, asking and answering question.

"I'm glad you tied me." Stacie admitted. "Watching what you've been doing wasn't easy. But if you want to untie me now, I'll lay down on the bench and let you tie me properly the way we rehearsed. Want to trust me?"

Libby kissed her passionately. The child was deeply involved in this enslavement of a woman. Without a word she loosed the knots. Stacie obediently, her heart aflame with love, laid her nudity upon the hard surface. "Tie me tight." She pleaded. "Tie me very, very tight."

When it was done, Stacie struggled. But she could not move. They had planned well. Her thighs were open. She could not even make them twitch. There remained but one thing, a thing she hated. "Don't forget the gag, darling." Her last words held only adoration for the girl creature to whom she was giving everything.

She opened wide for the wet wad, and compressed her lips tight for the tape. The thrusting kneading fingers set a fire

aflame within her loins. When she beheld the red iron approach her flesh she screamed with joy. The gag contained her ecstasy.

* * *

Sister Thalia looked across the desk as she did so often every day. Her voice was that of an administrator. “I want you, Stacie, to lift your dress and show me.”

“There’s no need.” Stacie confessed unhappily. “I’ll admit it. How did you know?”

“Don’t be silly. You know things. We know things. Gossip and simple deduction. Why on Earth were you so foolish?”

“I love her.”

“That is not a crime.” Sister Thalia smiled benignly, “Certainly not in The Priory. But we have never found it wise to foster a grand passion. It separates a Teacher from her pupils. I’m ashamed of you. Show me these absurd symbols of your adoration.”

“They are bandaged.”

“Of course. Take one off.”

Stacie obeyed. The Sister scrutinised the angry wound.

“Libby Thatcher. Of course! A delectable tid-bit. You may cover it up.”

“The fault is mine, Sister. Please don’t punish her.”

“Poppycock! I shall punish you both. What would you suggest?”

Stacie was bereft. Her darling Libby must know no pain.

“Don’t punish her, Sister. Punish me.”

“You girls and your nobility! Sometimes I could scream.” Sister Thalia exclaimed irritably. “Suggest a punishment you deem appropriate.”

Stacie was in a dither. “Put us in the dungeon.” She suggested hopefully.

“And let you feed on each other! Come, come. You can do better than that. I’m talking about punishment, not pleasure. I wasn’t born yesterday.”

Stacie was baffled. The whip was a good old stand-by. But she did not want to be whipped. Her tolerance of pain was not high. The idea of Libby beneath the lash was unbearable. She tried again: “You could chain us so we couldn’t.”

Sister Thalia perked up. “I like that! Fits the crime. D’you realise what you’re letting yourself in for?”

Stacie did know. But even to be able to see her beloved was better than nothing. She looked at Sister Thalia hopefully.

* * *

Hyacinth stood before the Prioress, a penitent unshriven. Unexpectedly freed from the stocks, she wondered if something worse lurked ready to pounce. “I’m really sorry to be such a nuisance.” She said with some truth. It was a stock platitude, but all she had to offer.

“Don’t be sorry, child. We find delight in you.” It was ambiguous. Hyacinth prayed for the most favourable interpretation.

“Thank you reverend mother. I really do want to please you.”

“You want to save that pretty hide from the whip, child. Don’t try and deceive me.”

“You are right, Mother Superior. I am sorry.”

“Let us drop the humility. You are now a teacher.”

Hyacinth was startled. “You mean, without…” She broke off just in time.

“Without using your pretty lips and your active tongue!” The Prioress smiled knowingly. “We are making a very great concession. What is it like to be so loved?”

Hyacinth answered with tears of joy. One did not embrace The Prioress!

“We are not entirely philantrophic.” The Prioress smiled. “The potency of youth may succeed where we have failed.”

Hyacinth blushed. It was a bridge she could cross later.

“She who you replace erred much because of that potency. At a certain age they are irresistible.”

Hyacinth looked at the Prioress and tried to visualise her at an age when the flesh of youth burned a fire within her loins. It was not possible. The Prioress had been born a century old. “Is my Penance done with?” She quavered.

“You do not wish to stand before your class in the agony of belts and bra’s and the scars of whips, do you child.”

“No, reverend mother.”

“It is possible that you will suffer so. But not on your first day. Go, child. You have my blessing.”

Sister Thalia was not quite so benign. “Your Penance is not done, Hyacinth. I will remember it. You will wear a dress. A Teacher is not naked before her Class. Beneath that dress there may lurk many things. Never believe yourself immune.”

Strangely the good Sister rose and kissed the naked girl who would soon wear clothes.

“I love you.” Belinda said, wide eyed.

“And I you.” Hyacinth meant it. Belinda was sweet.

“They told me to make up to you,” Belinda confessed innocently. “I’m supposed to rub up against you and make you want to love me. You know, with our tongues the way Mignon does.”

It was always there! Could there be no escape! Yet she had pledged nothing. “I love you without the tongues.” She said simply.

“They’ve got Stacie and Libby in a Dungeon.”

Hyacinth had been told the story. It was Stacie’s place she was to fill.

Belinda undressed. She did it with complete innocence. Hyacinth watched spellbound. There was something alluring and compelling about the puppy fat nakedness that emerged. “Will you suck mine, or will I suck yours?” Belinda asked without inhibition.

“Neither, darling.”

The child took the negative in her stride. Peering down at the joining of her thighs, she observed brightly. “You’ve got ever so much more hair than I have. Please let me try you now.”

It was in Hyacinth’s mind to march back to Sister Thalia

and ask to be placed back in the stocks. But that would prove nothing. The two days and nights she had spent sitting in misery with her ankles locked tight and fast had cured her of any idea of heroics. She was thankful to be free. “Try and understand, darling. We don’t have to do anything at all. Just forget it.”

“If I can’t persuade you to eat me, I get twenty with the cane.” Belinda said simply. Then, in a burst of urgent candour: “But that’s not why, Hyacinth. I mean… I think you’re wonderful. I want you to. I’ll eat you too. I’ll make it ever so wonderful!”

So young! Yet an accomplished Lesbian, a Priory Girl! Hyacinth felt defeated. Unless she stripped and allowed the avid tongue to have its way, the round sweet bottom would bear twenty stripes. Twenty was a lot! She knew. Belinda was a darling child.

Hyacinth stripped.

The class accepted her. Some were close to her own age, others mere children. But she saw knowledge in their eyes, and wondered how much they knew. Perhaps Belinda’s was only one of many pert round bottoms threatened with the cane. By the time she had absolved them all… She thrust the thought from her mind. One way or another The Priory got what it wanted.

“Please, Miss Hyacinth, I have to be whipped.”

The small intent face peered up at her from beside the desk after the rest had gone.

“Why must you be whipped, Rosie?” What did it matter!

“I was a bad girl. The Sister sent me.”

“How many strokes?”

“Twenty please, Miss Hyacinth.”

“Why arn’t you crying?” Hyacinth was suspicious.

“I’d sooner have twenty from you than forty from Sister Veronica.”

All so neatly planned! It was impossible for her to be kind. Like it or not, she must feast upon redolent girlish flesh. “Do you want your twenty now?” She asked wearily.

“Yes please, Miss Hyacinth.” The childish voice was eager.

“Very well. Do you want to strip or just lift up your skirts?”

“Could I strip, please?”

The child had been well rehearsed. Hyacinth shrugged.

Rosie was erotic. In years to come she might be fat. But not now! She could bear a child. In her curves and with her pubic hair she screamed in silent supplication for the sperm that would recreate her in another couple of decades. Another Rosie to tear at someone’s heart. Hyacinth selected a cane. Why be kind! No one seemed to want it. “Do you

want to be tied?" She asked without concern.

"Oh, would you please! It does hurt…"

The desk drawer held so much. It provided cord. Fighting back her own sexuality, Hyacinth bound the concupiscent female child across a desk. "Howl as much as you like." She advised without emotion. "I always found it helped to howl." She laid the cane across the chubby cheeks with vigour. Undoubtedly someone would take inventory of the stripes… Rosie howled in the most satisfying manner… For the first time that day, Hyacinth found herself enjoying her work. She slowed the tempo. The privilege might as well be savoured. Tomorrow it might be her own bottom that felt the cane.

"Do you like being caned, Rosie?"

Hyacinth paused her labour on the flesh to make an exploration of the mind.

"Oh no, Miss! It's awful. You cane so hard." Rosie wailed.

"You seemed pleased enough about it when you came?"

"I had to. Honest, Miss Hyacinth! Sister told me to."

"Who's the next girl after you?" Hyacinth baited her trap.

"It's Tessa, Miss." Said the tear dewed Rosie, neatly falling into it.

"What's Tessa done?"

“I don’t know, Miss. She told me she hadn’t done anything. But she has to have twenty same as me. Please, Miss Hyacinth, my wrists hurt. You tied ’em terrible tight.”

“Good! Now what about the other girls?”

“I think we all get twenty, Miss. Even the big girls. I don’t know why.”

For a moment Hyacinth was appalled. The Sisters would wear her down by a process of attrition. Each beautifully striped bottom, each modulated wail, each frantic tugging at the cords would fan within her the fire of her eventual undoing. She no longer doubted that punished female flesh was a powerful aphrodisiac. Insidiously the writhings and the wounds had already spurred her into an arousal she would not have thought possible. She speculated ruefully as to how many heated loins her own behaviour under whip and cane may have generated. A new dimension of her own female condition became manifest. How apt an accompaniment to such thoughts were Rosie’s sobs and sniffles. Absently, Hyacinth used her handkerchief to dry the worst of the inundation. How strange, yet how good, it was to again possess such an object and to be clothed! To be clothed when other girls were naked. She was flooded by a tremendous sense of gratification and power.

There came three solid knocks upon the door.

“Hello, darling, having fun?” Mignon sauntered gracefully into the scene of punishment, her eye glinting at sight of

Rosie's bent and scarlet buttocks. "I say, you really are damned lucky, y'know. No one ever makes me a Teacher."

"You'd whip us all day long, that's why!" Rosie said with conviction.

"Quiet, infant!" Mignon admonished languidly.

With a grin for the new Teacher, she bent and examined Rosie's weals. "Here let me have a go." She demanded with enthusiasm. Taking the cane from Hyacinth's unresisting hand she dealt the agonised child two splatting stripes that evoked two fine screams and a number of interesting lesser sounds. "I've been wanting to do that for a long time." She said equably, returning the cane. "Rosie's an impudent little Puss. Are you enjoying yourself, darling?"

"You arn't supposed to cane me." Protested Rosie indignantly. "You're not a Teacher."

Mignon casually repossessed the cane and delivered two more cracking strokes across the defenceless cheeks. She watched their effect with intent interest. "It's better when they can kick a bit." She advised Hyacinth. "Girls do the damndest things while they're being caned. What say we loose her ankles, but cinch her waist a bit tighter."

Mignon had a way with her. Hyacinth watched with amusement as she made the changes. A pink cheeked Rosie glared back at both of them reproachfully, but spoke no word. "Give her a real swisher to make her squeal, and

then watch." Mignon encouraged.

Hyacinth felt only the smallest guilt as she obeyed. The results were as their visitor had predicted. Rosie's legs produced the most delightfully erotic protests ever seen. Her voice proclaimed the righteous dismay of a thousand caned moppets. The two older girls were enraptured. "Puts on a good show, doesn't she." Mignon approved.

Giggling, the older girls took turns to cane the indignant damsel bottom. Its owners threats and pleas were equally ignored. So immersed were they in their enjoyment, that Rosie's announcement came as a shock. "Hey, that's twenty-one! You stop it or I'll tell."

Mignon raised an eyebrow at Hyacinth. "I've lost count." Hyacinth admitted.

"Let me loose, you rotten twisters!" Their victim wailed. "I'll tell!"

"If she's going to tell we might as well make it a couple more, just to be on the safe side?" Mignon suggested innocently.

The bound child's outrage was drowned by her own expressions of distress as the cane, most expertly wielded, cut into her tenderest spots. Released, she departed red faced, tearful and vowing retribution from above.

Alone, the two girls shared laughter. Their eyes sparkled. "What brought you here?" Hyacinth inquired.

“Can’t you guess, darling?”

For a moment Hyacinth was mystified. Then it dawned. “Oh no! Not you too?”

“Of course, why not!” Mignon enjoyed her sensation. Dropping a pretty curtsy, she mimicked: “Please Miss Hyacinth, I am to have twenty strokes with the cane because I have been a bad girl. Sister Veronica sent me.”

“This is too much.” Said Hyacinth.

“It’s not half enough, darling.” Said Mignon.

They looked their question marks at each other, then burst out laughing. They hugged in mutual understanding of absurdity. “They’ll probably send the Prioress to you next.” Mignon giggled.

“I can’t possibly cane you.” Hyacinth declared. “You’re as old as I am. You don’t want me to, do you?”

“You can, and you must, and I want you to!” Mignon stated flatly.

“I thought Tessa was next?”

“She is actually. But I changed places. And now, darling, how are you going to tie me?”

“A big girl like you should not have to be tied.” Hyacinth knew herself lost. She was in the grip of a golden glow of excitement. Mignon was infectious.

“Oh please, Miss Hyacinth, I can’t possibly hold still.”

“In that case I shall give you extra.”

“Oh, would you please! You are sweet! Dear Miss Hyacinth…”

“If you call me Miss Hyacinth again I’ll whip your pussy as well.”

“Thank you, Miss Hyacinth!” Mignon was in her glory. “Will you do my pussy first or last?”

The repartee was a glorious game. They milked it dry.

“Alright, I’ll try touching my toes.” Mignon conceded. “But, honest, I’m not any better at standing still than the rest of ’em. It’s not easy. You should know.”

She was beautiful! Hyacinth’s heart missed a beat at sight of the long straight legs, the curves of the hips, the firm breasts. She knew it a test of a girl’s breasts that she should touch her toes and they remain as cones. Mignon’s did. Oh, most definitely! They, too, should feel her whip, Hyacinth decided happily.

Mignon had stripped as a matter of course. When Hyacinth had queried the need it had been pointed out that it is hard indeed to whip a pussy when its owner is clothed. Hyacinth was not sure about the pussy whipping, but adored the nakedness. She herself had been so naked so long that she saw it for what it was: the greatest beauty in the world: the

final freedom.

She was intrigued, too, by the word pussy. She had fallen into the use of the more dramatic and evocative appellation that was so coarsely apt for a female slit. But for Mignon, pussy was just right! Treated in certain ways, Mignon would probably purr. Mignon was very, very, female. So female the sight of her nakedness brought a lump to Hyacinth's throat and set a fire aflame within her loins. She struck.

"You are learning very well, darling." Mignon said conversationally. "You made that hurt quite nicely." Having made her point of honour, the caned girl gave a small wail of self pity and straightened up, rubbing her wound and looking assessingly at she who had inflicted it.

"Bend over again." Said Hyacinth happily.

"I was going to give you a few tips on how to hurt a girl." Mignon offered tentatively. "Do you want me to, or do you know more than I do?"

"Tell me." Hyacinth invited. "But first, bend over."

"You are going to make me horny with that Mistress bit." Mignon warned. "You really ought to tie me. I'll rape you if you don't."

"Bend over."

The naked Mignon surpassed herself with curvatures. Her

bottom was thrust arrogantly into the air, pleading for the cane. The watching girl wondered if there were bones beneath the nudity, so fluid and so glorious was the bowed grace of the spine. Mignon was special. She struck with all her force and watched the now familiar miracle of the changing colours and the blossoming of the ridged wound. This time the naked girl cried out first and spoke afterwards. “Let’s make love now, darling. I can’t wait. I’m sopping.”

“You can bring yourself to orgasm now if it’s that urgent.” Hyacinth told her uncertainly. “I’ll wait.”

“You’re a dog in the manger.” Mignon complained. “Stripe me again. Low down in that sulcus bit the porno boys love to emphasise. That and the thighs are awful.”

Hyacinth hit with all her force in the sulcus between thigh and buttock. Mignon sank to the floor moaning in the ecstasy of orgasm, her finger busy between her labia. Despite herself, the watching girl knew a sense of loss that she was so little a part of the wonder she beheld. Mignon’s gasps and contortions told, only too plainly, that a girl’s body held a dynamo of sensation that most never dreamed was there. But Mignon knew. Oh, how she knew!

“The next one will hurt something awful.” Mignon conceded matter of factly. “It always does after you’ve come.”

“I’ll wait.” Hyacinth offered helpfully. She was not entirely unaware of the limitations of the feminine libido. “How

about having the next one on your cunt?"

"Oh, don't call it that!" Mignon complained. "Mine's a pussy."

"Very well, I'll whip your pussy."

Mignon's glance was almost reverent. "You've really become frightfully Mistressy, darling. Pity you won't tongue. But you will sooner or later. First thing I know you'll become one of the Sisters. Bet you'd be a regular bitch. Whip, whip, whip! That would be Sister Hyacinth. We'd all have burning bottoms."

"You are going to have a burning bottom." Hyacinth assured her happily. "Bend over again."

"Don't you want to whip my pussy?" Mignon was almost plaintive.

"I don't mind. Arrange yourself."

Mignon obviously felt the occasion demanded a more serious approach. But tentatively, and with dubiety, she placed her bottom on a desk and allowed her feet to dangle wide. Her furry place was starkly revealed in all its wonder. "Use a whip on me, please darling, not the cane." It was her only plea.

Hyacinth knew she was officiating over something rare. A glow of gratitude flooded her being. This girl was so compliant, so willing, so female, it was breathtaking. She selec-

ted the whip with care. Mignon should be hurt terribly. With a great curiosity she placed her hand exploringly on the exposed sex. It came away wet. “I told you so.” said Mignon reproachfully.

It was a wonderful stroke. As it implanted its biting imprint on its mark, Hyacinth knew that she, too, would climax soon without digital aid. The pressures of the beauty and the pain were devastating. Mignon slipped sideways to the floor and went into gyrations such as the watching girl had never seen.

“You really ought to tie me, darling.” Mignon admonished when it was done. “I’m ashamed of rolling around like this.”

“How do you want to be tied, dear?” Hyacinth felt love.

“Not over a desk. It’s so juvenile.” Mignon complained. “Put me on the trapeze. You can make me do anything you like then.”

It was so easy. A Priory schoolroom had everything. Hyacinth laughed as she lowered the bar that would hold this gorgeous naked helpless within the authority of her arm. Mignon obligingly placed her wrists where the straps would hold them. The Teacher pulled and tugged and buckled tightly. “You have to hurt a little.” Hyacinth assured her victim.

“The voice of experience!” Mignon’s voice held both mock-

ery and love. “How taut are you going to haul me up?”

Hyacinth pushed the little button and watched the lovely hands and arms rise, watched the leather bands that now prisoned the wrists that had been free, watching Mignon’s intent features as she, too, looked up to gauge her final impotence. When only the culprit’s toes were on the floor, the button was pressed again.

“You do everything so exactly right.” Mignon breathed. “I bet I’m in for the beating of my life.”

“It was you who told me you loved it.” Hyacinth jibed.

“Oh, I do, darling. Especially from you. You’re so absolutely pussy inflaming, it’s not true. I’m sopping again. You ought to be ashamed of yourself.”

“Well, I like that! It’s your pussy that’s oversexed, not mine.”

“No darling, you’re still off in the wild blue yonder. What the two of us ought to be doing is a wild incredible gorgeous sixty-nine.”

Hyacinth struck hard between the invitingly spread legs. “Does that quench the flame a bit?” She asked dryly.

It was too beautiful to bear! The whipped Mignon was all the unquenchable desire of all the world. She kicked, she lifted herself from the floor by her wrists, she flung herself from side to side. Her head tossed wildly, the damp hair fly-

ing. The watching girl who held the whip knew that there could never be a greater beauty than what she now beheld. The moans were music.

“I can’t get free.” Mignon sobbed. “Whip me.”

For the lucky ones there are moments when we are face to face with the ineffable. The sudden confrontation with that not previously believed. The fantasy come true. The girl who takes you by the hand and leads you into the world of dreams, and the dreams are real. So it was with Hyacinth! Until the last few days she had never wanted, or even dreamed, of whipping another girl. It would have seemed absurd. But now she raged with lust that only the whip and the cane could assuage. She longed to immure herself in a frenzy of lash after lash upon the tractioned loveliness of a naked girl who offered her only love.

Hyacinth whipped Mignon as though conserving an infinite treasure. Twenty strokes! Only twenty strokes! So small a sum to quench so great a need! So long as this gorgeous naked Mignon could scream her agony she would never wish to stop. Tied as Mignon was, she could whip her everywhere. Even those adorable breasts…

“Whip me.” Said Mignon.

Paradise! There was no other! Savagely and joyously Hyacinth plied the whip.

Mignon was infinitely rewarding. She was held only by her

wrists. From them she could never get free. The biting leather straps laughed at her efforts to tear herself loose. They held her nakedness with ease. But the rest of Mignon! It leaped and twisted and turned! It flung itself from side to side. When its flailing legs unwittingly exposed a target, Hyacinth cut into that exposure with purpose and accuracy. Mignon screamed again and again. Her orgasms were almost continuous. Her pleas forever without pause: “Whip me, whip me, whip me…”

Hyacinth knew there could be no greater glory.

“I’ve never been whipped quite like that.” Said the moaning Mignon during a pause in which her whipper sought orientation. “You are wonderful, darling, wonderful, wonderful, wonderful.” She hung limply from her strapped wrists, her lovely nakedness glistening with sweat. “Now you’re a Teacher you can whip me whenever you like. Oh darling, whip me every day. Will you? Tell me, tell me…”

“I will whip you every day.” Said Hyacinth, and slashed Mignon across her pleading breasts.

There are no words…

Hyacinth knew herself chosen. One of the elite. To possess Mignon: to whip Mignon: to be given Mignon’s love. She was Cinderella without midnight. How had she never known! But still it was the whip and not the tongue. Not the tongue, not the tongue, not the tongue… She placed a lash across the top of both Mignon’s breasts. Mignon screamed

and made delightful sounds. She struck her again, so that the naked legs flailed the air and the wrists began to bleed. How beautiful her captive was! Surely there could be no other like this!

“Whip me, whip me! Oh darling, whip me! More, more more!” The captive blossomed into orgasm once again. Lovingly, Hyacinth judged the climactic moment and used her whip to take Mignon into the land of dreams… It was wonderful to watch. So exquisitely beautiful… It was beauty that endured above all else.

“Darling, I’m ashamed of myself.” The suspended naked girl eyed her captor ruefully. “I bet I was wanton.”

“So what?” Hyacinth was speaking a new tongue.

“You took me off into somewhere I’ve never been. The Sisters can’t take me there. I love you. You are going to whip me every day, arn’t you?”

“Every day.” It was the plighting of a trothe.

“Darling?” The voice was filled with longing. “How many strokes have you given me?”

“I haven’t the faintest idea.”

Mignon laughed joyously. “Do you want to stop.

“Never!”

“See! You are as bad as me.” Mignon sighed. “It’s good

you're a Teacher, You can do what you like with me. But, darling, what about my marks?"

"What about your marks?"

"Well, just in case Sister Veronica takes inventory: have I had twenty on my bottom?"

Hyacinth counted the delectable scarlet stripes. "I can't tell." She admitted. "They cross and criss-cross. Sorry, darling, I wasn't counting."

"Neither was I. But you ought to, y'know."

"Do you want me to stop?"

"No. But we'd best not overdo things. Sister Veronica isn't stupid. Give me a few more: Just between us girls." There was a timid knock at the door. "Hello Tessie." Hyacinth greeted the shrinking girl. "Do come in. I'm just finishing dear Mignon. You don't mind…?"

"Oh no, Miss Hyacinth!" It was evident that poor Tessie would willingly have taken second place to anything.

"Make her take her clothes off, and hit me hard." Mignon demanded.

Hyacinth obliged on both counts.

"You arn't going to do me like that, are you, Miss Hyacinth?" Tessie asked horrified.

“Of course she is.” Mignon proclaimed. “It’s lovely.”

“It hurts awful.” Said Tessie.

“Nonsense!” Mignon turned to Hyacinth. “Darling, the poor child is scared. Give me a real scorcher across me breasts so the dear girl will know what fun it is.”

Hyacinth was challenged. If only she could make Mignon admit pain! She struck with all the cruelty at her command. Then watched incredulous.

Mignon tensed as the searing blow striped her soft breasts. But there was no complaint, no scream. It was as though the whipped girl had felt only the caress of love. Her moan was of joy. The undulations of her hips of ecstasy, the tossing of her head the expression of dreams fulfilled.

“Thank you, darling.” She acknowledged simply. “That was gorgeous.”

Hyacinth worshipped.

Tessie wept.

“Mind if I stay and help?” Mignon asked casually.

Hyacinth was still under her spell. She would have agreed to anything. Tessie looked back over a naked shoulder apprehensively: “She’s proper cruel, she is.” A small voice informed the Teacher.

“Twenty on your bottom, was it, dear?” Hyacinth was be-

coming blasé.

“That’s right, Miss Hyacinth. But from you. Not from her.”

“Don’t you like Mignon caning you? She’s just helping me out.”

“Why don’t you whip her?” Tessie suggested. “She likes it.”

“Don’t you like it, love?” Mignon asked.

“No!” The negative was decisive.

Mignon placed her hands on the immature breasts. “These are nice.” She kissed the naked child who was now suspended on tip-toe, “How would it be if we whipped these instead of your bottom?”

“It’s my bottom Sister Veronica’s going to look at.”

“Wonderful! We’ll cane that too.”

Tessie burst into tears.

The older girls enjoyed the sight. For brief moments they were sadists. Maiden tears and naked puberty! What more could heart desire! “Let’s whip her pussy as well.” Mignon pleaded.

Tessie whimpered heartrendingly and tugged at the straps. Hyacinth strove to quench the fire within her loins. Mignon laughed at both of them. She went over and cupped her hand upon the captive’s twitching sex. “See.” She said tri-

umphantly. “Sopping wet, just like mine. You whip her bottom. I’ll whip the more interesting bits.”

“Don’t you dare touch me!” Tessie said without conviction.

Mignon curled the whip around both small cones.

Tessie screamed and knew herself delivered into agony. She wept and sobbed and looked to Hyacinth in mute appeal. Hyacinth took the cane and cut it deeply into the soft bottom of a girl. It was pure splendour!

Hyacinth dismissed Mignon. She took the rest of them with grim determination. If she must whip these girls, she would. Bottom succeeded bottom. breasts succeeded breasts. Howl and moan fed her personal joy. She plied cane and whip with accuracy and vigour. Sister Veronica would have no cause to point a finger. All the girls who left her classroom were well whipped, and carried the evidence upon their skin.

She was uncertain whether it was she or The Priory that had won a battle.

“Really, Mignon, you are incorrigible!” Sister Veronica modified the accusation with a smile.

“What have I done now, Sister?” Mignon looked across the desk hopefully.

“You know perfectly well what you have done. You caned Rosie without authority.”

“I was just helping Hyacinth.”

“From what I have seen of her work today, Hyacinth needs no help. By the way, strip. I’d better look at you too.”

Mignon posed prettily. “Aren’t my marks lovely, Sister!”

“Hmmm! I suppose those on your breasts were accidental?” The Sister’s tone was caustic.

“I thought it would be nice practice for Hyacinth.” Mignon improvised brightly.

“How kind of you! Perhaps I need practice too, do you think?”

“Whatever you say, Sister. Thank you.”

Sister Veronica resumed her seat behind the desk. “Stand properly to attention, you incredible girl. You need talking to.” The Sister spared an intent look, “Those marks on your breasts are truly lovely… Really, I don’t know what I’m going to do to you.”

“You can always whip me, Sister.” Mignon sounded like he who offers to toss a two headed coin.

“That’s the whole point.” Sister Veronica agreed. “We can always whip your pretty skin, and you love it.”

“Oh, Sister! It hurts terribly.”

“That would appear to be purely coincidental.” Sister

Veronica said dryly. “If I was to fasten you now and finish the whipping of your breasts that Miss Hyacinth has so competently started, I have little doubt you would have an orgasm before the tenth stroke. You are oversexed.”

“Oh, thank you, Sister.”

“Don’t be ridiculous. It was not I who gave you active glands! Now, to get down to business. Do you wish to ask me to conclude that infliction?”

“Dear Sister Veronica, please whip my breasts. I have been a bad girl.”

“Delightfully done, dear girl. But we both know you are being arch and coy and faintly impudent in the expectation of an erotic thrill. Am I not correct?”

“Yes, Sister.” Mignon’s voice lost buoyancy.

“So, therefore, I will not whip your breasts. I will not whip you at all.”

Mignon felt deflated. She was tremendously aroused by her visit to Hyacinth. The punishment of her breasts threatened by the Sister would have hurt more than she would wish. But it would have left her glowing. She had long feared the Sisters might circumvent her addiction to the lash. She realised, too late, it had probably made her unconsciously impudent in her reaction to punishment. Her tendency to orgasm under the whip or the cane was an embarrassment to all.

“Please, Sister, don’t do something awful to me. Don’t lock me up in some horrible dark, little hole. I know I’m a problem about… about what you said. But honestly, if you use the bad whips, and if you whip other parts of me besides my bottom, I’ll hate it as much as the others do. You’ll be able to tell from the way I scream.”

“That sounds like an invitation, Mignon?” The voice was cynical.

Mignon brushed away a tear. “I do mean it. Sister. Oh please… I’m so happy at The Priory. I know I’m impudent, but that’s part of the being happy…”

Sister Veronica was torn. There were few of the girls she did not love. She cherished a deep affection for the girl who stood naked before her desk. Mignon was sunshine. The girl had uncannily hit upon an intent. Yet the Sister found herself shrinking from the immurement of so much happy beauty in a dark and silent place. There was now no doubt that solitary confinement was what Mignon hated most. It was therefore the obvious thing she must suffer. Sister Veronica sighed. Moving round the desk, she placed a loving hand on the trembling girl’s arm. “Come along, my dear. There is something we must do.”

The girl to be punished had unconsciously described her cell. Small, gloomy and bare. A stone box to contain a girl who had sinned. Its total furnishing was a three legged stool and a pail, the bare crudities of a century past.

“Turn round, dear, and cross your wrists.”

The sorrowful voice was too much for the naked girl. The awfulness of the dismal place was claustrophobic. Mignon knew she would die, locked in such a place. With a wail of desolation she sank to her knees and clasped the Sister’s legs in supplication. “Don’t leave me! Oh please, don’t lock me in here alone.” Her tears were desperate.

Sister Veronica’s heart quailed at what she must do. There was no doubting the efficaciousness of this cell upon its captive. But she was loathe to leave and lock the door. Her fingers toyed lovingly within the delinquent’s hair.

“Whip me so my skin is cut.” Mignon begged.

There was no answer.

“Flog me with that awful cat thing… oh please…”

The sobbing became desperate in the silent cell.

“Do something awful: a hot iron, or needles… anything!”

“Stand up, my dear. You have frightened yourself. It will pass.”

There was that in Sister Veronica’s voice that told Mignon she was lost. Resignedly she rose to her feet, wiped her cheeks with the fingers she soon would not have, then turned and crossed her wrists behind her back. The Sister produced cord.

Ordinarily, Mignon adored having her hands tied. But not now. Not here! There was something tremendously personal about the tensing of the slender cords about her wrists. They spoke of love, of things shared, of possession. Often they were a prelude to the whip or the cane. But today, when the warm fingers pulled the last knot tight it would signal only desolation. The cords would keep her company, they would enhance her vulnerability, they would invoke nostalgia. They would, also, inhibit anything she sought to do for herself, anything…

There came the final moment that neither wished to end. Sister Veronica kissed the hungry lips and dried the tears. The tied girl looked at her imploringly, a piteous appeal more poignant than the words she could not utter. For moments they gazed into each other's eyes. Then, for fear of weakening her resolve, the Sister fled. Alone in her small prison, Mignon heard the lock turn in the slammed door, and the bolts shot home with a frightening finality. The tears started afresh and flowed unimpeded by her bound hands.

Mignon was by nature happy. Her lubricity was a spontaneous reflection of joy. Even the cell could not dampen all of what she was. As her sobbing died she took stock of what had been done to her, wondering how well she could cope, how long the imprisonment would last, why her hands had been tied.

The cords biting into her wrists were a message. Mignon

was not sure what the message was. But they were a human link in this inhuman place. With cunning born of long practice, she struggled to free herself of them. But experience and pain soon told her she was safely secured, so that she desisted and would not try again. It would have been nice to have her hands, but they were gone. Shrugging her strained shoulders, she walked the few paces the cell allowed, wall to wall and back. It was as though she must have the assurance of the stone to know the limits of her, almost non-existent, freedom. Then, dolefully, she sat upon the miserable little stool. Its small hard surface hurt Hyacinth's stripes upon her bottom. She did not care. In fact she welcomed this evidence that she had once been alive. Alone, she faced the hours, and perhaps the days.

Sister Veronica was troubled. Memory of Mignon's stricken face as she stood bound in the ugly cell would not go away. There are punishments that are altogether right and fitting: There are others that are not. Mignon's cheerful disposition was adored by the girls and enjoyed by the staff. True, she required frequent discipline, but her cheerful acceptance of it held an endearing quality of its own. It would be a loss to all should her spirit be broken by the cell. Better she derive erotic joy from her whippings than that her laughter be quenched.

Like many who impose authority, the good Sister had boxed herself into a situation from which she could not withdraw without loss of face. To go downstairs and release the darling child was scarcely practicable within the

code. Authority should take its course. Yet she knew there would be no sleep for either of them in the night to come unless she took some action. Mental pictures of the naked Mignon curled and bound and huddled in a corner of the stone floor would prohibit rest or peace of mind. Another girl perhaps, but not Mignon.

There was, of course, a way! Examining it Sister Veronica was by no means sure she wanted that either. But it was Mignon's own plea. It was practicable. She went in search of it.

Mignon had been in the cell five hours when the door opened. If someone had told her five days or five weeks she would have believed them. The hateful place had taxed her morale to the limit. Again and again she had fought back the need to scream, the need to tear uselessly at the cords upon her wrists, to beat against the implacable door with naked feet. Now, at sight of Sister Veronica's smiling face, she gave a choked sob and fell to her knees, rubbing her cheeks frantically against the Sisters legs as though to assure herself that life did indeed exist. She tore at her bound hands in need to clasp human warmth, but since that was denied she used her face again and again against the texture of the Sister's cloth. She could not speak, only weep in thankfulness.

"I should not have placed you here." Sister Veronica said simply.

Gently, she raised the weeping girl to her feet, turned her about and untied the cords upon the youthful wrists. Immediately the hands were free they were wildly thrown around her neck, wet lips sought hers as Mignon came back from death into life. Sister Veronica was shocked at what she had done, and deeply thankful that she had the judgement to undo it. A few days in the cell and the Mignon everyone loved would have been gone forever. How sweet and vivid the child saw! No child in years, but in the possession of eternal youth and laughter. She felt a flood of tenderness that would make what must still be done no pleasurable task.

Mignon's intuitive perception saved the pain of explanation. When the sobbing ended and the sniffing had been attended to, the naked girl stepped back and gazed adoringly at her salvation.

"You're going to whip me instead?" It was more a statement that a question. The answer was in the Sister's eyes.

"And it's going to be the awful whip, isn't it?"

"Not the Cat, child, the other."

Again the entanglement of grateful arms. The Sister felt both omnipotent and humble. Knowledge that she held such power over this lovely creature was almost unbearable. She, too, was choked with emotion.

"Thank you, Sister. Oh, thank you…!"

The girl was beyond belief. She was facing a punishment more awful than most of the girls had ever known or would ever know, and she was facing it with gratitude. “Should you thank me, child? It will cut you terribly.”

“I know, and I’m so glad. I want to be what you want me to. Oh, thank you, Sister. I’m so grateful…”

They walked to the Execution hand in hand.

It was much the best pose. Both agreed as Sister Veronica buckled the straps around the wrists still indented by the cords, pulled them tight so that the girl to be whipped must stand upon her toes.

“Please don’t be sad, Sister. You’re feeling guilty about me. I can tell. I’ll be alright.”

“I would not have wished to see you scarred.”

“But they’ll heal. I’ll get over it.”

“It will be very long before all traces go. Months, perhaps years.”

“I’ll be proud of them.” Nothing could daunt Mignon now that she was out of the fearful cell. “Besides, there’s only five. You’re being terribly kind.”

Kind! Sister Veronica shook out the length of the wicked thing that would slice the white back awaiting its cut. Looking back over one shoulder Mignon saw it too. One look

was enough. Mutely she averted her face and looked steadfastly ahead. She who loved to be whipped was now desperately afraid, not so much of the whip itself, but in fear that it would make her disgrace herself before this woman she revered.

The blood came instantly with the scream. A scream more awful than Sister Veronica had ever heard, she who had heard so many. A heart tearing ululation of the unbearable, it came from the inmost depths of the lovely female body that was now a thing of madness held by slender bonds from which the tearing wrists seemed likely to separate from their clawing hands. She stepped back in awe at what she had done. Awe and a certainty that she was witnessing something more exquisite than she had ever seen. The tiny drops of blood formed and slipped away, painting the ivory back with slender rivulets of red.

There was more than one scream. Others followed in peal after peal of anguish. There could be no doubt that the tied girl had discovered a punishment in which she would find no joy. Mignon delivered herself utterly to pain. The watching Sister felt certain that if she spoke, the writhing girl would not hear her words. The slender body jerked and heaved, the screams sank to moans, the moans to sobs and small inarticulate sounds that were as expressive of despair as the first scream itself. Finally the body glistening with sweat, is back decorated with its own blood, fell limp, most of its weight supported by the wrist straps. The small toes touching the floor but uncaring for a discomfort sur-

passed a thousandfold. Neither spoke. The room seemed filled with the heavy breathing of the girl.

The Sister circled the suspended nudity. Mignon's head had fallen forward in weariness. It was not until the second round that the bound girl raised hurt eyes to smile wanly at the woman who held the whip. "Thank you, Sister." The voice, too, was pale, but it still held gratitude. Sister Veronica marvelled.

"Are you ready for the next, child?"

"Yes Sister. I'm terribly sorry about the noise. I can't help it."

No mention of pain! No plea for clemency! The Sister's heart went out to the girl. Here was something rare, something to be treasured and preserved. Without dubiety she set the whip aside and freed the girl who bore its single wound.

"But why, Sister? Why?"

"Because I love you, child."

For the second time that day she led a wondering and worshipping Mignon by the hand.

* * *

“You sure you’re not barking up the wrong tree, m’boy?” Lady Hipple asked jovially.

“I behaved shockingly.” Terry protested. “It was unforgivable.”

“Now you’d like to be forgiven?”

“I suppose so. I want to marry Hyacinth. I’m… I’m sure that demonstration you had her put on for my benefit was well intentioned… It certainly did throw me at the time. But now I see it for what it was. I’m ashamed of myself.”

“Don’t be. The view when you left wasn’t that good. Always found those things a bit of a bore myself. But dammit, boy, marriage! That’s nonsense.”

“Why?”

“You don’t even know the girl.” Lady Hipple laughed coarsely. “You’ve only seen her naked. Might look awful with clothes on. But, seriously, what’s got into you? You’re a sensible young chap.”

“I’m not sure I know what’s got into me.” Terry admitted frankly. “I’m not a child. I’ve been around a bit. I hate to offer that love at first sight thing: its a bit frayed at the edges. But it has been known to be true, hasn’t it?”

Lady Hipple was flattered by the inference that she might have known such an emotion. Her earthy humour came up with an idea. “How’d you like to sleep with the girl and see

if she still looks good afterwards? Might be arranged."

"I don't believe she's like that."

His hostess poured more sherry and chuckled. "She isn't! But she wouldn't have anything to say about it. I'd have her spread-eagled on a bed with a pillow under her bottom, all ready and waiting for you."

"She'd never speak to me again! And anyway, I wouldn't, not by force."

"We'll blindfold her then. She'll think the Butler did it." Lady Hipple was in excellent spirits.

Terry grinned uncertainly. He knew Lady Hipple to be uninhibited. But surely not to this degree! "There's all sorts of stories going round about The Priory." He said sheepishly. "I don't know which of 'em to believe."

"Believe every one of 'em, dear boy." Lady Hipple advised firmly.

"But… I mean, about the girls getting whipped…?"

His hostess chuckled. "Your own particular inamorata is well marked right now. I happen to know.

"Hyacinth whipped! What on earth for?" He demanded incredulously.

"Inked her blotter, I expect."

“But she’s so beautiful…!”

“Carries whip marks exquisitely.” Lady Hipple agreed, deliberately misinterpreting his exclamation.

He flushed. “You make it sound like an every-day occurrence.”

“At The Priory it is. Some pert little baggage is probably bending over for six of the best at this moment.”

“The cane perhaps. But the whip…?”

“We do mostly reserve the whip for the bigger girls. Hyacinth is a bigger girl. She’s been whipped quite a lot, actually.”

“And they accept? I mean, they just stand and take it?”

Lady Hipple chortled. “Well hardly. We usually tie ’em. Saves a lot of fuss. They prefer it.”

“Prefer it!”

“Well if you’d just got a swisher on the rump you wouldn’t want to be seen hopping round the room holding your bottom, would you?”

“I suppose not. But it’s all so… so…”

“Delightful?” Suggested Lady Hipple helpfully.

Terry had been about to utter a fervent affirmative. Hyacinth’s enthusiasm was infectious. He checked in time. But

her keen eye had observed his hesitation.

“Know what I think, young man! I bet you’d love to whip that little girl yourself. All these stories you say you’ve heard have given you an erection. Most men love to whip girls. Hilary used to whip me when his whatsit was downcast. Come now, be honest.”

Her guest’s flush was now a blush. He had been read like a book. He could not deny that finding Hyacinth tied naked to a tree had sparked a flame of eroticism, perhaps actual lust, he could not quench. With Lady Hipple it was easy to admit his sin.

She was immensely intrigued. “See, I guessed it!” She exclaimed triumphantly. “Well, if a bit of tail would have cured you of one thing, whipping her bottom might cure you of the other. Want to try?”

Offered Paradise on a plate! Being British and a gentleman he refused. “I couldn’t possibly.”

“Don’t be a young ass! Think what I’m offering. If I hadn’t known your father I wouldn’t dream of such a thing. If you’re shy, we can still blindfold the dear girl. Keep your mouth shut and she’ll never know.”

“But I’d know.”

“That’s a damn fatuous thing to say. Try my remedy: Whip the girl, then screw her. You’ll find it a complete cure. Mention marriage then and you’ll run for your life. Take my

word for it."

"It's too cruel. Taking advantage…"

"Horse balls!" Said Lady Hipple.

Hyacinth was puzzled and hurt. She could think of nothing she had done to deserve a whipping. Besides, she was now a teacher. It wasn't fair. If the children found out! She shifted resentfully against her straps.

Mignon had known nothing. She had borne the message and been immensely intrigued by it. She had obeyed its order and tied Hyacinth on her toes ready to be whipped. But she knew not why. Only that, her task done, she must not linger. There had been a swift kiss, the gathering up of The Teacher's discarded clothes and a receding tattoo of light feet. The naked Hyacinth stood on her toes wondering.

It was Sister Thalia who came and adjusted the blindfold. "I can tell you nothing, child. This seems to be between you and a higher authority. I do not even understand why you must wear this thing on your eyes. I am by no means sure I approve of this whole affair. Your behaviour has been exemplary as far as I am concerned. But I am not involved. I have been asked to make this absurd non-explanation and to fasten this eye covering so that you cannot get it off. You will try to dislodge it against your raised arms, so I must make it tight.

Sister Thalia, too, tapped off into the distance. Hyacinth stood panting with apprehension in the dark.

When the footsteps came she knew there was more than one. There were no voices, just the susurration of motion that kept her cringingly expectant of a blow. Then, once more, a pair of feet drifted into the distance. She was alone with an unknown. One of the Sisters probably. But why!

“Why am I going to be whipped, please?” She asked respectfully.

Silence.

“I don’t know what I’ve done wrong.” She offered plaintively. “Please tell me.”

Silence. Perhaps a faint sound of breathing.

“It would help me to bear the pain if I knew.” She quavered. Her courage was no match for the eerie silence.

It was a whip. The blow caught her squarely across her shoulders. Its unexpectedness and the portion of her anatomy chosen caused her to yelp in shock. But, the impact over, she realised the blow had been a half hearted affair. It hurt and it no doubt marked her skin. But by Priory standards it was child’s play. Perhaps that was the answer: a novice was undergoing some sort of initiation at her expense. She remembered her own indoctrination.

The second blow was similar, but curled beneath an arm

and found her breast. She moaned and struggled in protest. “Please don’t whip my breasts.” She requested politely. What a thing to have to say to someone you could not see! The sound of breathing was now quite distinct. Whoever was whipping her was either in very poor physical condition or was becoming excited.

The next blow was perceptibly harder. It inconsistently explored her bottom, but lapped on over one hip so as to hurt more than the others. She moaned to convey the message.

How beastly to be in the dark. How suspenseful not to know! How shaming if she was tied thus for the attention of some child! There was one other it might be…! But surely not! The Prioress would have no need for secrecy. Who, then, was whipping her! And why!

“Who are you, please?” She asked more boldly than she felt.

The answer curled around her waist with a blow that was almost professional. She could not contain a cry or forbear some small motions. Her response must have given satisfaction. The blows became steadily harder. Spaced to allow her time to moan and to tug against her straps, they soon had her emitting all the sounds that a whip inevitably extracts from a naked girl helplessly tied. Soon there were tears upon her cheeks and a great bitterness in her heart that she be whipped for nothing but caprice.

“Please.” She begged. “Please don’t whip me so hard. It’s

awful in the dark like this." She chafed her blindfold against an arm, then the other. It held firm. She was in the dark. Sister Thalia had done her work well. The next stroke was from the front, cutting her loins. She screamed lustily.

As whippings went it was no better and no worse than many she had felt or seen. She supposed that 'undistinguished' might be the world. When the blows stopped, she hung against her wrists wondering. Was it over! How could she know.

Terry unashamedly refused to deceive himself that whipping Hyacinth had been the high point of his life thus far. It was! The behaviour of the lovely naked girl, helpless under his whip. Her pleas, the way her skin sprang into scarlet life under the thong, all of it had produced in him an erotic demand he recognised. It was simple and demanding lust. He was ashamed of it. But acknowledged its presence. He wanted nothing more than to lash, and lash again, the helpless nudity Lady Hipple had provided for his delectation. But he knew little of these mysteries. He loved Hyacinth and had no wish to injure her. Enough was undoubtedly enough. Her sobbing had penetrated his lust and touched his heart.

But what now! Lady Hipple had cynically and personally delivered Hyacinth into his hands for what she called his 'cure'. He found himself with a dire and urgent need that the cure, as outlined by her, be consummated. He had condemned himself often enough for his failure to take his

male right she had so freely offered that night he had freed her from the tree. Now he must do it against her will. She would hardly welcome his attentions after he had whipped her.

But how! There was, of course, the knee trembler. He knew of it only as a joke. Something boasted, but never done. Because he loved the girl he shrank from something so shaming and unorthodox. This lovely creature deserved to at least lay down to receive him. Lay down to be raped. Was that what he was doing! Surely not. And yet…

He looked at the straps that secured her. Before he could use her he must set her free. But what then! Tie her to the bench! Would she obligingly allow him to so dispose her body for his pleasure! It was a bit of a poser. But his male ego plus his demanding sex generated overconfidence. Somehow he would cope…

Hyacinth was amazed that she be freed before the blindfold was removed. She felt the fingers on the straps, and thankfully lowered her arms and sank back upon her heels. To stand upon her toes to be whipped was tiring. Instinctively, then her hands flew to the band about her eyes. She had a great need to see the companion to her pain.

But her wrists were roughly grasped by hands far stronger than her own. She was dragged and thrust down upon something hard. Rebellion flared. Something was wrong! She kicked savagely at where she judged the hurtful hands

to be. There was a gasp of pain, and suddenly she was free.

She tore at the blindfold. It was the first priority. Sister Thalia's competence defeated her for moments, but her frantic clawing won. Suddenly she could see.

But what a sight to behold! A young man clutching his testicles, his face twisted in pain. She laughed in joy. Her foot had found its mark. So it was Terry. The absolute rotter! To have her tied and naked, with rape for dessert. She was furiously angry. Furiously glad of freedom. "Why, oh why?" She demanded. "Was that all you wanted, to whip me. To marry a girl you could whip." Her last words were tearful.

He looked up at her, lost. How to explain. How to make her understand… He was desolate. For moments their eyes locked in total misunderstanding. The most beautiful girl in his world, the girl whose nudity he had seen and whipped, saw him for a lecher, a satyr concerned only with her flesh. Lady Hipples's Grand Plan fell in ruins about his feet. He reached to touch her. But too late! Hyacinth gave him one look of utter contempt and fled beyond his ken.

* * *

Lady Hipple was amused. The agonies of the young were absurd. She wondered if she, too, had engaged in such

antics. Memory caused her to hastily turn the page.

“She kicked you in the nuts and ran, eh!” She chuckled. “About all you could expect, wasn’t it! You muffed it, young fellah!”

“She’ll never speak to me again. I’m sunk.”

“And serve you right, getting your balls in the way of her foot. I thought I’d done everything possible to put you in the way of a nice leisurely rape. Really, I don’t know what the young are coming to.”

Terry squirmed. “I love her.”

“Oh, for goodness sake! You and your love!” She looked at him with an infinite tolerance. “What do you want me to do? Put something in her Tea?”

He looked at her with the pathetic eyes of the male who hungered for a woman’s arms. “Anything. Anything at all.”

Lady Hipple considered. “I can easily place you in the same room. But unless I lock the door she won’t stay. If I do lock the door she will hate you more than ever. You grasp this fundamental fact of women’s nature, I suppose?”

“Yes. She must hate me.”

“Not really. She revolts against having her body used.” Again she chuckled, “We women have a problem with our bodies. When we are young everybody wants to use ’em

except us. The way men used to clutch at me…! It's that damn accommodating little slit, of course. So blasted convenient! If we didn't have to pee it ought to be sewed up. Men could shove their dinks through a knot-hole or buy a pound of liver. I suppose you want to try again?"

"More than anything in the world."

Lady Hipple sighed. "Why don't you go down the hall and jack off in the lav'?" She asked practically.

"But I love her!"

"That takes us back to square one. You wouldn't like to shove it into me, I suppose?"

He looked desolate.

"Oh, all right! Nobody's wanted to stick it into me for years. Poor old Hilary… How about young Sally? She'd do it for a fiver. I'll pay if you're a bit short."

"Please, Lady Hipple. You're joking."

"Whole situation could do with a bit of humour, if you ask me." Lady Hipple retorted. "But I can think of one more chance. But the ball will be in your court, not hers. Willing to try?"

"Oh yes." He declaimed. "Oh yes, anything…"

Hyacinth was both angry and afraid. It seemed probable that she was not to be whipped: not unless it was her breasts! She was tied tight to a pillar in such a way that her mammaries were her most prominent feature. No matter how she surged against the cords she could change nothing. Even her nipples betrayed her by becoming hard. No blindfold. No lecture. Nothing! She had been tied helpless and left to speculate as to why.

There should have been a fanfare of trumpets or the waving of a flag. But there was nothing save a smiling Terry who walked in with an assurance he did not feel.

“Drop dead.” Was Hyacinth’s greeting.

Terry was unperturbed. He had expected no less.

“You are very beautiful.” It was a tried and true pacifier for injured female sensibilities.

“Go and jump in the Lake.”

He felt he was making progress. “Please marry me.” He asked soberly.

“Get yourself something else to whip. Try a horse.”

Terry sighed. He felt certain he was making progress.

“Please marry me.” He asked again.

“Had you thought of some female animal?” Hyacinth inquired frostily. “I believe some of them are quite comfort-

ing."

"Don't be unkind."

"Unkind!" Hyacinth was outraged. "You whip me half to death and then talk about being unkind!"

"That was a mistake. I apologise."

"A mistake! You absolute ass! It hurt like Hell! Was trying to rape me afterwards a mistake too?"

"I was misinformed. Oh, darling, don't be angry."

"Of course I'm angry. And don't call me darling."

"Isn't there something I can do."

"Yes. Untie me."

Terry winced. Why did she have to think of that! "If I do you'll just storm out of here." He complained.

"Of course I will. But if you have an ounce of chivalry you'll do it."

"I have no chivalry. I simply want you."

Hyacinth laughed bitterly. "Take me then. I can't stop you. I'm tied with my legs a bit apart. I expect you'll manage."

"Not like that. Not for us. Tell me you won't run if I set you free."

Hyacinth wanted very much to be free. She shunned the act implicit in that freedom. “Take a running hump.” She suggested acidly. Her cunt throbbed.

He looked upon her nakedness, knowing his privilege. She would always disarm him. He started loosening knots.

When she was free Hyacinth massaged her weals. There always seemed to be enough of them. “Thank you.” She vouschafed ungraciously.

“What can I say?” He implored, utterly lost before his Goddess.

“Try saying good-bye.”

She was infuriating. She never gave a chap a chance. He grabbed at her nakedness.

Hyacinth hit him on the nose. It was purely fortuitous. But lucky. The nose bled. Its owner retired from active amour, searching for a handkerchief. Hyacinth felt that even Mr. Pennyfeather could have put on a better show. She walked regally from the room. She would probably be whipped. But, at least, not by a crass male hand.

Terry dabbed ineffectually at the scarlet flow.

Mr. Pennyfeather looked at Mignon approvingly. “No note?” He asked in disappointment.

“We don’t need a note, do we, Mr. Pennyfeather?”

It was a new approach, but valid. Mr. Pennyfeather was suspicious. Anything too good to be true was a trap. An old soldier was not easily lured astray. But Mignon was any man’s dream come true. “You were feeling horny, like?” He asked tentatively.

“I haven’t been whipped in a week. I’m starving. I say, have you got any of that tipple of yours?”

He needed the Special Blend himself, and produced it with alacrity. “Why don’t you get one of the girls to whip you?” He asked as he filled the glasses.

Mignon had asked herself the same question. “It’s not the same.” She admitted. “There has to be some sort of compulsion, some factor beyond my control. I do hope you understand.

“It’s being tied and helpless?” He suggested.

Mignon took a long swig of the beverage. She quite unashamedly wanted to get tight. “You are so understanding.” She looked at him with adoring female eyes so that the columns marched past the stand and the roll of drums sent the blood surging through old veins. “You do like to whip me, don’t you.”

Mr. Pennyfeather loved whipping Mignon. She tightened his ageing reins and made him young again.

“It’s a pleasure, Miss.”

“How about other parts of me besides my bottom?”

The Army blood surged. Nothing like this, even in Singapore.

“Should we got to the Tool Shed? I mean, to look after me properly? Would you like to strap me to that pedestal affair?”

The blood of conquerors surged through Mr. Pennyfeather’s veins. Mignon finished her drink and handed over the glass for a refill. While it was being dealt with she insouciantly stripped herself naked.

“The pedestal’s mainly for the bottom.” He suggested. “You’re sweet. You want to whip other parts of me?”

“If it would please you, miss.”

“I can hardly wait.” Mignon finished her drink. “Come on, let’s go.”

“You are not going anywhere.” Said a firm voice. “You are coming with me.” Said Hyacinth. “I’m up to your little tricks.”

The sergeant put the bottle of Special blend back in the cupboard. Mignon looked with love at her empty glass and her female deliverance. She felt glowingly certain that, one way or another, her flame would be adequately fanned

into a blaze. “I’m so glad you came, darling,” she said happily. “Do take your clothes off.”

“You’re drunk.”

“Not yet. Please sergeant, give us both another.”

Weighing profit and loss, the sergeant filled two glasses.

“You’d like to be whipped, wouldn’t you, darling?” Mignon was offering the treasure of Empires.

“No. I’m going to whip you.”

Hyacinth downed her drink. It seemed the easiest disposal. Mr. Pennyfeather thoughtfully replenished the glass. He was casting his bread upon the waters. It was returned tenfold.

“What game are you playing?” Hyacinth asked with interest.

“He’s going to whip my cunt.” Mignon said helpfully.

“And your tits.” Said Mr. Pennyfeather.

“He means my nipples.” Mignon explained.

“I suppose he’d like to whip mine too?” Hyacinth was at the bottom of her glass. Life had been dull lately.

“It would be a real privilege, Miss.” Mr. Pennyfeather was truly reverent.

“Give me another drink.” Hyacinth winked at Mignon shamelessly. She was exorcising the memory of Terry and all his kind.

“Do you want to fuck us too?” Mignon brightly asked their host.

This was dangerous ground. Mr. Pennyfeather could manage one. But he was uncertain about two. “I’ll give the matter a little thought.” He said guardedly. Perhaps the whippings would have a beneficial effect.

“Do we get our bottoms whipped at all?” Asked Hyacinth guardedly. “Or is this strictly a tits and twat evening?”

Mr. Pennyfeather was enraptured. “Tell me where you want it and that’s where you’ll get it.” He assured them expansively.

“And you’ll tie us nice and tight?”

The enemy had just signed a total capitulation. Life was good! “So tight you can’t even quiver.” He assured them magnanimously. The Special blend suffered heavy casualties in the round now poured.

“Which do you feel like, darling?” Asked Mignon dreamily. “Tits or dear little Pussy?”

“Pussy.” Hyacinth said decisively. She hated having her breasts punished.

“Hear that, sergeant?” Asked Mignon languidly. “You have to whip my breasts.”

“It will be a pleasure, Miss.” Mr. Pennyfeather’s cup was brimming over. “Well, let’s get on with it.” Mignon suggested purposefully. “Lead on McDuff. It’ll take the Tool Shed to do us justice.”

They made the journey. Mignon naked and giggling. Hyacinth wondering what she had got herself into. The sergeant bringing up the rear with two bottles and some extra rope.

Mignon was bent over the pedestal and strapped tight in short order. The jack was pumped. Her bottom rose and stretched. “Good gosh! Do you do this to all the girls?” She enquired happily.

“Don’t be coy.” Hyacinth admonished. “You know you’ve been on that thing before. Thrash her bottom soundly.” She directed Mr. Pennyfeather. “Then you can tie me with my cunt sticking out. Can I have another drink?”

Mr. Pennyfeather was in the Garden of the Gods. He poured liberally.

“Whip her bottom. If you don’t I will.” Hyacinth was adamant.

Mr. Pennyfeather took a hearty swing and missed. He had been associated with the Special Blend even before their arrival.

“Here, give it to me.” Hyacinth took the cane and thrashed Mignon’s taut bottom until its owner genuinely appeared to regret her situation. She then undid the straps and turned to Mr. Pennyfeather. “She’s breasts and I’m cunt. Tie us up please.”

The ex-sergeant was not at a loss. He had not been in the Royal Engineers for nothing. Within a few minutes Hyacinth regretted her enterprise. She lay across the pedestal, but in reverse. The padded bar was beneath her bottom. Her wrists and ankles were firmly pulled down to the base to almost join. She could not move. She hurt. Her pussy flaunted itself for all to see. No whip could possibly miss it. She looked sideways to observe Mignon bent back over a trestle. Her breasts seemed all of her. They were terribly exposed. Hyacinth was glad she had chosen something lower down. “Can I have another drink?” She asked. She was certain she would need it.

Perhaps it was the strained position, the obscene exposure. Perhaps it was no more than a return to common sense. But, suddenly, Hyacinth knew she wanted out. The picture of this nondescript man studiously whipping her sex repelled. For Mignon perhaps, but not for her! She had allowed a drink and boredom to jockey her into an absurd situation. Was that the explanation! There was something else too: Terry! Furious as she was with his use of her as a whipping girl and his abortive attempt at copulation, he was nonetheless a most engaging young man. More importantly he was the only young man. At The Priory, males

were noticeable only by their absence. She tugged at Mr. Pennyfeather's cords and straps. She could not move. She hurt.

"Fixed you nice and tight like you said. You'll no get loose." The sergeant, holding her glass, peered down at her struggles with satisfaction. Hyacinth intuitively knew he would never free her until after she had suffered. Feminine guile would be her only hope.

"I do want that drink." She pleaded. "But arn't we silly. I can't possibly manage it bent over backwards like this. My hair's falling on the floor and my mouth's upside down.

The old soldier made a swift reconnaissance and started to deploy. "If I lift your head a bit I might pour it in." He suggested doubtfully.

"What! Waste that lovely stuff!" His captive sounded genuinely shocked. "Just unstrap my hands for a jiffy while I down it. You can easy fasten me again."

She held her breath while he sighingly complied. Once committed to flight, panic comes easily. She straightened up, her bottom was still very much a prisoner. Smiling warmly at her benefactor, she accepted his glass. "You really are sweet." She cooed. "While I tuck this away, you do pour such lovely big one's, would you be a darling and fetch my bag? I left it at your place."

"You didn't have a bag." Said Mr. Pennyfeather decisively.

“Oh yes. It’s the one with…” She described a nonexistent bag in great detail. “Do be a dear. I’m quite safe.”

He departed, grumbling. Hyacinth knew panic now for sure. She put the drink on the floor and attacked the straps as best she could reach them. He would not be long. He would also be angry. She had best be free. If she failed to loose her ankles her punishment for mutiny would be dire. Mignon watched her activity through a misty haze of the Special Blend. “He’ll lace into you twice as hard now, darling.” She giggled.

It was done. She was free. But there was Mignon. “Oh darling, you’re spoiling things.” Mignon complained as she felt her bonds slipping away. “I’m not going.” She asserted tipsily when her rescuer grabbed her hand and tugged. Hyacinth changed her grip from hand to hair and yanked hard. Mignon followed. But before they reached the fatal door it was thrown wide. Within its frame stood a glowering figure of wrath.

It was Sister Thalia.

Hyacinth and Mignon huddled in the small total darkness of the little prison in the wall of Sister Thalia’s office. They held on to each other for reassurance and the comfort of female flesh on female flesh. They shivered, but not with cold. Sister Thalia had been more than displeased.

“I bet old Penny’s getting a talking to.” Mignon giggled. The effect of the Special Blend had not been entirely dissipated by the Sister’s anger.

“I wonder if she’ll pick up our clothes.” Hyacinth mused. “We were a couple of silly asses, y’know. We probably deserve all we are going to get. You’re hopeless, but I don’t know what got into me.”

“I know what got into you, darling.” Mignon giggled again. “That stuff of old Penny’s really does something for a girl. I wish I had some now.”

Hyacinth stiffened as she felt sly fingers searching in the darkness and come to rest upon that part of her they sought. “Stop it, Mignon! Take your hand away.”

“Put yours on mine.” Mignon demanded unperturbed.

“No I won’t!” Instead, Hyacinth’s fingers found solace in sweeping caresses and came to rest on the single wound across her companion’s smooth back. She traced its length with a gentle finger tip. A sharp indrawn breath in the darkness told clearly that Mignon was aware. “This scar you have scares me.” Hyacinth said slowly. “You haven’t told me how you got it. But I can guess. The fact that you got only one tells how awful it must have been. It’s something they do to us when they think all else has failed. That’s right, isn’t it?”

Mignon refused to be diverted. The darkness appeared to

have relieved her of the few inhibitions she normally had. She was now comfortably clasped against her companion's back and using both hands busily on Hyacinth's front. "Yes, that's right, darling." She whispered in the ear so close to her lips. "Isn't it a simply deliciously terrible gorgeous feeling to know it's out there somewhere waiting for us."

"You're really quite impossible." Hyacinth laughed lovingly as she removed the busy hands from her secret places.

"Oh, don't stop me, darling! It gets better as I go along." There came a small pathetic break in the gaiety of the voice. "Come back, please! It's better than thinking about what's going to happen to us. I'm as scared as you are, probably more. I've had a cut. Oh, darling, I hope they don't use it on you."

Hyacinth sighed. Two naked girls locked together in the dark. There could be no doubt they would be terribly punished. Their behaviour had been outrageous. Soon they might not be able to touch other. In a great need of communion she sought and found the ready flesh with Mignon's breasts pressed tight against her back. The wise and loving fingers resumed their work…

The door opened. They blinked their way into the light and stood sheepishly looking at their clothes in a small heap on the desk. Why had they been foolish enough to take them off!

"You can put your clothes properly away." Sister Thalia

said curtly. “You will have no immediate use for them. In the meantime wear these.”

They held out their wrists for the handcuffs. Hyacinth felt the bite of the steel almost as a sentencing. The shining metal marked her as a girl for punishment. Joined in front, her hands could do for her what she must. But chained thus her punishment had begun.

“You will both use Hyacinth’s room for the night. I don’t want the girls seeing a Teacher shamed. In the morning you will report to me.” Sister Thalia’s voice was business-like and lacking sympathy.

At the door, Hyacinth turned. Her voice was tearful. “We’re sorry, Sister.” It sounded so trite, she tried again. “I don’t mean because we are going to be punished. But really and truly sorry for being foolish.”

“I am sure you are.” Said Sister Thalia. But her voice was not quite so grim.

Hyacinth found it hard to repress a giggle. Mignon did not try. The open hamper beckoned invitingly as a prop upon a stage. Sister Veronica stood on one side, Sister Thalia on the other like Priestesses at a pagan rite.

“It will be a bit of a squeeze.” Sister Veronica observed dryly.

“Both of us?” Mignon lifted her joined hands. “And handcuffed?”

“Both of you, and handcuffed.” Said Sister Thalia firmly.

Mignon daintily stepped in and sat down. Hyacinth looked appealing from one sister to another. “Any position you like.” Said Sister Veronica. “But get in!”

Hyacinth shrugged in defeat. In some other scene this could have been a grand and glorious giggle. Even under the threat of their present plight it was obvious Mignon was intrigued. Shamed and awkward she stepped into her tussle with the impossible.

But, of course, few things are impossible. When the hamper lid was closed and locked, both girls were thankful for a short journey. So tightly were they entwined that Mignon’s handcuffed fingers could find nothing of which they searched. Unwittingly the good Sisters had discovered a most potent punishment. A few hours thus would engender in any girl a wish to behave. Hyacinth prayed the idea might not occur.

The opening of their wicker prison provided one more shock. Neither of the Hipples were present. But some one else was. It was Sally. “Seen you before, haven’t I?” She said to Hyacinth with deep satisfaction. She examined their handcuffs as they climbed stiffly from the hamper, clicking each cuff one notch tighter so that they hurt. “Lady Hipple left me in charge of you. She’ll be back tomorrow. Left you

a note." Sally proffered a slip of paper. Her demeanour clearly stated her knowledge of its content.

In this place anything was possible. Dazedly, Hyacinth's handcuffed hands accepted the missive. It was very short: —

"Back tomorrow. Understand you've been naughty, naughty. So have given Sally carte blanche. Heaven help you!!!"

It was a sickening frightening blow. Poetic justice perhaps. Probably no worse than they deserved. Sally might hurt them no worse than they would be hurt by other hands. There had been a shocking venom in the blond girl's voice. She had not forgotten. She would vent her spite on Mignon too. If she had not been handcuffed Hyacinth would have considered flight. In her tightening of the steel Sally had guessed! It is one thing for a girl to be punished in justice or caprice. But for revenge…

Hyacinth shuddered.

"Are you going to behave or be silly?" Sally asked pleasantly. She held all the cards.

"What happens if we don't behave?" Mignon was genuinely curious.

Sally shrugged. "Men will handle you, and I'll hurt you twice as much as I now intend." Her eyes glinted, "And that will be a great deal."

Mignon looked down at her chained hands. She had sensed the bitterness between her companions. Sally read her thoughts.

“Sure, the two of you can jump me. Even handcuffed you can do a lot. I know. I’ve worn ’em. Want to try?”

“Don’t!” Hyacinth warned. She turned appealingly to the girl who held them in her power, then did something utterly demeaning. She did it for Mignon. Kneeling before her blond mistress she said simply: “I was cruel to you. So be cruel to me. But please be merciful too. Don’t be cruel to Mignon because of me.” It sounded so trite, so lame. She looked up without hope. Was there a trace of something other than hate on Sally’s face! Was there! She could only hope. Dispiritedly she got back to her feet. “Tell us what to do.” She invited abjectly.

It was another dreary stone box of a cell, quite small. “We arn’t staying.” Sally assured them cheerfully. “But this is a notion of my own I wanted you to see. Something for you to think about, especially if you are not instantly obedient. Understand that! I want instant obedience. Look around. Get the message?”

The message was not hard to get. The cage was large. It held several of the ugliest rats Hyacinth had ever seen. Their bright eyes surveyed her hungrily through the bars and mesh. “I suppose you lock us in here and open the cage?” Mignon asked horrified.

“Bit worse than that, love.” Sally was complacent.

Hyacinth could guess, but looked the question.

“Tied hand and foot, love. You’d be able to wiggle a bit. But they haven’t been fed for a long time. No competition really…”

“Did Lady Hipple condone this one…?”

“She won’t be back ’till tomorrow, love. But these little dears could nibble you today.” Sally smiled her enjoyment. “One other thing I forgot. When you get left on the floor here I’ll make sure something nice and tasty is shoved inside your slits. Got to give ’em a bit of incentive, y’know.”

Mignon wept. Rats were not her Thing.

“Do it to me, not her.” Hyacinth pleaded dully.

“Oh, don’t worry, love. I will.”

They left the ugly place.

“Just wanted you to see.” Sally said brightly.

They went to the pain room.

Hyacinth called it that in her mind. She had suffered there. Sally had suffered there. So had unnamed and unnumbered other girls. It was abundantly equipped for their discomfort. It was large and well lit and designed for a single purpose: to make a naked girl scream. It was hard to

believe that in a few minutes she and Mignon would be screaming. But it would be so. The handcuffs hurting on her wrists told her so. The look in Sally's eye was most eloquent of all. Pain! Always pain! It had become a daily part of her existence.

"Lay on your back on that bench." Sally directed Mignon.

"Couldn't we infuse a bit more joie de vivre into these proceedings?" Mignon asked plaintively as she meekly obeyed. "You could cut this atmosphere with a knife. I know we have to be punished and we'll do a lot of screaming. But, after all, we are just three girls together. Couldn't we cheer up a bit?" She looked from one to the other of her companions dolefully.

Sally was actually touched. "Alright, love. I'll drop the vendetta bit. It's a bit grim for me too. I'm going to hurt you terribly. But if there's a laugh here or there, let's have it."

"Am I going to get screwed on this bench?" Mignon responded happily. "No. I'm going to whip your breasts."

"Mmmm… m! That's nice."

With intent interest Mignon followed the course of her binding, making appropriate comment. After her legs were firmly secured her handcuffs were removed and her arms drawn down and back. As her wrists were being strapped, she inquired languidly: "I suppose there's something about this thing that pushes my shoulders?" "Like this." Sally

worked a small lever. Mignon's chest rose, straining her waist against its own confining band. Her breasts flattened under the pull, but remained lovely, thrust, inch by inch, into a cruel and demanding prominence.

"Oh Golly!" Mignon exclaimed. "Look at 'em! Arn't they lovely! But how I'm going to scream. Hope you won't mind." She visibly made an effort. "I can't even twitch." She admitted happily. She looked up at her Inquisitor. "Kiss me, darling. I don't hate you."

Sally kissed her. It was as though she was mesmerised. Mignon had a way with her!

Sally and Hyacinth faced each other. It was their final confrontation. Apparently still under the influence of Mignon's charm, Sally did the unexpected. She reached up and clasping her captive's head kissed her soundly on the lips. Her own were surprisingly sweet to the frightened girl with handcuffed wrists. Under the beneficence of total authority Sally had become very human. She was suddenly a girl among girls. Hyacinth was still very much afraid. But she felt it as a nicer kind of fear. How strange the expressions that flit across the mind! She said "Thank you" in a low small voice, and Sally saw the grateful moisture in her eyes.

There was another bench for her. But much shorter. When she was strapped to it, her torso was held immovably, but half her bottom protruded beyond the end, her legs and

feet were totally free, so that she found herself uncertain what to do with them. They might have been more comfortable bound. She looked up enquiringly, half amused.

“Lesson in self control, love.” Sally assured her cheerfully. “You’ll soon see how it works. I’m sure you’ll love it.”

Hyacinth was quite sure she would not. Like a patient supine upon a hospital cot, she turned her head to observe Mignon’s travail.

“First come, first served.” Sally announced briskly. “One breast at a time love. Got to make this last a bit.” She dangled the fine thonged whip that would striate Mignon’s lovely curves. Two pairs of female eyes focused on it, fascinated. It swung and curved, biting the air before it bit the breast. Mignon closed her eyes and moaned. Neither listener could tell whether it was a sound of ecstasy or pain.

The clever blows continued, spaced but steady. Mignon’s moans could no longer be mistaken. Mignon hurt! Soon the moans became small cries and gasps, all the sounds of agony. Hyacinth turned away. Soon she, too, would make these noises and worse. All this because of a piece of nonsensical behaviour with Mr. Pennyfeather! A terrible awareness of her servitude engulfed her. She and Mignon were prisoners whose every move and every word was limited by invisible chains of penalty. Chains that instantly became real and the moment they transgressed.

Yet transgression was as implicit in their age, their sex, their proximity to each other. Thus punishment was implicit too. Day by day. All their lives… Would it be like that! Would it! She thought of Terry. Why had she not had the wit to use him. He was real. He was the only hope of escape she knew. Their approach to each other had been made shaming and absurd. Yet, had she not been so determinedly feminine in her protection of her mystique, she might now be free. Free! It seemed incredible! Instead of which she was about to be whipped in cruel ways that would make her scream without thought or hope of anything save that the whip might stop. It would not stop. It never stopped!

"Let's try you now, shall we love." Sally's amused face looked down. Hyacinth guessed she was in for something shaming and painful. She had a pretty good idea…

"Open little legs up wide." Sally's adoption of baby talk might be good news, but it was somehow oddly shaming. "Baby play nice game. Stick legs up straight and then out to each side as far as they'll go. Make dear little pussy pop into view."

Pop was hardly the word, Hyacinth reflected bitterly. Her sex was laid bare so that she became ten times naked. So that was to be her punishment! Her cunt would be whipped. She used the ugly word within her mind in bitterness. The pain would be more bitter still. The slender thong of leather that dangled from Sally's hand would curl and

cut and wrap around. It would find every inch of her. With her bottom half over the edge she was shamingly stripped for action. She remembered the night before. Ironically their punishment was identical. She wondered why she was more afraid of Sally than of Mr. Pennyfeather.

She examined the strangeness of it. She and Mignon had willingly offered themselves to be bound. In fact had implored a stupid man to tie them so that they could not move, then to whip them until they howled and beyond. To whip them perhaps until he was tired of striping their flesh or wielding the whip. Was the only difference, then and now, the Special Blend! She rejected the thought. There was more to the involvement than that. Had she and Mignon called upon Sally and pleaded that she do to them exactly what was being done at this moment there would be no fear. Perhaps even sexual arousal from the domination of female hands… How strange the feminine mind!

“Now baby learn nice rules.” Sally continued blithely. “Baby get five lovely strokes with nice whip on dear little cunt. Baby can kick all she likes after each one. But then baby opens up wide again for the next. If baby fails, even once, then baby gets ten. Isn’t that a lovely game?”

Their eyes met in total understanding. “It’s a lovely game.” Hyacinth admitted. “I’ll try and play it.”

“Obeying the rules?”

“I really will try. But if I fail, what will you do? Tie me?”

“Baby, mustn’t fail. Terrible, terrible things happen if baby fails.” Sally bent and kissed her victim. “Take my word for it, love.”

It was cunningly and cruelly devised. Far, far worse than to be bound! It took every ounce of Hyacinth’s courage to raise her lovely legs high and then spread them in the most shaming posture a woman can assume. First the ‘V’ through which she could view Sally’s enjoyment of her subjection, then continuing the spread to the extent that bone and sinew would allow. It was quite surprising how far that was.

“Baby open up little eyes.” Sally admonished. “Baby must watch.”

The ultimate cruelty! To have to watch the whip, and while watching keep the legs wide, the furry triangle defenceless.

“Number one.” Said Sally. The whip sang. The anguished eyes followed its swift are. Then the scalding explosive agony on a part of her that had never known such cruelty. Hyacinth pealed out a scream of utter desolation.

But her legs were free! Sally watched avidly their frantic kicking at the air, watched the lovely tapering curves entwine in anguish, the knees bend and raise back to cover and to protect that which was forfeit to the thong. The screams were coincidental to such poetry of motion. Neither heard them. It went on for a long time before the motions faded in weariness and the thighs crossed to pro-

tect their treasure.

“Number two.”

Instantly the eyes opened. Instantly the silky legs went up and out. The maiden fur was offered to the sacrifice. The whip sang in gladness and bit with an avid appetite. Instantly the screams began. Instantly the feet churned the air in a flight that took them nowhere. With eyes closed Hyacinth fled into a land of pain where none could follow.

Sally watched. She drank in the loveliness she had created and now controlled. But an even greater control was being exercised before her eyes. The way in which the eyes had opened and the legs separated at her word of command left her with an immense and pleasurable sense of power. Yet, oddly enough, with a strange humility. She knew she witnessed the ineffable. She doubted her own ability to so immolate her most secret place.

Sally was not a vicious girl. She knew that she and Hyacinth had got off on the wrong foot. Lady Hipple had helped nothing. Had, in fact, been the creator of their animosity. Standing, now, with the whip in her hand she recognised the power that must have come to the girl who had whipped her savagely that day. A sort of once in a lifetime glory that had best be snatched while it was there to take. It was in her heart to relent. These two lovely creatures she had bound for her pleasure and their own punishment were too wonderful to spoil. She had the ru-

mours of the Priory. Did these exquisite creatures do those things! Did she own at this minute, so much wonder, so much available femaleness! Could they do things to her, and she to them! She found the thought exciting. She supposed she could easily compel them to pleasure her. She could certainly do what she pleased with them. She looked at Hyacinth's gaping sex and glowed. It was there! Why must she want love too! But that was true of men also. Even when they raped you they wanted to be loved.

"Number three."

How glorious it was! The fear filled eyes fascinated yet cringing. The obedient legs. Those incredibly obedient legs! What must be uppermost in the bound girl's mind as she opened them to invite an awfulness such as most girls never know. They had accepted three of the five. When that was done she would let them rest and whip the soft sweet breasts of her other female possession Fate had given her. There, too, she would make the girl watch. It was so wonderful to see them watch. Eyes filled with a knowledge that sent them surging against the straps that held them tight.

When four and five had gone their way Sally asked casually: "If I put my pussy at your mouth will you use your tongue?"

"No."

"I'll whip you until you do."

She watched the tears well into the hurt eyes and saw them fall. Those tears were of her. She had created them with words. She could make this female thing shed tears. She could make her accept agony. But she could not make her accept her sex. How strange…

“I will do it to you.” Mignon pleaded. “Don’t make her. You’ll have to break her and then it won’t be any good.”

Sally moved to her other captive. How lovely were her striped breasts. She began, leisurely, to whip them and to watch the flinching eyes, watch the muscles tense and tug in hopeless striving until Mignon pleaded sobbingly. “Stop! Please stop. Let me do it to you. I want to. I want to. I want to …”

For Sally it was a moment. She stopped plying the whip upon the throbbing curves of flesh with their bright lovely buds. Savouring every motion she straddled the bench and lowered her sex against the hungry mouth that sought it, not to buy relief but from longing. Soon Sally was the only one of the three who moaned.

For Hyacinth it was nightmare. Lacking Mignon’s erotic response and tolerance of pain, she had no resource on which to fall. For her each stroke was but the prelude to the next. She could see an endless vista of them going on and on throughout the day. Most demanding was the query as to what would happen when instinct betrayed her and her legs refused to open for the whip. Five times she had

used her will. What now! What would Sally demand of them! It was too awful to be strapped tight and motionless. The freedom of her legs was a punishment in itself. A freedom only to dance obscenely to an accompaniment of her own screams. She wished she had fought at the start, even though handcuffed. There might have been a faint hope. Now there was none. Fear had her firmly in its grip.

“We will now have a second series of five, love.” Sally urbanely advised. Same terms. Same rules. “I think you are wonderful.” She bent and kissed the lips dry with hurt.

Hyacinth could not face it. She burst into moaning inarticulate cries. She could not know their eroticism. Could not know the flame they fanned in the loins of the two girls who were her audience. In anguish she threw pride and all else to the winds. “Don’t whip me any more. Not there… Don’t whip me. There’s no need. I’ll do anything, anything, anything.”

“Suck my pussy?” Sally’s voice sounded inexorable.

The tears flooded so that speech was choked, but the lovely head with its anguished features nodded and nodded again. “Don’t whip me, please.” It was a litany.

Sally was moved. This was a new experience. Lady Hipple had never handed her the whip or the cord. She herself had felt both often enough. Their imposition had been a condition of her employment at higher than usual wages. It was understood by both parties. When Sally transgressed,

the cords and cane exacted a fine from her flesh. As she was whipped she always vowed to leave the premises never to return. But she never did. She had wondered why. But had not bothered to analyse. Now she wondered. Three girls! Yet without the whip would anything have happened between them! Probably not. A girl and a whip: the two were almost synonymous. Idly, she cut the thong across Hyacinth's cunt, and watched the resultant splendour with aching loins. When the tired legs fell limp and the moans became only panting breaths, Sally did the incredible. Did it without volition, instinctively without thought. She freed Hyacinth, helped her from the bench, placed the whip in her hand. Then lay down and took her place. She did not say a word.

Mignon watched the strange tableau in disbelief. Pleas and demands flooded to her lips. But she did not utter them. Hyacinth wanted nothing but to nurse her wounds. Incongruously tucking the whip under her arm, she used her hands to clasp and soothe her whipped sex. Bent thus, her eyes still closed, she wallowed in her pain and its cessation. From long experience Mignon knew that Sally must indeed have struck hard and vicious blows. Her own breasts throbbed. But her hurts were not as Hyacinth's.

To Hyacinth herself it was still a nightmare. A nightmare from which she was now awake, but which lingered in her mind as though real. Her hurt and her fear had been so great that recovery was slow. Two pairs of eyes watched her return to reality with interest. When she straightened

up and looked about her a slow realisation dawned. Not until that moment had an awareness of freedom existed. Suddenly it was there. She felt her wrists, and her waist, and her wounds. She looked at the recumbent Sally on the bench, and returned to life. As though sleep-walking, she strapped the slender wrists that were passively placed where hers had been. Then freed Mignon, and sitting huddled against the wall began anew to weep.

To Mignon it was opportunity. Hyacinth was safe. She gave her whole attention to the girl who had delivered herself into their hands. Looking down at Sally's troubled face, she asked: "Why?"

"I don't know." It was all Sally would say.

Mignon considered the situation. One thing stood out. "You are dressed." It was almost an accusation.

Sally raised her head and looked as best she could. "I'll be damned, so I am. Honest, I forgot." She looked up apologetically.

"Want me to tear them off?" Mignon asked as though it was the first and most important order of business.

"Don't tear them." Sally said sensibly. "Undo the buckles and I'll take them off and let you fasten me again. I will. I promise."

"I can't trust you." Mignon said unhappily. "In your spot, I'd renege. Sorry."

“I know. I understand.” Sally admitted. “So free one of my hands at a time. I won’t be able to fight you with one hand strapped down like this. Then we can slip my things over one shoulder at a time and you’ll still have me safe.”

It was easy. Mignon did as suggested. Her captive was beautifully passive. Soon she was beautifully naked. She looked up roguishly at the girl to whom she had surrendered. “What are you going to do with me?” She asked.

“I don’t know.” Mignon confessed. They both laughed.

“Aren’t you going to get revenge?”

“Oh that!” Mignon dismissed it with a wave of the hand. “Fat lot of good revenge did you.” She paused for thought, then asked soberly: “Is there any way one of us can escape from this place?”

“One of you?”

“Hyacinth. I belong in The Priory. She doesn’t.”

Sally looked disappointed. “Doesn’t she want to get her own back? You’d better ask her.”

“Don’t be silly. Look at the poor girl. You hurt her. All she wants is out.”

“Me and my nobility!” Sally was chagrined. “Might as well let me loose then. I thought I was making a grand gesture.”

“You can make the grandest one of all.”

Sally sighed. Life was defeating. Nothing ever the way a girl planned. “I suppose so, if that’s what she wants. Nothing to it really. I can have her out of here in no time. Damn!”

“You still have me.”

Looking at Mignon’s loveliness, Sally brightened. “It’s you that’s got me, love, wouldn’t you say?”

“And I’m going to keep you, darling. We’ll be two sorry girls tomorrow, but today is ours. Or should I say mine…”

“I can’t get her out of here tied to this bench.”

With a purposeful air, Mignon strapped Sally’s ankles tight and placed the whip close to hand. “I’m going to unstrap your hands now. You can’t do much with your ankles as they are. So you’ll cross your wrists behind your back and let me tie them. If you make a fuss I’ll use this.” She pointed to the whip.

Sally laughed. “You sure don’t trust me even the smallest bit, do you. Never mind. You’re very sweet. Why don’t you use the handcuffs? They’re hanging on the wall, keys in ’em. Saves fuss.”

“If you keep on being so damn nice I won’t have the heart to whip you.” Mignon complained. “And I want to whip you, hard!” She discarded the straps and watched guardedly as her captive sat up and most obediently placed her hands behind her back. The handcuffs snapped round the passive wrists with the most satisfying clicking noise.

She looked at the key left in her hand. A naked girl has no place to put a key.

“Hang it back on the nail.” Sally suggested. “If you’re going to have fun and games with me after the great escape act, we’ll have to come back here. Can’t let Crabtree get wind of what’s going on.”

Mignon nodded. Sally was a treasure. Thoughtfully she took a length of cord and tied it round her captive’s neck, the trailing length forming a leash. “I’m going to hold on to you on the journey, darling. Just in case.” She loosed the straps on Sally’s ankles.

Sally rose jauntily and shook like a leashed puppy. She tugged at the handcuffs. Satisfied, she turned and twinkled. “This my ensemble, love?”

“I think it’s lovely.” Mignon cooed. “You look beautiful and you can’t get loose.”

“You really are an innocent.” Sally said amusedly. “I can easily lead you the wrong way. Or I can scream at the wrong time. Or I might give you an unexpected kick, then cut and run.”

Mignon looked crestfallen. “Oh damn!” She exclaimed in mock anger. “I like you the way you are. In fact I’m proud of the whole effect. Mean to tell me I have to gag you and hobble your feet. If I do that you can’t tell us which way to go.”

Sally laughed delightedly. “Your problem, love.” She grinned companionably. “You might just as well set me completely free. I’m going to live up to my part of the bargain whether you trust me or not. But if you think I look pretty the way I am, leave it at that. I sort of like it too.”

“That’s it then, darling.” Mignon decided. “After all, there is afterwards. Being the way you are does make it harder for you to change your mind about that, and I’m sort of looking forward to it.”

“She’ll need clothes. She can wear what you took off me. And she’ll need money. There’s a few quid in my bag over there she can have.” Sally offered practically. “Now, let’s get her out of here before I stop being noble.”

To Hyacinth it still had the aura of a dream. Clothed. Four pounds ten in her pocket. Walking down a country road in total and absolute freedom. Behind her two years of imprisonment. Ahead of her lay… what!

The parting had been tearful. A thing of whisperings, of looking over the shoulder, of regrets and what might have beens. Of a tremendous gratitude, and of love… None spoke of the morrow.

It had been so easy! Impossible alone, but with Sally doors had opened, keys had been found, corridors traversed. The two naked girls had not dared leave the Castle walls. But Sally had pointed out the little used path in the trees that had led to the road. The air of freedom was heady stuff. Hy-

acinth drank it deep. Soon her pulse was racing. The pain of her whipped loins was forgotten.

When the expensive little car slowed, her first instinct was flight. But the voice stopped her in her tracks.

“I say, would you like—” The voice, too, died.

She turned and faced Terry’s startled eyes. “How the Devil …?” He was more surprised than she.

“I’ve just escaped.” She said brightly. The thought that he might overpower her and return her to slavery never entered her mind.

“Good!” His heart was in the single word. “Come on. Get in.”

The sports car smelt of money. Terry himself had the casual untidiness of the rich. Hyacinth sank into the luxury of the bucket seat with a sigh of bliss. Undoubtedly the day was hers! From hamper to happiness! She longed to tell him. But all she could manage was: “I’m sorry about… about, that day. I wasn’t very nice to you…”

He gave her a rueful sideways glance. “I wasn’t very nice to you was I?”

“You wouldn’t have minded!” He looked at her, incredulous.

Hyacinth wondered if she had said the wrong thing. “Well,

I do get whipped a lot. I suppose one more or less doesn't matter all that much."

"Suppose it was more than one?"

She failed to catch the inference. "It's always more than one." She retorted gaily. "I say, do you really want to marry me?"

"Yes, tomorrow." He pulled into a lay-by and kissed her soundly. "Want to phone your people or anyone?"

"I don't have anyone. Just a few odd cousins I scarcely know. I'm not society. Your people may not think much of me. I'm probably on record as some sort of criminal."

Terry was assured. Not the awkward young man under Lady Hipple's wing. After moments of concentration, he suggested: "Tell you what, Sweetheart. Let's go to the ancestral domicile. My people are over at Cannes for the week: Really, this whole thing of you and me is working out miraculously. We'll be alone except for the servants. Maybe we should leave the wedding bells until the pater and mater return. In the meantime you can have a look at me and the way I live." He grinned mischievously. "You might prefer The Priory."

It was a golden day. Hyacinth knew it could not be true. But she accepted and adored. He bought her everything a girl just escaped from prison could possibly need. She had never been so expensively or gorgeously attired. There

were also trinkets, costly ones. The best Hotel for lunch, deferential waiters, exotic food and wine. At the end of it the ancestral home was almost more than courage could adjust to. It ranked in magnificence with Lady Hipple's Castle. Through it all, a small question mark nagged and would not let her rest. She voiced it over the Tea that, by custom bound, she was compelled to pour. The maid who served it called her madam and looked at her with envy.

"Terry, why me?"

Accepting the proffered cup, he nodded thoughtfully. "You had to ask that." He acknowledged. "Now I have to answer. It's not that easy. You're looking for something deeper than the old love at first sight thing and the romantic impact of our first meeting. They don't quite satisfy, do they?"

Hyacinth was uncertain what assurance she sought. She did the best she could with too much too soon. "I want to be loved. I want to love you. I'm not in love with you now. For me you've been a Fairy Prince, and that takes any girl half way to loving you. But I don't see why you'd be satisfied with that. This lovely place you live in: I don't rate. It's out of my class, and anyway I'm an ex convict. With your background you could have half the girls in England. So I come back to asking why you want me. I'm a Priory girl. I suppose a policeman might walk in here at any moment and take me back there."

"They won't." He said with authority.

She believed him. Her eyes showed her gratitude and her puzzlement.

“I’ll make it short.” Terry said decisively. “It’s because you’re a Priory girl that I want you.” He grimaced ruefully. “I’ll try that again. I want to marry a girl named Hyacinth. But I have an actual need of her because of what she has learned.”

“At the Priory?” Hyacinth was still puzzled.

“Of course.”

“The thing I learned most about at The Priory was being whipped—” She broke off and looked at him askance. “I am stupid, arn’t I. That’s it, isn’t it!” She looked at his earnest features with sympathy. “I suppose it isn’t that easy to tell a girl… that you want to whip her…” Her voice trailed off into an electric silence.

“Hate me,” He asked dolefully.

“No.” The one word satisfied her need at that moment.

“I trespassed in The Priory grounds the night I found you tied to the tree, out of curiosity. There are stories about girls being chained and whipped…” He looked at her in wry appeal, “You see, Sweetheart, all my life I’ve had a fantasy about a beautiful girl in chains who gets beautifully whipped and punished, mainly because she’s so damn beautiful. The dream’s a part of me. It would be useless for me to marry any girl who was not a part of that dream.”

It was deflating. But Hyacinth was determined not to be temperamentally feminine. No punch in the nose! “You got the wrong girl.” She said ruefully. “Mignon loves to be whipped. I don’t. But I think she wants it done by a girl…” She shrugged apologetically, “The two things seem to go together.”

“I want you. But I’ve hurt you …”

“I suppose so.” Hyacinth admitted unhappily. “I know about… about your Thing. It’s not long ago I was told every man wants to whip a girl. It’s not long ago that I whipped a girl and gloried in it.” She grinned at his surprise. “Yes, honest! See, I’m as bad as you. I suppose the thing that bothers me is that surely, with all your privilege, you could whip all sorts of girls? That little female who brought up the Tea: I bet she’d think it an honour.”

“If I paid her enough.” He admitted.

“What’s wrong with paying?”

“You can buy the other thing too. There’s a name for it.”

Hyacinth tried to place herself in his shoes. He was not a man about town type. He was quite young: there was a boyishness about him. She could understand that, for him, there might be only one way. The Priory rounded out his image of his need. A girl in The Priory was indeed a damsel in distress. She was also delinquent: naughty! Thus deserved every stroke he chose to place upon her skin. She

was criminal: handcuffs became her.

“Did you want to whip me right away or wait for our wedding night?” She asked impishly.

“Alright. I deserve a bit of sarcasm.”

“I’d let you, y’know.”

Again he looked at her incredulously.

“Well, why not?” She asked defensively. “You’ve dealt my ego quite a blow, so I’ll do the same for you. Sure you can whip me. I like you. That’s the main reason. But wouldn’t I be insane to reject all you offer because a bit of pain goes along with it! You were right in your reasoning. A Priory girl is made to order for you. She’s conditioned to the whip and all the rest. And, what’s more, she’s grateful. She can’t help being grateful. As far as I could tell I was a prisoner there for life. Why would I elect to go back there when I can have all this!”

“You know I wouldn’t send you back.”

“I don’t think you would. You’re sweet. But suppose you just let me walk away from here. Where would I go! I suppose I’d survive. But for girls like me there isn’t much in life except what some man will give us. I was eighteen when I was put in The Priory. I’d had a good look.”

“You make us sound like a couple of bastards.” He mourned.

They looked at each other and laughed.

“That’s better!” Hyacinth approved. “Don’t let’s hang any more crepe than we have to.” She looked at him roguishly. “Want me to tell you things about whipping?”

To her delight he blushed and looked uncomfortable.

“I am experienced, y’know.” Hyacinth continued demurely. “Might save a few pitfalls.”

He joined her mood. “Please do.”

“Well, the first thing is that if you take me to your dungeon now, I suppose you have a couple of these delightful facilities, and chain me up and go after me with a whip or a cane or whatever you prefer, you are going to feel guilty.” She grinned at Terry sympathetically. “I haven’t been naughty: that’ll bother you. Or, if you look at it another way, you’ll find yourself whipping a poor defenceless girl for an erotic thrill, and your puritan conscience will bother you about that.”

“So I can’t win?” He protested humorously.

“Let’s try another.” Hyacinth was enjoying herself again. “You whip away at poor little naked me until you get a huge erection—” She laughed at his shock. “In a Priory full of females all things are known and discussed. You’d be surprised. I’m going to call a spade a spade for your own good. So what are you going to do with your erection… I’ll be moaning in agony.”

“Dramatising?” He queried huffily.

“Honestly though, what are you going to do with it?”

“Don’t talk like that.”

“Alright! Let’s look at the other side of it. You whip me skilfully so that it’s me who gets carnally aroused. I bet you’d be as shocked as the Victorian gentleman who sought his Vicar’s guidance because his wife was wicked enough to have an orgasm.”

“You’re trying to reform me.”

She gave him no response.

“So we marry. Like most husband’s you’ll get the feeling. But instead of taking me to bed, you’ll say: ‘Let’s go down to the dungeon, dear. Just ten or fifteen strokes before we go to the Johnson’s.’ And like a dutiful wife I’ll strip and place myself against the whippingpost or whatever and get my ration for the day. Don’t you think you’d get bored. Same old screams…”

“If you say so.” He was definitely miffed.

“Honest, Terry, I’m trying. I sound facetious, but I’m not. I don’t mean to be. Just one last one. Prison… The Priory… places like that: A woman who’s betrayed her husband or her country: dramatic situations where whipping a girl has logic and purpose. Even the lesbian thing of one female whipping another. In all these there is a sort of validity that

satisfies. I'm scared that without such motives it's going to fall flat for you."

She looked at his unhappy face and knew contrition. Suddenly she had him in her arms and was kissing the sad lips. "I'm a beast!" She exclaimed. "Take me wherever it is and whip me. Now! Please!" She stamped her foot for emphasis.

He adored her. "It's downstairs." He said softly.

Hyacinth had chosen the old pose of tip-toe and hands high. She knew it the most flattering. She would make it good for him! She wryly wondered how many girls had made the same vow upon their wedding night. She had done most of the work and direction that had now rendered her naked, helpless and apprehensive. But that was all familiar. It was Terry who mattered. He had given her so much. "Please whip me, darling." She cooed it as Mignon would have done.

She had even chosen the whip. A compromise that would not leave her cut. Its lash curled round her now, and by calling on every ounce of fortitude she possessed she was able to sweetly say: "Thank you, darling. That was beautiful," before she moaned.

Terry circled the loveliness he possessed. He was fascinated and angry over the intimate marks upon her sex that Sally had placed there earlier. His eyes were on them now.

Hyacinth was curious. "Are you angry on just moral

grounds: humanitarian, that is. Or simply jealous, darling?" She asked tenderly.

"A girl did that to you? Why?"

"Girls are vividly sexual, darling. We love each other cruelly."

"You!" He looked at her askance.

"I am not a lesbian. You know that. But whipping a girl sets me on fire. Whip me now for my sin. Whip me."

Her words inflamed him in a way his own desire could never do. He whipped her cruelly, glorying in her cries and pleas that he cease her punishment. When he paused to give her rest, and after her moans had dissolved into sobs, she surprised him with a demand.

"Terry?"

"Yes Sweetheart?"

"Those marks on me: I just remembered." She told him of Sally and Mignon. "Have you any influence with Lady Hipple?"

He examined the question. "I expect the old girl would oblige if she approved of whatever it was I wanted."

"Ask her to forgive Mignon and Sally. They'll be punished terribly for making it possible for me to escape."

“What will she do to them?” He felt guilty at a demanding erotic curiosity.

“They’ll be terribly whipped. Not like you are whipping me now. But with an awful whip that cuts their skin and draws blood. Then they’ll probably be put in a dungeon and loaded with chains, not so they can’t escape, but just to make them miserable. They’ll be chained to opposite walls so they can’t comfort each other …”

“You mean, be lesbians?”

“Oh alright! But please help them. They don’t deserve—”

“I’ll phone her in the morning. They’ll be home then.” He assured her eagerly. The knight errant rising to the fore. “She’s unpredictable, but…” He looked at his naked captive wife to be shrewdly. “But if she’s receptive, do you want me to try and get her to free this girl you are fond of? What’s her name… Mignon?”

Hyacinth’s heart leaped. “Would you! Oh darling! Whip me forever!” She sobered, and amended slowly, “I’m not sure Mignon wants freedom. She could have come with me. But she refused. You… you see, she’s purely for females.”

She watched the play of emotion on his face while she twisted against the familiar straps and did the change from one foot to the other. He was suddenly decisive. “I want to make you happy.” He said with sincerity. “If I brought this girl here and had her freed, would it please you both?”

“I am not a lesbian, but I love her.”

“Suppose she had to be brought here by force?”

Hyacinth laughed delightedly. “See! The idea has an erotic fascination! Naked Mignon delivered in chains! It even gets me excited.” She let her imagination rove. “I’d love it. Besides, then you’d have two naked girls to whip. Sure that isn’t what’s prompting your philanthropy?”

“I’m not even sure I can prevail on old Hipple.” He protested, laughing. “Though I’ll admit it’s a delectable prospect.”

They examined each other in a new rapport.

“I’m afraid you have to whip me some more, don’t you?” Hyacinth asked.

“I’m afraid I do, darling.”

He whipped her some more. She behaved delightfully.

It had been the most remarkable day of her life. Hyacinth mused happily as she sipped the after dinner brandy in the lounge. She was sore from two whippings, but very happy. She was amused at Terry. He was obviously struggling with civilised man’s oldest problem.

“Stop torturing yourself.” She advised him archly.

“The answer is yes. I will come to your bed and you can have your way with me. There, feel better?”

He looked at her in pure worship. “You mean the Priory teaches you things like that?”

“And much more.” She laughed. “Females are far more earthy than males, y’know. We’re not supposed to be. But we are.”

They enjoyed each other in silence for awhile, as freshly realised sexuality can do. Then Hyacinth’s impishness got the best of her.

“Of course I should be chained.”

He tensed in ecstasy.

“Lots of ways.” Hyacinth mused unconcerned. “You can even chain my legs and still manage it if the chain’s long enough, and my hands can be behind my back. It’s my hard luck if I have to lay on ’em. Probably sticks my thingummy up nicely.”

Terry’s adoration was almost painful to see. Hyacinth was femininely aware of it, and continued blithely: “Of course the proper place for an obedient and loving wife is to be chained at the foot of her lord’s bed, with just a blanket tossed to her if she’s been a good girl. Would you like that, darling?”

“You are quite unbelievable.” He breathed in a hushed voice.

Haycinth spent the night handcuffed to one leg of Terry’s

bed. But she had earned a blanket.

“You must be out of your mind.” Said Lady Hipple over the phone.

“They were only trying to be kind.” Terry expostulated lamely.

“Let me talk to that little doxie you’ve taken to your bosom.” Lady Hipple demanded.

Hyacinth was trembling as she took the receiver. “Good morning, Lady Hipple.”

“Don’t you good morning me, you saucy baggage.” Lady Hipple said in high good humour. “If it wasn’t that I’m fond of you I’d have the coppers over there in no time and make sure you got dragged back to The Priory in chains.”

The voice of authority was heavy. It put Hyacinth in her place. “Are you going to Lady Hipple?”

“Of course not, love. Good luck to the both of you. You’re crazy, but Hell, who isn’t at your age. I could use a good erection myself.”

Hyacinth was out of her depth. How did a plebian speak of sex to the nobility!

Lady Hipple switched subjects. “Silly young pup expects me to send those two girls over there all charges paid.”

“Couldn’t you, please?” Hyacinth put her heart into her

voice. “It’s so wrong that they should be whipped while I’m so happy.”

“They’ll be a lot more than whipped.” Said Lady Hipple darkly.

“Oh please!” Hyacinth was at a loss for words. “If I come back, will you forgive them?”

“You’d come back here and take pot luck?” Lady Hipple sounded breathless.

“Of course! We love each other.”

There was a long silence, marked by heavy breathing.

“I wish I had you! I’d never let you go.” Lady Hipple said fervently.

“I’ll walk in your front door and you can do what you like with me if you’ll let Mignon and Sally go free.” Hyacinth affirmed vehemently.

“I say, hold on!” The listening Terry interjected.

“No go, love.” Said Lady Hipple regretfully. “Think of my position: defender of the faith, and all that rot. Someone’s going to have to be tanned for letting you go. You ought to be grateful I can keep the coppers off your trail. Even if you walked in here right now, I’d still have to uphold authority. You’d simply get whipped along with the other two. I’m not being a bitch. But can’t you understand?”

Hyacinth understood. She handed the receiver to Terry. She wept.

After a long conversation, he hung up and turned to her in perplexity. “She has a point, y’know.”

“Do something. Don’t let them be punished because we’re happy.” Hyacinth was distraught.

“What can we do?”

They could do nothing! The bitterness of impotence! She looked at the man who owned her, and sensed his concern. Lady Hipple had been kind. What more could they ask of her! Hyacinth recognised the immutable quality of authority. She rested her head on the shoulder of the man to whom she had delivered herself utterly, and wept. Terry used his fingers and his lips to comfort her. He had no other weapons.

“They are going to be whipped.” Hyacinth said sadly. “It is only right that I be whipped too.”

Terry knew guilt at the thrust within his loins. This female thing that had come into his life was more erotic than his wildest dreams. He took her by the hand.

“I suppose there will never been an end to justification for whipping me.” Hyacinth said to him dreamily as he strapped her wrists to the whipping post. Observing her new condition, she turned to him, smiling. “You like this better than tip-toe, darling?”

“It’s always been here.” He admitted. “It’s part of the fantasy. Do you mind?”

So frightfully British! She laughed at him. “You do love whipping me, don’t you!”

“It’s bliss.” He adored her with spaniel eyes.

“Then whip me, darling.”

Terry whipped her with a new cunning. He had glimpsed the possibilities of the thrashing legs. When she unwittingly separated them in her protests against pain, he brought the thong between.

“That’s not fair.” She sobbed.

“Are you sure the two you are concerned with are not whipped there?” He asked shrewdly.

For answer, Hyacinth considered for several moments, then spread her legs as wide as her bonds allowed. He said no word. Nor did she. It was the whip that spoke.

The hamper was delivered about noon. The two who loved were sipping cocktails on the terrace. Crabtree and another carried up the burden and departed. The wicker monstrosity stood potent before their eyes. Hyacinth wondered if any girl could be more blest. She looked at her Lord and Master questioningly.

“They belong to you.” Terry said grandly.

Hyacinth slipped the catch and threw back the lid. Two naked girls sorted themselves out and managed to stand erect despite the handcuffs that prisoned their wrists behind their back. The key to each was on a string round their necks. On Mignon's string there was also a brief note:

"With all my love." It was signed 'H'.

"We didn't even get whipped." Said Sally.

There were drinks all round. They sat upon the terrace and admired each other and their new condition. The newcomers remained handcuffed. Hyacinth lifted their glasses to their lips. A discreet footman pretended not to notice the nudity.

"See, you've got a Harem." Hyacinth twinkled at her Lord.

"You can whip us all you want." Mignon offered hopefully. "We're terribly grateful."

Terry was obviously overwhelmed by such a plethora of feminine worship.

"You won't whip us half as hard as we'd have got back there." Said Sally with conviction.

"You've really been whipped, darling." Mignon observed to Hyacinth in an interested voice.

"What are you going to do with us?" Sally inquired.

Everyone saw it as a legitimate question. Everyone looked

at Terry.

“Set you free, of course.” Terry proclaimed in lordly fashion.

“I don’t want to be set free.” Mignon stated decisively.

“I don’t want to be out of a job.” Sally affirmed.

Once more Terry was the centre of attention. “You could keep us sort of chained up around somewhere.” Mignon offered hopefully.

“We won’t complain about being whipped sometimes.” Sally said with rare submission.

“You lucky man.” Hyacinth observed dryly. “Three slave girls. Think of it. Why don’t you whip us all now? You know, a sort of welcome.”

“Please.” Mignon breathed.

Terry squirmed. “You are all quite impossible.”

“That’s why you have to whip us.” Sally encouraged.

“You wouldn’t like it if I did.”

“We’d adore it darling.” Three female voices chanted in unison.

Terry sighed. “There has to be a cure for this.” He said happily. “Come along.”

Hyacinth held the glasses to be drained by eager lips. Three contented damsels followed their master downstairs to be whipped.

Terry rose to the occasion. The two handcuffed girls were strapped to benches at waist and ankle, their handcuffs untouched. Hyacinth found herself tied tight against the whipping post, hands above her head.

“Lot of work, this.” Terry observed when he had them safe.

“Tribulations of a Harem owner.” Hyacinth told him acidly. She was aware of pique at no longer being the centre of his world. She fought it back. But she was female.

“You are quite sure you want to be whipped?” Terry asked redundantly.

“Oh yes!” Mignon and Sally sounded like the twins.

“In that case,” said Terry triumphantly, “I will use the cane.”

“On our bottoms?”

Hyacinth realised that her feminine companions were having fun. They had perfected simultaneous speech. The effect was entrancing. Terry was captivated. She herself said nothing.

“On your bottoms to start with.” The Lord of the Harem assured them solemnly.

“Ohhhhh! Are there other places?”

“I could turn you over.”

“Ohhhhh, but that wouldn’t be polite.”

“You sound as though you can hardly wait.” Terry observed dryly. “And seems to me I noticed some quite pronounced marks in that region on Hyacinth.”

“It was too dark to see which side we were on.” Sally lied before she and Mignon lapsed into giggles.

“You are behaving like a couple of idiots.” Hyacinth told them tartly.

“Yes Teacher. Thank you Teacher!” A further gale of giggles.

Terry cocked an eye at Hyacinth. “Do they go on like this all the time?” He asked, almost in awe.

“You’re holding the cure in your hand.” She told him shortly.

He looked down at the cane as though he had forgotten it. “Ah yes.” He breathed with tremendous aplomb, flexing the wicked thing in his hands. “Which one of you gets it first?”

“Me please.” They both said.

He gave them each a sound cut. The giggling stopped. “That hurt.” Said Sally as though surprised. She tried unsuccessfully to rub her bottom with her cuffed hands.

Two more swinging slashes on the two ripe and inviting spheres evoked a good deal of panting and the quavering admission: “We are sorry we were impudent.”

Each girl gave an involuntary gasp and moan when the cane found her for the third time. The watching Hyacinth was amused by the realisation that Mignon and Sally must have supposed themselves part of an entertaining charade, a fun thing. But Terry was striking hard. He had found his heart’s desire. The girls were in for a surprise.

“Arn’t you forgetting Hyacinth?” Mignon asked coyly.

The realisation that she had indeed been forgotten was no comfort. Hyacinth found herself curious. “Mind your own bottom!” She told Mignon tartly.

“I say, I’m frightfully sorry, old girl.” Terry was contrite.

“Don’t be. Look after your guests.”

On the basis of never argue with a woman he gave her a quite savage cut. Hyacinth angrily steeled herself against reaction. He might as well have hit the post to which she was bound. He hit her again and, once more, she achieved the impossible. The third stroke brought the inevitable gasp that was followed by quiet shaming tears that were not shed because of pain.

“I think she’s jealous,” Mignon sagely observed.

“You’ve been neglecting her,” said Sally.

Terry was no student of the feminine psyche. It was his cue then to soundly whip Sally and Mignon for their pert obtrusion into the emotions of their sister in distress. Instead, he thrashed Hyacinth. He was passionately anxious that his beloved feel no neglect. On the basis that if a little is good a lot is better, he was quite cruel to the girl he had tied to the post. As the scalding stripes wrapped across her bottom Hyacinth forgot all else save pain and anger. She howled and moaned and wept. The watching girls were concerned but helpless. They knew what he had done wrong. But how to tell him!

“I think she’s had enough.” Mignon ventured.

“We’ve got two nice bottoms here.” Sally offered divertingly.

Terry paused. He sensed that somewhere in this welter of femininity he had taken a wrong path. He was panting slightly. The bound Hyacinth’s shoulders shook with her slow sobbing. The girls had ceased to giggle. An awkward silence fell. It was broken finally by Hyacinth.

“Please may I go to the bathroom?”

No knight of old sprang to his Lady’s need with greater celerity. If his love wished to be whipped, then whipped she would be. If her need was for the bathroom, he would get her there with the greatest possible speed. Cords fell rapidly around the weeping girl’s feet.

“Thank you.” The freed captive gave Terry a pale grateful smile which swept on to embrace, also, the two girls bound to their benches. Without another word she fled upon her mission.

* * *

It was surprisingly easy. To dress. To scribble the few words. To walk with elegance down the stairs, the hall, and through the grand front door and down the old stone steps to the waiting Bentley…

But surely the Bentley could not be true! Surely not the smiling figure of Lord Hipple exquisitely attired in the best of Savile Row, an effect somewhat marred by a pair of white tennis shoes.

“Ali, there you are, m’dear. Gertrude said this would be about the time. Pleasant visit to Cannes, I hope.” He opened the door. Without pause Hyacinth swept into the car. Lord Hipple sat beside her and played his opening gambit: “And how is your dear mother…?”

Hyacinth wanted to cry and to laugh. She did both. Lady Hipple joined her, but omitted the tears. It was a most satisfying feast of female emotion.

“Bunch of Twits, arn’t they?” Said Lady Hipple.

“Men are absurd!” Hyacinth sobbed happily.

“Let me put these on you, you’ll feel better.” Lady Hipple solicitously locked the handcuffs on Hyacinth’s wrists. “We’ll have a couple of snorts before lunch. Then I’ll run you back to The Priory myself.”

“Oh, thank you… thank you!” Hyacinth’s voice was choked with the sweetest emotion she had ever known.

“May as well leave your clothes on for now, dear.” Lady Hipple chortled. “Don’t imagine you’ll be wearing any for a week after the Sisters lay their hands on you… You don’t mind, love?”

“I don’t mind.” Hyacinth assured her happily. “Just so long as it’s a woman…”