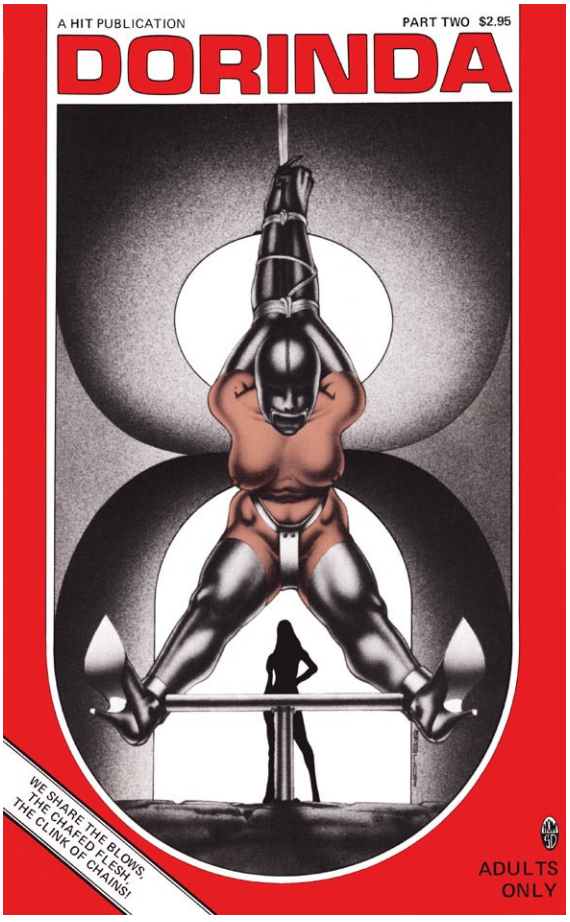


DORINDA

PART TWO

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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TERRY

"A quite routine assignment," said Mr. Rabin.

I could have killed him. Nothings routine in this nut house.

"You will go to prison, have a nice trial, be sentenced to bad things, and then we bring you home again."

"You've gone round the bend," I told him. Then bit my lip. It's remarks like that that keep me striped.

"It's quite practical, darling," Thalia broke in placatingly. Thalia's really quite sweet and does not whip me any more than she has to. I expect I looked as doubtful as I felt. With Dorinda gone I felt sort of extra vulnerable.

"See darling, these people are rich. But daughter's in a jam, a bad one. They are willing to pay a lot of money for you to go through all the ugly bits, and then to pay a lot more to bribe whoever is going to let you escape afterwards. We will always have you in sight."

"For about twenty years?" I asked despondently.

"The Magistrate may not order you whipped." Old Rabin came out with that real corker as though it was a birthday present.

"It will all be rushed through in a very short time." Poor Thalia was trying hard to show me any bright spots there might be.

"Only the very senior officers of the prison will fuck you."

If the previous consolation had been for my birthday, this latest Rabin special was for Christmas.

"Do I have to thank them?" I asked. That one got me two strokes. I wish sometimes I could keep quiet.

They got me ready. That meant clothes. Old Rabin blandly explained that in his country girls were rarely arrested in the nude. But, he said they would be very cheap. They were. He said I wouldn't have 'em on very long. I could believe that too.

He was quite a nice policeman. They gave him some money, so I realized he was in on the deal. "Sergeant Fazhari: meet Miss Terry Esmond." It was too absurd. I had to try hard not to giggle while he was handcuffing me. I think he was surprised that I wasn't surprised. He told me later that most girls cry a lot when he puts the handcuffs on. He was a bit premature actually: Mr. Rabin insisted on gravely shaking hands – probably to enjoy one last clutch at his investment. But Thalia threw her arms round my neck and kissed me warmly. I kissed her back and made believe she was Dorinda. Amazing! A few minutes before she'd been whipping me. Us girls really are something . . . !

I got a nice look at the mouldy town while I sat in the back of the car with sergeant Fazhari. He said he would like to play with my three thingummys while I took in the

scenery. I put my handcuffed wrists behind my neck so as to give him plenty of scope and let him get himself all excited. I could tell he was a bit miffed when we drove into the Police station or whatever they call them there. I suppose a sergeant has to show a bit of decorum with the female suspects even in this place.

I was booked. I didn't understand a word. But I could have cared less. They searched me and stole my pants, then bunged me into a rotten little cell. I wasn't sure whether they had left my handcuffs on because they'd forgotten or on purpose. I could have cared less about that too.

They actually sported a wardress. She showed up almost immediately with a couple of civilian friends. Know what she did! I couldn't believe it myself at first. But when they began to undress me it was real enough. The old vulture held an auction. My clothes were bid on by the sister vultures she'd brought along. When I saw them looking at my teeth and my hair I got a really funny feeling. When the bidding was over I was tossed a bit of sacking to go to Court in, and the three witches departed with my clothes. I could understand why that chap at the desk had been anxious to get first grab at my pants.

They got me into Court within the hour. There was a sort of ceremonial dress for this. My bit of sack, my handcuffs, and chains on my feet that made an awful lot of noise. There was a rope loop round my neck, a tether by which I was led to my just desserts. I was very impressive. No one paid any attention to me at all.

I stood in the box with the wardress beside me while everyone had a free for all. I may have had a lawyer in there somewhere but I never met him. The noise was intense, the clothes were everything you've ever seen. Hands waved. At the end of it I got ten years and twenty lashes.

Imagine my feelings! If all went well I might miss the ten years. But there was no way I was going to miss those twenty lashes. I was to get them right there on the premises before being sent to the prison where I hoped and prayed I really would escape.

They made quite a thing about me being whipped. I gathered it was not every girl that had the honor, which was probably too bad in the eyes of the male staff since they all got a first class erection of the notion of dear little Terry getting her bottom swished.

First off I was taken to the chief whatever he was that ran the place. I had to stand to attention in front of his desk and listen to a long harangue in about three languages. The moral of it was that I should take off my bit of sacking and lay across his desk.

When that amusing exercise was over I was taken back to my cell by a lesser being who told me frankly that he'd like to fuck me too but didn't have the rank. To demonstrate his injured feelings he put my handcuffs back on extra tight and felt me all over with very rough hands.

But it wasn't long before he was back. This time it was the Chief Assistant something or other. We went through the whole bit again. I tried to look interested and grateful for his concern about my morals. But I was afraid I might go to sleep on my feet if he went on too long. Those early missionaries must have been an awful bore.

When it was time for 'Off with the sacking!' he got quite a shock. I could see it hit him. I really had been whipped a lot. There was darling Mark that time he was so angry with us both. There was that bastard Mike and all his crew. Good old Cuth had come back no less than nine times during my day tied on the deck. Then there were the appearances. All in all I must have been a very stimulating sight for any male who enjoyed what most males seem to enjoy. Alright! Alright! So I like it a little too. But just a little. . . .

He explained in his broken English that he wanted me to relieve his tensions with my lips and tongue. But not yet. My stripes had given him ideas. A girl who entered their fine jail with a clear skin could hardly be whipped without the fresh marks being noted and commented upon. But if she was as well striped as I was what did a few more matter. He explained, with great charm, that he would like to give me those few more.

I could hardly refuse, could I? No use acting coy. My marks betrayed me. That's the trouble with a girl being whipped. Everyone else feels that since the ice had been broken they might as well have a go too. A simple case of one stripe leading to another.

So off came my Dior creation and little Terry is once again asking how she should stand. The bit of sack went on and off so easily that the handcuffs were no impediment. I could see he liked those too. The different ways in which a girl can get a man an erection are just out of this world! I had to kneel with elbows and cheek on the floor and knees well in. I didn't like it. My bottom stuck up like a beacon.

It hurt like Hell. I'd always known it would if it was not Mark. Only Mark could make me crinkle. Dorinda maybe . . . . Fortunately he had to be a bit careful, so he limited it to ten. I was crying by then. I didn't try to be heroic. I was tired and wanted to go home.

He was most chivalrous about helping me up off the floor. I'm quite sure he felt sorry for me. Men are queer mixtures. But his sympathy was not such as to interfere with his plans. However he did give me a lovely drink before he had me kneel and then stuck his fly in my face.

I hadn't been back in my cell five minutes before the vulture showed up. I wondered what she wanted. Anyway she had a private place of her own she took me to. Seems as though she was in the senior executive class too. Imagine little Terry's feelings when she was bunged into the living room and there's the other two vultures waiting. They had me naked in no time. I hoped one of them might buy my sack. Then they undressed themselves. I'll draw a veil, as they used to say in Victorian novels. They could never have made the grade in Hollywood. I don't think all three of them could have inspired one good male erection.

Vulture number one produced their universal panacea: A whip and a bottle. They gave me a bit of the bottle. I was to get the whip if I didn't behave. The marks I had already aroused no comment. Probably when they were girls they'd been well decorated too.

They sat in a row. Three obscene Buddhas. I was instructed to go up and down the line. I was to get the whip only if I failed to sense and deal with a quivering orgasm. None of 'em wanted to be left on the hook. I prayed that once would be enough.

It wasn't! I know I'm good at this. Dammit! Dorinda's told me so many times. You know that pride in workmanship thing! Well, it didn't help me now. My poor tongue! Have you ever had a tired tongue? Sounds absurd! Well, I had one then. The old biddies weren't too keen on letting me have a rest. But I think they were a bit grateful so I missed most of the whip, except for one dear old soul who enjoyed flicking it at my slit while I stood to attention.

Once more I ended up in my cell. I was about ready for beddy–byes when another joker showed up. This time I had to discard my sack and let him suck just about everything I had. The bath I'd had back at old Rabin's seemed quite wasted. My new client could have washed the Statue of Liberty. I was quite surprised when he made me lie down and proceeded to give me a bit of pleasure. I've thought of him ever since as 'Ox tongue' he was that well endowed. Practice, I suppose. Anyway my evening in that lousy cell turned out a lot better than I expected.

But I went to sleep in tears thinking of Mark and Dorinda. It was the middle of the morning when the star of the show was led out to her fate. I shouldn't joke. But they made such a production of everything. First off there was quite a to–do. The chap who'd given me a bit of fun the night before had enjoyed his bit of fun too. He'd locked my ankles together with a spare set of handcuffs – Oh sure, they'll go round a girl's ankles! Then he'd gone off shift. Seems like his handcuffs weren't standard. No one could find a key to fit. I'd sort of figured out he had a sense of humor. Anyone following him would have had a Hell of a time making any use of a girl with her feet locked together. I'd actually been grateful. They'd been almost as good as a chastity belt.

Anyway, they sent someone for the key. When I could walk again we started the procession. Everyone was there. A girl was to be whipped, naked. Tumescence was rife! I was a sex symbol. Unfortunately it was the wardress who was to do the job. I'd have preferred a man.

They had a post affair. Very simple. I was hoisted up by hands far more than willing, until I could drape my locked wrists over the top. Then I was gently lowered until I found myself standing on tip toe. My hands linked on the other side of the post and the handcuffs snagged on a hook so I couldn't pull 'em down. It was perfect for what they intended to do to me.

It's the kind of whip that counts. I looked this way and that until it came into view. I almost curled up inside. The damn cane was about five feet long. Some sort of native cane or something. My sentence was read in a very official manner by an elderly gentleman who, I am sure, was enjoying his finest erection in years. My bit of sacking was torn away. I mourned it not. But there was little Terry stark naked with a very large female with a very long cane just to the rear. I mean . . . after all. . . !

Do you like first hand descriptions of a girl being whipped?

I suppose I could manage one. You know, stroke by awful stroke. They did it very well in that book: 'Nell in Bridewell'. But I couldn't possibly go into all those turgid exclamations. The damn girl always sounded to me like a silly ass. Actually a girl does not think a lot in such circumstances. She is far too busy hurting. You just go from stroke to stroke wondering if it will be the next one that will kill you. There is no possible belief that you will survive. You are just a cracked record saying over and

over: 'No, no, no!'

You scream a lot too. You can't help it. They didn't seem to mind. It sustained their erections and proved my whipper was doing a good job. How I did scream. That damn switch or cane or whatever the vulture was using on me was a new experience. It wasn't a cane and it wasn't a whip. I was getting the worst of both worlds, and I was getting it from my knees to my neck. A cane is supposed to be for a girl's bottom, not the rest of her. I'll never forget how I tugged and heaved at my handcuffs. They cut me back as though it was a game. I knew my wrists were bleeding. But I did not feel the pain right then. All that mattered was that I jerk loose. Impossible! Oh sure! tell that to a girl fixed the way I was fixed. If I'd been tied there by my nipples I'd have jerked them loose. I was frantic. All I knew was pain.

So you'll have to excuse me if I don't do too well on the graphic description. I just hung there screaming and squirming while the vulture cut me here and cut me there just as she pleased. I was just a pretty piece of female flesh delivered to the butcher.

I was left like that a long time after my whipping was done. I remember wondering if Rabin got extra cash for my suffering. Not that it would do me any good. A slave does not get paid. When they lifted me off the post I could scarcely stand. But I was all ready for transit. My faithful handcuffs were still on my bleeding wrists. All they did now was loop a chain round my tummy and fasten it tight with a padlock that also went through the single link of my cuffs. So now I couldn't do anything at all. I just had to hold my hands at my waist. It was a rotten helpless feeling. I wanted to scratch my nose I wanted to tidy my hair. I couldn't do anything. But those who handled me as a prisoner in transit sure could. My poor little quim and my rose –buds got pinched and cupped until I would have given anything for one of the silly twits to have finished what they started.

It was quite a long ride. I was in a closed van, my ankles chained to a ring in the floor. Wicked little Terry mustn't have a chance to escape! There was another poor girl in there too, fixed the same way I was. We tried to talk. But no go. So we just smiled and smiled and smiled and tugged away at our chains to show we were sisters under the skin and all that rot. The prison was worse than the other place. I got washed and disinfected. Their idea of a wash was to chain me to a ring in the wall and playa hose on me. The water wasn't all that cold. But it sure had a force. It hurt. The bitch who did it to me made me stand facing her with my feet apart. Then she gave me a full force jet right on my quim. I just couldn't stand it. But she made me do it over and over. It was a good introduction to my new home. Ten years! I tried not to think about it. . . .

I got a scrap of a dress. It hid the essentials. But it was a women's place. We could just as well have been naked in that climate. I think they only made us wear it so we'd have something to be ashamed of taking off. It's funny. No matter how many times you've done it you get a fresh flush of shame every time you strip before someone else, even a woman. I never felt that way with Mark or Dorinda.

Then I was back at attention in front of a desk. She was a great big Nazi looking type. I got a lecture and then off came the dress and I was bent over to get 'The welcome'. A nice friendly caning to get me properly oriented and mentally adjusted.

I was really cheesed off. I let the howls and the tears have full rein. Why not! She loved it and it helped me bear the misery. My poor bottom had just about had

enough.

I was put in a cell. Still handcuffed. They loved those handcuffs. They were to humiliate, that's all. The rotten bitches!

You want the rest? It's a drag really. The Nazi type caned me damn near every hour on the hour and made me tongue her until I hoped I'd never see another female part the rest of my life – except Dorinda's, or course. Oh, how I longed for that girl! I wanted Dorinda so bad it hurt.

Then, a couple of nights later, who do you think it was who unlocked my cell, unlocked my handcuffs and escorted me outside the gate? Oh sure, not hard to guess. The Nazi lady herself. She hadn't had me long, but she had got all the use out of me she could. I suspected Rabin's rentals had got cheated. But I didn't say so.

Oh, it was good to be free! I kept thinking of those ten years. I'd have had no skin and no tongue left!

It was a miracle to hop into the car. There was darling Thalia waiting for me. I hugged her and kissed her as though to reassure myself that someone nice really existed. Then I absentmindedly put my wrists into the handcuffs she held open and watched her click them tight. It never occurred to me that for a little while: the time it took from the prison wall to the waiting car, I had been free. Totally free. I'll always wonder what would have happened if I'd run like blazes.

No rest for dear little Terry. Not that I'd expected any. Old Rabin had to get his dividends out of me: 'return on investment', I believe they call it. I got in one glorious night with Dorinda, but next morning I got the summons.

"We have a limited tourist trade," Rabin said, eyeing me in a way I didn't like.

"You rent them things?" I asked helpfully. Then realized what I'd said!

"You are a most perceptive child." I really think the old boy would sooner be nice to me than nasty, so I gave him my full attention. "It is my experience that tourists seek abroad those pleasures they would be ashamed to seek at home . . . . You are following?"

"Someone wants to cane my bottom?" I'd seen it coming. He sighed sadly. With such eloquent sighs the old boy hardly needed speech. "Alas yes. He is a young man of your own race. A simple youth who, I suspect, is splurging an inheritance in pleasures of the flesh."

"Isn't he a bit depleted by the time he's got this far?"

"It has taken him this far to pluck up his courage," Rabin said dryly. "I fear you are the first."

"But you think it's in a good cause?"

"Ah yes!" Old Shylock brightened perceptibly. "He did not quibble. During our conversation I gathered he had little interest in using female facilities for their usual function." He peered at me brightly through those thick lenses. "You may be relieved by my deduction that he is probably impotent."

"That part doesn't usually hurt but the other does." I pointed out. I got another sigh. This one told me to shut up.

Well anyway, Cedric: that was his name. Imagine! He'd rented a house for his exploration into what fun it is to hurt a girl. Thalia delivered me nicely cleaned and perfumed and with my wrists handcuffed behind my back in the good old tried and true fashion. It's really awful like that, a girl can't do a thing! The key was tied round my neck with a bit of ribbon and a bow. She said I looked simply darling. I was sure I did.

Poor Cedric! I'll always remember him as that. A poor lean weak chinned clerk from a poor dusty office in a back street. All of a sudden fate had placed Heaven in his hands and he didn't know what to do with it. He sat and looked at me with his mouth wide open. If I hadn't been handcuffed I'd have popped something in it. I knew for sure this was the first time he'd ever really had a good look at a naked girl.

"I've read a lot of books," he said as though that explained everything.

"And they've told you exactly what to do to me?" I wasn't sure right then if I wanted to help the silly ass.

"Er, well . . . . I do have my own ideas." Sophistication plus!

"Please tell me."

He was stymied. He couldn't get off the first tee. I had an inspiration. It seemed a natural.

"Look here darling," I said in as sexy voice as I could manage, "why don't you forget the Arabian Nights and we'll just be a couple of tourists seeing the sights. Then take me back to London. I'm ever so much fun."

"But I wanted to whip you. . . ?" He'd managed to get it out.

"Whip me in London. There's not so many flies there." He looked hastily down at his own, then blushed.

"If you'll unlock my handcuffs I'll be a really good girl and make you very happy and I won't try to escape." I let him have both barrels. Then I twisted and pulled at my wrists as though they hurt.

He was in agony. E.C. 1 battling Damascus. The accounts payable clerk versus Ali Baba. I watched despairingly as Ali Baba got the upper hand.

"Mr. Rabin said you'd make that suggestion." Firm reproof.

Good old Rabin! What hope had a girl got with such an owner. He'd reach out of his grave and rent me at a profit.

"Did he tell you to keep me safely chained?"

He had the grace to look discomforted. "Yes actually he did." He shuffled his feet a bit. "As a matter of fact he rented me quite a lot of stuff."

"Jolly decent of him."

"Saves buying it, y'know."

"Simply spiffing. What did you get?"

He flushed. "Quite a lot of chain actually. Anklets and wristlets. A lot of cord . . . . You'll look very pretty. Then, there were some other, er, things. . . ."

"You mean things to hurt me and make me cry?"

It was a blow below the belt. He wasn't ready for it. He hadn't adjusted to my breasts and pubic hair even. For a moment I guessed he wished he was back in E.C. 1.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" I asked sweetly.

"Of course I am! You know I am!" He glowered at me resentfully. "But it's not going to make any difference."

This time it was me who sighed. In his own way Cedric was as much a prisoner as I was. Prisoner of a fantasy and of a strange land that would never allow the two of us together to leave this town.

"Well alright," I conceded. "How are you going to torture me first?" I wasn't going to make it easy for him.

"I'll cane your bottom." The words exploded out of him like a groom saying 'I do' at a wedding.

I turned round with plenty of hip motion and displayed my chubbies. Looking back at him over one shoulder I said sweetly:

"They've really been very well caned already."

It was as though he'd noticed my whip marks for the first time. I'm sure it was. My nipples and my quiff had hypnotized him up to now. As for the rest of me he may have supposed that girls actually were striped that way but no one had ever told him. He boggled.

"I say, y'know, that's not cricket."

"No. It was a cane . . . . and a whip. In fact, several."

"But . . . but, I've paid a lot of money. . . ?"

"You mean you didn't expect to rent a used girl?"

It was a bad day for Cedric. "Well, no. What I mean to say . . . well really!"

"I'm merchandise, y'know," I explained gently. "Mr. Rabin rents me out all the time, always suitably chained. I'm bound to get a bit – what do they call it: shelf marked."

"But I can't. I mean to say, I shouldn't. Not after . . . . after. . . ."

"No. You shouldn't, should you."

"But I'm damn well going to! You'll have to put up with it."

"Thank you, kind sir," I said.

"Are you his only . . . only. . . ?"

"No. I am not Mr. Rabin's only girl," I said icily. "He has at least one other far more beautiful than I. But her bottom, too, looks much like mine. It's an occupational hazard for slave girls."

"You're a slave?" He looked incredulous.

"You surely don't think I'm a local housewife picking up a little extra cash?"

"You mean you're really a slave . . . girl?" His eyes came to life.

"That excites you, doesn't it!" I flung at him bitterly. "Well get your money's worth. Yes, I'm a slave. A real live slave. I'm kept naked and chained and I'm whipped if I don't obey. Does that give you a nice firm erection?"

His hand was half way to his crotch before he stopped it.

"There is no need to be offensive," he enunciated stiffly. Suburbia outraged. He looked at me doubtfully. "You mean to say you . . . you sold yourself?"

"Don't be ridiculous. When they need a girl they simply kidnap her. There's always a loose girl trotting around. They kidnapped me. Now I'll never, never escape. I know I won't!" I made my voice as pitiful as I could. Then added as an extra thrust: "I'm always chained like a puppy dog or some wild animal."

It hit him. Suburbia is tender hearted. Or, rather, it has a keen sense of what is proper. Girls in chains aren't! Except, of course, in the odd secluded villa! He wriggled uncomfortably.

"You make this very difficult for me," he admitted. "I'd made up my mind to be quite hard hearted and go through with something I have always wanted very much. Now I get you." He looked at me with red faced irritation. "You aren't what I bargained for at all. You're very sweet. You keep pecking away at my better nature, and on top of that you have already been terribly whipped. Really! I begin to think I had better send you away, back to Mr. Rabin. Such a nice man. I'm sure there's something wrong somewhere."

"If I give you an address will you contact them and tell them where I am?" I looked at him adoringly. "I'll be ever so nice to you."

He waved a disgusted arm. "There! That's just what I mean. Mr. Rabin said you'd ask that. I had to give him my word I'd treat the whole matter as strictly confidential. No, young lady. Back you go!"

I'd won a victory! For a moment little Terry was proud as punch. I wasn't going to

get whipped after all. But then it hit me. I'd dug myself a pit and fallen right in. What sort of a reception was dear old Mr. Rabin going to give his little slave girl when she was sent home as unsatisfactory. I could just feel Thalia going to work on me with her strong right arm. I couldn't cozen either of the Rabins. But I might twist poor Cedric a bit . . . . So I bent down at his feet in my best slave girl submission act and sobbed: "I have been a bad girl, Master. Please punish me."

It gets 'em every time. I used to use it on Mark until he caught on. I think wives use it on husbands: You ask for what you don't want and hope you don't get it. It worked with Cedric. He'd never seen anything as lovely as me. He tossed nobility out the window.

"That's better." He said it grudgingly just to show he was not a man to be trifled with. "I think you really deserve to be punished."

"Yes master." You know: butter wouldn't have melted in my mouth.

But poor Cedric was back at square one again. He had a naked girl complete with all parts. But his problem was which bit to start on. Understandable, really, considering he'd never in his life touched any of 'em. I took a chance and peeped up. He was a perplexed young man.

"Would you like to look at the nice things Mr. Rabin sent over? I'd love to see them," I suggested innocently. Actually I was curious.

It saved the day. First thing I knew I was on my feet and we were peering in a sizable wooden box. It was quite a collection. I'd sort of got the idea that I'd stay on this assignment for as long as Cedric paid my rent. That meant until he got tired of making me howl. Old Rabin must have hoped for a lengthy visit. The little lot we were looking at would have kept Torquemada happy for years. I didn't know what a lot of the items were. I could tell Cedric didn't know either. But he wasn't going to say so.

There were chains galore and a lovely collection of whips, canes and crops. I was thankful to note that the old boy had not included any of the kind that slice. He would watch the well–being of his investment that far. There was a lot of cord and some straps. Then there were some grim looking things I really didn't want to know about.

"What are you going to hurt me with first?" I asked enthusiastically.

Cedric winced. "I do wish you would couch your remarks with a kinder phraseology. You make me feel like Genghis Khan."

I was about to come up with something flip when I realized I'd better go easy. I might yet be sent back to father Rabin with request for a refund. "I'm sorry, master," I said as though I really meant it. "Would you like to punish me for insolence?"

He perked right up again. His faith in Rabin's Rentals restored. "What would you suggest?" he asked briskly. I could see he was not much of a one for decisions.

"I usually got two on my bottom for impertinence," I said meekly.

"Very well then. Mustn't break with tradition, eh." He oozed bonhomie. "Which

cane to you prefer?"

Only Cedric could have asked that! I picked the one that hurt the least. He didn't notice.

"In what position would you like me, master?"

Another decision. Pure cruelty! "Well, er, what about the touch your toes sort of thing, eh?"

"Thank you, master." I'd really butter him up.

I bent over. I couldn't touch my toes with my hands chained behind my back. But I decided to give my lessee another glimpse of the unknown. I bent as far as I could and parted my legs.

I heard him gasp. Looking back and up between my own legs I could see his fingers twitching. He was immobilized. Poor Cedric was looking at a phenomenon that has disconcerted better men than he. Simply that, in such a posture, the principal bit of a girl that you expect to see in front begins to show up at the back, hair and all.

"I say, Miss Esmond, perhaps you'd better close your legs." He evidently feared I was about to suffer some irreparable displacement. Or perhaps my little thingummy seemed an accusing eye.

I promptly obeyed. It's safer with your legs together. He lashed me twice. Savagely. I'd expected them to be bad. They were. Into those two cuts at my bottom had gone twenty years of frustrated longing.

I can take one, even two like that, without a fuss. The hurt's all there. But you keep it inside. I smiled radiantly as though he'd given me a diamond necklace. "Thank you master," I said gratefully. Then I stood on tip toe and kissed him on the forehead. After that I knelt, bowed my head and waited.

It was really a tense moment for me. I'd have sworn I could hear his heart beating. I guessed him steeped in sensation. The nothing else like it feeling of a cane thunking into a girl's flesh. If it triggered a wrong instinct I could very well be half killed in the next few minutes. The silence lengthened. Suburbia won.

"Please get up." His voice was squeaky. "I would like to . . . to discuss what has . . . has, er, just happened."

What had happened! I'd been caned twice on my bottom. I hurt. He was probably sexually excited. Hardly a matter for a League of Nations debate. But talking doesn't hurt. So I got up gratefully enough.

We sat and looked at each other. "Would you like me to make tea?" I asked innocently.

"Oh, I say! Would you. . . ?" You'd have thought I'd offered him my virtue.

"I'd love to, master."

Without a pause I walked up to him, turned my back and wiggled my handcuffs.

Nothing happened. He would be enduring agonies. "I say, y'know, I can't let you loose."

"I can't get tea like this, master."

"No, you can't, can you!" He was doing some heavy thinking.

"You'll have to take my handcuffs off sometime, master. You do have a bathroom, don't you?"

He got the hint. My back was turned, but I swear I could feel his blush.

"Er, quite so . . . ." He was mired again.

"I know the very thing, master," I exclaimed joyfully.

"You unlock me and I'll fetch the proper chains from the box and you can chain my ankles."

He was so relieved at an obvious solution that he undid the bit of ribbon round my neck and unlocked the cuffs before he realized he'd set me free. I was not about to do anything foolish. I had to try and condition him a bit first. I went and got a set of ankle chains with about the linkage I can walk with best, and the key, and presented them to him, kneeling. While he was fumbling away at putting them on me, I asked sort of absently: "Do you realize, master, that I was quite free? I could have fought or run away?"

He stopped dead. I could feel his chagrin and his shock. He gave the matter a good deal of thought, then asked: "Why didn't you?"

It was a sensible question. I deserved a sensible answer. "I wanted a cup of tea," I said simply.

Poor Cedric. Nothing was quite as it should have been for him. He hastily clicked shut the second anklet, no doubt in case I changed my mind. "There!" I said cheerfully, "I can't run away now. I'll go and make the tea."

His eyes never left those chains on my feet. They fascinated him. I'm sure he could not understand how I could walk in them. "Slave girls have to learn how to walk with their ankles chained," I told him demurely.

We sat and sipped. I'd have thought he needed something stronger. But the tea braced him. After all, he was English.

"I'm a bit out of my depth," he admitted.

I had to laugh. He managed a rueful grin of his own. It was like those stories Somerset Maugham used to write: a man suddenly finding himself a stranger.

"What did you really expect when you made the deal with Rabin?"

He made a lost gesture. "Not you."

"A piece of female flesh that wouldn't say boo?"

"I don't know."

"Lovely curves that undulated as she hung from her wrists and you whipped her naked flesh?" I hadn't read those books for nothing.

"Yes, I'm afraid so."

"Why be afraid. You've got what you want. I look very nice hanging from my wrists." I poured him another cup of tea.

"You mean. . . ?"

"Of course. You don't think you are the only chap with such ideas! Sure I've been strung up by my wrists and flogged."

He looked at me with awe. For him it was like suddenly meeting Glenda Jackson, the President of the U.S. and the Queen of England all at once.

"But you're so . . . . so–"

"Ordinary? Rational? The girl next door?"

"You do put things rather well."

"Look at the marks on me."

He looked, and suddenly realized he was looking at something very female. As usual he got pink.

"Don't you still want to whip me?"

"You make it sound like a wife asking her husband if he doesn't still love her."

"Of course. It's the same thing. Is the male still hungry." He shook himself like a wet dog.

"Does Mr. Rabin know you talk to his customers like this?"

I told the poor chap about my previous adventure. "He doesn't mind as long as his rental is paid and I get home without too much damage. I don't think he wants me damaged though."

"I suppose that's a hint?"

"I'm sure there was a damage deposit?"

He made other ineffectual motions. "It would be like whipping my sister – if I had one." He sounded bereft.

I kicked myself for getting us into this fruitless argument. If I hadn't been so damn puckish he'd have been happily Whipping me by now. "Look here," I said seriously, "You have rented me. You'll probably never get any better than I am. You have a

dream to make real. So that's what we are going to do. Sorry and all that about wanting to escape. Sure I want to. But I'm a slave. I'll be one for you." I looked at him earnestly. "It might as well be you who hurts me. If I get sent back to Rabin in disgrace I'll get a damn sight worse."

"I say, that's jolly sporting."

You know those moods when you feel: Oh, what the Hell . . . I felt one then. I felt sorry for the silly twit. He needed a tonic. I bent over. This time I could really touch my toes. "Whip me, master."

He gave me two more. I knew he was holding himself in. I thanked him prettily and kissed him again. "Why don't you undress?" I asked innocently.

Poor Cedric was faced with another A.D. – that's short for awful decision. "In front of a girl?" He was truly shocked.

"I'm naked."

"Yes, but you're. . . ."

"You mean I'm a slave and I'm paid for so I don't count."

"But, really, what would be the point?"

"You'd be all ready. You know: when a chap's been cruel to a girl he always wants to fuck her. It's not half so good with your clothes on."

He recoiled as from a rattlesnake. Poor Cedric! That unforgivable four–letter word.

"Haven't you ever had intercourse?" I daren't slip him two fucks in a row.

"As a matter of fact, no." He made it sound noble.

"Well, let's get that job out of the way first, then. I want you to. You won't whip me half as hard afterwards."

"Er, thank you, no. Another time. . . ."

I lay down on my back and stretched my legs as far as the damn chain would allow. I was deliberately obscene. I reached down with my fingers and parted my lower lips and swung my knees far apart. "You stick it in here," I explained patiently.

Cedric had a gift for being hypnotized. He stared with glazed eyes at what I was offering. I had a feeling he was expecting something to stick its head out of my whatsit and snap at him.

"It's lovely and warm in there," I coaxed.

"But I'm supposed to whip you." He had a one–track mind.

"Afterwards."

He was suddenly weeping. "I can't! I can't. . . !"

I'd guessed this all along. Those books had covered everything. "Could you have done it when you whipped me?" I asked slyly.

"I. . . . I think so."

"Simple. Whip me again." I handed him the same cane and bent over.

He went on sobbing into his hands for awhile. Then began to notice how curved my bottom was. The sobbing dried up. I pushed a bit of my fur out behind. That has a very erotic effect. He looked at the cane he didn't know he'd been holding.

He could certainly hit. I thought longingly of that argument and of how I might have prolonged it forever. I got two more. Real stingers. Immediately they were over I lay down again and offered him my virtue. I was annoyed that my own little thingummy was beginning to throb. I felt crinkly.

He threw his clothes away as though they were enemies.

Don't ever doubt that a man would sooner make a girl cry out with his prick than with a whip. If he prefers the whip, it's because he either can't do it with his cock, or he wants to make it last forever. I suppose, if a man did it carefully he could whip a girl day after day after day.

He wasn't bad naked. No Hercules, but passable in a lean sort of way. But his thingummy hadn't managed to survive the disrobing. It was evidently very sensitive to immediate impressions. We both of us surveyed its flaccidity with varying degrees of chagrin. I simply got to my feet again and bent over. At least now we'd be ahead the time it took Cedric to undress. These two were very painful. I expect he was annoyed.

He managed to get down between my legs before Napoleon lowered the flag again. The damn thing had no staying power at all. I realized that the sight of all my goodies at close range probably petrified the poor twit. I suggested a change of venue.

We were both a bit stodgy and conventional when it came to rummaging around again in old Rabin's box. We picked a thumbscrew. Having done so we looked at each other with a sort of wild surmise.

"I'm afraid you'll have to fasten me awfully tight," I apologized.

This wasn't too difficult. There was a wooden chair with stout arms. Rabin had supplied the straps. After five minutes of trial and error dear little Terry was sitting with her wrists strapped to the arms, just about as helpless and unable to twitch as I'd ever been. Mark had never needed to fasten me like this. It was total. It was scary. I could see by the look on Cedric's face that I looked very nice. But, of course, we weren't concerned with Cedric's face.

I'm not mechanical. Neither was my would–be torturer. It took the two of us quite a long while to get the contraption fitted to one of my wrists and hands. When it was done I wished I was anywhere but where I was. I mean, after all those books I've read . . . ! I would tell poor Cedric was having to call up all his own reserves. His

little Willie had shrunk to almost nothing.

There always comes the final moment. No more excuses.

No more words. We had begun to pant, for different reasons. There was a sort of screw effect. I had to watch while Cedric tightened it. I suddenly realized that I was going to be watching this whole exercise. Little Terry was going to be tortured and she was going to have a front seat view of her own flesh and bone being torn up. I surged against those straps that were tight around my ankles, waist, above my breasts, my elbows and wrists. I was fixed, but good.

Cedric kept turning the knob. I began to suspect that he'd flubbed the operation, when suddenly the awful contraption began to take hold. I stiffened and looked at his intent face. I don't know why I looked. Cedric wasn't going to rescue me. Why should he! This was as much my idea as his. "It's beginning to hurt," I said, just to keep him informed.

"Good." He spoke the word as though in confirmation. He was absorbed.

The next turn had me gasping. He paid no attention, but twisted again. I screamed. I couldn't help it. I just had to. I screamed and screamed again. It was that sort of pain. A girl had no defenses against it. It possessed you and you didn't know its limits. The screams were half pain and half fear. Now I could understand why, in the past, the better torturers had always used thumbscrews.

That damn chair and the straps were part of it. I could not move enough to matter. I fought those straps, but did not budge. My master thoughtfully tightened one or two of them while I was still screaming. He had discovered the ideal instrument. It would go on and on hurting me even when he was doing something else. He could even leave the room and that horrible thing would continue to bite and wrack and burn so that I could cry and cry and plead and plead when there was no one to listen. If there had been any question of my saying yes to something, I'm sure I would have said it.

Cedric thoughtfully gave it one more turn. A girl can't really describe an experience like this. At least I can't. When you think of it there is not that large a vocabulary of words to explain pain. You have heard them all. Then there are the things I blurted out, mostly pleading. You know: 'Oh please stop . . . ! I'll do anything . . . !' I exhausted my repertoire of those too. It was sort of an explosion of everything at once. Cedric listened gravely, and watched with glowing eyes.

I felt the impotence of slavery. A slave cannot bargain. She has nothing to offer. Her master owns all of her already. She cannot threaten, she has no weapon to threaten with. The stock situations in which a girl is tortured are on the premise that something is required of her besides screams: she can stop what is being done to her by saying yes. She may not say it, but the choice is there. With a slave girl it definitely is not. It will stop only when someone else decides they are tired with that particular bit of fun.

The metal ugliness was on my hand. But it might as well have been all of me. The pain was. That's all little Terry had become: one huge flaming agony. A strange and awful thing that twisted and shrank me inside and caused the noises I made to be without words or form, they were just a continuous ululation of suffering. You see, that damn thing on my hand wasn't like a whip. No cut followed by variations,

perhaps a pause if you are lucky. This never stopped, never relented. You knew it would not stop unless some mechanical motions were made first.

Mr poor hand! There it was sticking out from the strap that cinched my wrist tight down against the wood, and on it, clutching it like some dread beetle, was this strangely shaped contraption spawned from a nightmare centuries old. Sorry if I sound like a bit of hyperbole. But I'm trying to tell you. I was watching. I saw it all. I saw my hand and the thing on it. But I could not move it. The strap was such a lovely neat circle. It held my wrist so beautifully. Anything I tried to do with my fingers hurt too much to be worthwhile.

To make the whole thing worse was the knowledge that there was nothing to stop Cedric turning the screw again. I knew, of course, that if he did I would die, my hand would never be any use again. I hadn't any hope of fainting. I've never fainted in my life. I think that fainting bit went out with corsets and constipation. I watched his face, in between throwing my head all over the place. It was the only thing I could move. Cedric was very happy. He'd got hold of a bit of me that had never been used, a virgin hand. It was an exploration for both of us. He reached once more towards the knob.

"Stop!"

Involuntarily I barked the single word as though I had authority. It just popped out. Cedric paused, startled. Then he saw me. I mean he really saw me. Since he'd strapped me in the chair and we'd half laughingly puzzled out the thumbscrew I'd become, for him, just a delightfully curved and tastefully strapped feminine something that provided the most stimulating erotic sounds and motions. Now he blinked and beheld poor little Terry Esmond's face wet with tears and drawn and lined with agony. I'm sure my face must have looked awful, even if the rest of me didn't. It made him pause and think.

"Pretty awful, eh?"

Just pleasantly conversational. I could have killed him! I just increased the tempo of the inarticulate noises. He perked up.

"I'm not going to take it off, y'know." He was feeling his oats.

I sort of zeroed in with a focus on his eyes. "Oh Cedric, I'm only a girl. I'm not made of iron. . . ." I trailed it off in agony and tossed my head. I wasn't acting. It was real. I couldn't be flip about it. So it must have been pretty bad.

He told me afterwards he kept me like that for half an hour. I thought it was a week. He did not turn the screw again, but I never stopped the noises. I didn't care how degrading they were. They were the only relief I could find. They do help, y'know. I don't know why. But they do.

When he took it off I managed a choked thank you. If I'd been free I'd have kissed his hand like a dog. I'd have done anything to express the overwhelming gratitude that engulfed me like a wave. I suppose that's part of being a slave too: being whittled down like that. A slave girl positively loves her torturer because he's taken the thumbscrew off her hand . . . ! That's abasement. . . . What omnipotence the torturer enjoys!

Cedric did not loose a single strap. I sat within their grip panting. I know my breasts were heaving because they were doing it against the stricture of the strap above their final curve. I wanted only peace and to be left alone with my eyes half closed. It did not really matter to me whether I was unstrapped from that chair or not. All I could think of was the cessation of the worst of the pain. It was glorious, pure euphoria.

After awhile I looked down at my poor little hand. It was a bit of an anticlimax. I'd expected blood and mangled flesh, but except for some angry red marks and indentations it looked pretty much the way it always had. I tried moving my fingers. They worked. But my thumb was swollen and throbbing. I looked up at Cedric. He didn't seem quite so ineffectual now.

"Did that please you?" I asked weakly.

Cedric was bursting to talk. He'd made discoveries and wanted to share them. I knew I'd better talk too. I had a hand he hadn't used yet. If we could keep talking the thumbscrew might stay down on the floor.

"You were quite wonderful."

"Thank you."

"It is true, y'know." His silly face became immensely earnest. "A girl . . . a girl like . . . you were, is beautiful. The most beautiful thing in the world."

"You don't really feel it's sadism, do you Cedric?"

"Oh no!" He was shocked. "You don't think it is either, do you?"

I knew whatever I said would mean a lot to him. I should have hated the silly ass. But I didn't. Call me nuts, but I didn't even think of him as a sadist. You have to remember about me and Mark. You couldn't use that ugly word about Mark. But then, I love him.

"No, I don't think you are," I said gently. "It's something else. Tell me about it."

His face was illuminated. He had beheld a vision. "It's something to do with beauty." He explained slowly. I don't think you girls have ever understood the real reason men worship you and your bodies. They are quite different, y'know: I mean the real you and the lovely thing of flesh and blood you inhabit. Sometimes a man will love one or the other, sometimes both. It's as though you are twins."

Cedric took a deep breath and plunged on. "But that's only the beginning. The bit girls are aware of and which they exploit. Behind it is a sort of glory that only males can see.

Each of us carries in his mind a picture. It's indefinite and forever changing. It's a picture of a girl, maybe I should say of a woman, there she is silhouetted against the Universe, a backdrop of all the wonder man has ever seen. She herself is the quintessence. In her are the beginnings and the end. From her springs the magic that gives perspective to the rest. She is a composite of all the women that ever were or ever will be. She is naked. But she is clothed in the dreams of men. . . ."

I felt quite humble. There was more to Cedric than met the eye. "You aren't just thinking of your mother, are you?" I asked helpfully. I'd read about parent images.

"Oh no! She is that, of course. But it's just a facet of the whole. What a man sees is the purest beauty of all. You don't think us capable of it. But we are."

"Women have dreams too."

Cedric glowed, triumphant. "But you can't make them real. A man can!"

I sensed his discovery. "You mean–"

"Of course!" He broke in. "When you were . . . well, you know! The picture fell into place. It was no longer diffused. Your pain made it stand out in vivid relief. In torturing you I was reaching out for the esthetic. I found it. You gave it to me."

Little Terry realised unhappily she was likely to be giving it to him again. I knew that if I possessed an instrument by which I could evoke that kind of sublimated glory I'd use it.

"It's so wonderful it justifies what you must do to me to make it real?" I had to try and put the brakes on somewhere. But gently, gently.

"You don't mind? I won't keep you too many days!" He was an eager boy. His face alight with something women never have been able to resist.

"Days! But darling. . . ." I gave him a quivering smile. "Not all the time, love." He was a puppy dog wagging his tail. He was so happy. I knew he'd never let me go while the money lasted. I had a mental picture of father Rabin knocking at the door for some extra rent. "I say, love. How about another cup of tea?" He was palpitating to please. He was one of the English to whom a cup of tea is the answer to all things.

"You wouldn't have anything a bit stronger?"

It was quite a blow that the eternal woman should like a snifter. But he took it bravely. He rummaged. All he had was some Grand Marnier. It's potent. You sip. Not really designed for a girl who can't use her hands. The dollop he poured down my throat lit a raging fire. He took one just as big. I knew from the expression on his face, and by the Inferno that was consuming my tummy, that perhaps I should have left well enough alone. We sat and glowed at each other like a couple of Christmas trees. As the sunshine spread Cedric poured the rest of what was in the glass between my willing lips and downed his own.

"I say love. Let's try something else from the box, shall we?" Cedric had, at last, come into his own.

"Yes, let's." It was my voice alright. But I didn't care.

I took a detached interest in my companion's activities. I was a sort of indulgent parent watching little Chester play with Daddy's stamp collection. Cedric was happy and engrossed. He liked to figure things out. I was still strapped tight. But I didn't mind that either.

This one went on the toes and foot. I'd never had a good look. He got it positioned

without releasing my ankle. I could feel rings into which my five toes were thrust. Another bit of it went back over my heel. I felt sure the surfaces were all pointed or had little knobs or something. There was a clamp effect. I could feel Cedric tightening screws on each side. They squeaked. Rabin should have rented him an oil can as well.

It possessed my foot quite suddenly. Little Terry yelped to let her nice master know he had reached the first tee. The nice master kept right on turning. First one side, then the other. I removed the word nice from my thinking.

The rings tighten round my toes and, at the same time, were drawn back to dig into the foot itself. My heel and my toes were drawn toward each other. I was right, there were very small spikes everywhere. Cedric tightened assiduously.

You don't want all that agony over again, I'm sure. I mean, enough's enough. The Grand Marnier kept the demon pain under control for no more than a couple of good turns each side. Then I was howling all over again. I suppose I was a bit tipsy, because when I started to cry I was surprised, as though it was somebody else's tears that were wetting my cheeks.

I realised, through the pain, that the job wasn't all that easy for Cedric. Mechanically, I mean. He had to get the horrible thing as tight on me as he could without damaging my foot. He had two guides: What he could see of the thing at work on my skin and bone, and the noise I made. The latter was suspect. I knew it. He knew it. Both of us did the best we could.

He told me afterwards that it was only fifteen minutes before he got the great idea. The first I knew of it the straps were being unbuckled and I was a free girl.

I won't say freedom felt wonderful. I hurt just as much free as strapped in the chair. In a way it was worse. I had an instinctive compulsion to tear at the thing hurting me. I couldn't. Cedric still had charge of it. But, in looking down, I saw something that the poor boy must have been very conscious of. Cedric had an erection!

Our eyes met. We knew. We knew. We did not need words.

But he explained carefully. "While you have it on your foot . . . please. I want us to do it while you are hurting."

I sure was hurting! I could hardly keep still. The foot that was being tortured kept jerking of its own accord. I remembered the old stories of the Chinese girls with, their bound feet and of how, in the act of love, the male would kick them to give her pain.

Using mostly my hands I edged myself down on the rug. I wanted to stretch out my punished leg as though to keep that ugly metal thing fastened upon it as far away as possible. I knew he would not allow me to touch it. But he had let go. I was quite free except for the bond of the pain that was still going full blast. But that was the idea. Cedric had to have that. I took the best position of all and held out my arms in welcome.

Cedric did quite well. I did quite well too.

When the pain reasserted itself I let my still tortured leg jerk and behave in any way

it liked as a reminder to my master that his slave girl was still in pain. All he did was kiss me and hold me down. He found my hands and gripped my wrists out on each side of my head. He wasn't going to give me any chance for ideas. I was his and I'd better believe it. Cedric was doing fine. After a very little time he took me on another journey, quite successfully.

Afterwards he insisted on the Lord and Master thing. He made me do silly little errands. He refused to take the thing off my foot. I had to wear it. He threatened to handcuff my hands behind my back the first time he caught me touching it. I believe him. I was feeling like his slave girl. I expect the pain did it. That pain had become a steady throbbing misery that I could do nothing about, but which it was obvious I could bear. Maybe a girl can bear anything. I tried crawling. I tried dragging the injured member and using mostly my hands to pull myself around. His errands purposely made me travel. But he insisted that I get up and walk. He didn't care how. But do it!

I honestly did not think it possible. I was sure I'd just crumble. The thought of putting that clamped agony on the floor and resting my weight on it seemed absurd. But I did it. He didn't even threaten to whip me or anything. Just sat and watched, giving me plenty of time. The first step took a bit of time. You know how you hesitate before wading into icy water! I kept putting that metal affair on the rug and pulling it back. When I did take the first real step it doubled the pain. But I learned a hop–skip gait that got me around. My mind was full of wondering how long he would make me wear it. I knew he was loving every moment of keeping me lame. I expect I did look pathetically beautiful as I winced and gasped my way about the room. I didn't plead. I knew there were worse things. Besides, he was happy.

They say one drink leads to another. Usually I don't let it.

But I needed an anaesthetic. I don't know what Cedric took his for. Now I had my hands back I could sip. It still went fairly quickly. We talked a lot, at least Cedric did. I have to admit that little Terry's constant flow of chatter was inhibited by the machinery on my toes. It's hard to be bright when you hurt. I accepted another Grand Marnier, remembering that Yankee pleasantry about people reaching the point where they 'felt no pain'. I couldn't get there fast enough.

My Master was ruminatingly discussing projects for hanging me up by my feet, my hair, my wrists, etc. He was also taken with the idea of staking me out on an ant hill. I was also to be spreadeagled here and there around the premises. None of it very original. But, for him, it was all brand new. If it ever happened it would be a succession of delights for his slave girl. When we both of us at the same time noticed that these erotic fantasies were having an effect. His thingummy was pointing at me accusingly on its way up. Cedric looked down at it wonderingly. I think he was surprised at the intrusion. I was surprised myself. It had been my belief that alcohol had a debilitating effect on male prowess. I can only attribute the things enterprise to a fooling it may have had that after laying dormant for twenty years it was not going to allow a few snorts of Grand Marnier to stand in its way. Like the good little slave girl I was I resumed battle stations.

But you know men. This one had to be different. Cedric got the bright idea of changing my footwear from one set of toes to the other. I wasn't enthused. But when he asked if I'd like to go back in the chair for the transfer I said no, I'd try and bear it like the good little girl Mr. Rabin had rented him. I lay on my back and let him fumble. I hoped he was seeing three of everything the way I was. I wiggled my toes

gloriously when they were free. It still hurt. But it was a beautiful feeling. I wished the clamp did not have to go on my other foot.

Poor Cedric. I had my feet well spread, so he had a fine view of you know what. I'm sure he believed that hairy patch was some sort of miracle. He probably wondered if all girls had one. But his main problem right then was the fact that, with my feet so far apart, it was a long way from point A to point B. Half way there he dropped the whatsit.

"Damn," said Cedric.

I kept quiet. I could have cared less. He picked it up and examined it owlishly from all angles. It was a sizable affair. I watched him through the V of my raised knees. He was pink, his eyes a bit glassy. He then dropped the whatsit and said damn once more.

"Why bother?" I suggested craftily.

The solution to his problem, classic in its simplicity, appealed. He nodded to show how pleased he was with my cleverness, then fell on me like a ton of bricks.

I hadn't really all that much interest in this replay. I was floating on a delightful cloud. Let the dear boy have his fun, was my attitude. It was a little while before I noticed something amiss: Cedric's red face seemed a bit further down than it should have been. I became conscious, too, of a total absence of friction down below. I raised my head and looked. Cedric seemed quite active down there. He was doing a bit of panting too. I tweaked his ear. He lifted his face and looked around without seeing a thing, then carried on with his athletic exercises.

"Hey," I said. "Wake up."

He woke up, literally. His face was comic. We were both tipsy enough to wonder if he'd shrunk a foot to account for him being so far off target. "I say, old girl. Something wrong, what?" he mumbled. He took another tentative prod, then sat up.

"I say, I'm most frightfully sorry."

"Think nothing of it."

"Really, I'm mortified! To think . . . such a mistake!"

"They happen."

"But with a lady. . . !" It was one of his finest blushes.

I helped him get the whatsit off. But the Grand Marnier was not helping either of us for fine precision work. He had made a most excellent penetration of the aperture for the big toe. What with one thing and another it had become a tight fit. When I pulled he yelped. It was not until I went and got some cold water that a successful withdrawal was effected. I thought of Dunkerque.

The object of our ministrations never recovered.

Cedric dressed and went in search of another bottle of Grand Marnier.

Dear little Terry went to sleep.

• • •

DORINDA

I keep thinking of Mark. I can't forget him. Every day I cry a little thinking of Kyrexos. Does he think of me! Certainly he will think of Terry. Mark loves Terry . . . . He is our only hope of escape.

Can we ever escape, ever know again what it is to be free! I do not think so. Certainly not by our own hands. We are always chained or watched. We are slave girls.

To be a part of Rabin's Rentals is like being a vehicle upon the highway. From time to time we are returned to base and given a grease job and an oil change. Then sent out on the job again. There is no rest. A truck does not need a rest. We no longer expect one.

Fazrah was nice. I liked him. "Make him happy," Rabin had instructed me. "Keep him amused for a day or so. That's all the time they need." I did not ask who 'they' were or why they wanted Fazrah amused. A slave girl does not ask questions. If she does she is whipped. I hate being whipped.

Thalia had tied me so tightly I could scarcely tremble.

Then she had popped a Ping–Pong ball in my mouth and sealed my lips with wide tape. "For just a little while, darling," She had assured me before I was rolled up in the rug.

That's how Cleopatra got an audience with Caesar. So the legends tell.

When a trussed and naked girl is unrolled out of a rug it's a bit like being born. You blink and gaze around to see what your fate is. Mine was very Arab, very handsome, looking at me with about the same degree of surprise with which I looked at him. I learned afterwards that he thought all he was getting was a rug. I must have seemed a real bonus.

He yanked off the tape and looked startled when I ejected the Ping–Pong ball. He was half way through untrussing me when he suddenly caught on. "You're from Rabin, aren't you?"

"Yes, master."

Again he was surprised. "Who taught you to call a man, master?" he demanded.

It was Mark, of course. But I could not tell him that. "Mr. Rabin insists, master."

"And beats you if you don't, eh?" He laughed. "He's a wicked old rogue."

"I am his slave, master. I must not speak ill of he who owns me."

"Stand and cross your wrists at your back."

I obeyed. He tied me tight with a piece of the cord in which I had been delivered. He led me to where I must stand. He lounged back in a chair and enjoyed my nakedness. I did not mind.

With seeming irrelevance he said: "I have three wives. I have no need of a girl for that."

"No, master." I understood.

"You are used to men who enjoy your moans?"

"Yes, master."

"We are in an isolated Villa. Your cries will not be heard." I shrugged as best a girl can when she is tied. "No one hears a slave girl's cries, master."

"You are American?"

"I was, master. I am now a slave."

"I spent a year there once," he mused. "I'm an Oxford man actually." He looked at me shrewdly. "I suppose you were kidnapped?"

"Yes, master."

"Aren't you going to ask me to help you to escape?" His smile invited.

"You wouldn't. You'd refuse." I forgot the master.

He smiled gently. "You consider me and . . . the others, monsters?" He was genuinely curious.

I did another bondage shrug. "It does not matter what I think. I am for the amusement of men."

"Please, I would like to know."

I did not myself know the answer. I wanted to. I wanted to answer Fazrah with truth. "I do not think most who whip me are monsters." I managed slowly. "They are men in search of something."

He nodded in confirmation. "You are wasted on Rabin." I was flattered. He was kind.

"Release me," I pleaded. He shook his head regretfully.

"There is a code."

"Whip me then." I was angry and tired of words.

"Suppose I do not want to whip you?"

"There will be something else. Do that."

"What do you suggest?" He was delightfully suave.

I tore at the cords he had knotted round my wrists. I tugged and heaved and twisted. He watched avidly. I hurt. I knew I could never free myself. But I fought. I fought as though I must wriggle free or die. I made my body twist and turn and bend. Then, when I knew him enslaved, I said: "There, that is what you want. Now possess me."

He took me cruelly and wonderfully, my hands still bound. I wished they had been free.

"You are not as other girls one buys."

"Why the Hell should I be! My name is Dorinda Matson. I'm an all out American girl. I've bloody well been kidnapped and I don't like it. I'd escape if I could. I'd sell my body to escape. I'd do anything to escape. I want to escape more than anything in the world." I went all out. I glowered at him. "O.K. I've broken the rules. Whip me."

He was delighted. We'd resumed positions. Me, the slave, standing to attention. He comfortable in his chair. "You are quite remarkable," he said appreciatively. "I am a good mind to whip you just to see your reaction."

"I would scream. It's very simple."

"You are tying to provoke me. Why?"

I didn't know why myself. I gave him another shackled shrug and admitted, "I don't know."

"You are like a child that tests its parent's tolerance."

"O.K. That's valid. Whip me."

"I don't think you are one of those girls who enjoy the whip?"

"No. I hate it."

"Then why harp on it?"

I wept. Not on purpose. What girl wants to cry with her hands tied as mine were.

He watched my impotent strivings to rid my cheeks of tears. His voice was still gentle, but amused. "You are bored. You are tired of men, men, men. And the whip and the cord and all the rest."

I had not realized. But he had. "Yes, I am sick of it all." I suddenly knew how very sick I was being slave.

"Yes. It is bad, this condition. You should not be a slave. Let us end this thrust and parry with words. I will not whip you. But there is something else for which you have a gift and which will give me great pleasure. Thus the day will not be lost.

Actually I should be gone. But you intrigue me. . . ." It was a beautiful Moorish room. There were two pillars. Fazrah bound me to one of them.

How easy that is to say: that I was bound to a pillar. How little the words tell of the skill, the cruelty and the love by which the cords became one with my flesh.

I did not mind. I smiled at Fazrah with love. Who else was there for me to love! A slave girl loves where she can. I stood, Oh so docile, against his pillar and smiled. Thalia had used so much rope to truss me that there was enough. But, first, he added his own personal touch that I should know myself wholly his. He passed a chain round my belly and pulled it tight, oh so tight! I heard the padlock click. A moment later he held the key before my eyes, then put it in his pocket. Still I smiled. I was a slave.

I fought the chain. We laughed together as I fought. It held me. I could never free myself from that single constriction. When he picked up the cord I said: "Why tie me. I am already helpless. The chain holds me utterly."

"There is still the pain. Do not forget the pain." I nodded. I had forgotten the pain.

It was oh so beautiful. It hurt so much. I knew that in an hour I would pant and groan and sweat. But I was beautiful. That is what mattered to us both: that I be beautiful.

My ankles. My knees. My wrists behind the stone. Always only a single or double strand. No more. The less the cord, the more my pain. They were pulled deep into me so that some might bleed. But it was the shoulders that would punish me. Punish me for what! Who cared! I was simply a slave girl tied so that she would weep. A single band round each shoulder, under the armpit and over and across. Cinch it tight behind the pillar. My shoulders were wracked. To breathe hurt. I could not move my body. Only my head.

"You are exquisite."

We looked at each other. There was nothing to say.

I felt proud. I knew the cords made me lovely. I was a woman before I was a slave.

"All day, master?" my eyes questioned.

"All day, adorable slave. There will be much pain."

"I know, master. Already I hurt."

We admired each other. Suddenly I remembered. "Why must you be gone, master?"

He laughed derisively. "If it was known I linger here my life might be forfeit. Certainly my liberty."

He was so young. So vital.

I remembered Rabin's instructions. "Politics?" I asked. "Politics," he conceded. "But with you I do not wish to think of such things."

I considered well. Then I told him.

He, too, considered, nodding at my words. Fitting them into place. He looked at me stricken. "There is no time. . . ."

"There is no time," I agreed. "Hurry."

He looked at me as I wish to be looked at by a man. His actions then were swift. I wanted them to be. He found paper money and a knife. With the knife he cut free my hands, then curled my fingers round its handle so that I might free myself. The paper money he thrust into my other hand. His lips were suddenly on mine, hungry, alive. I was glad they would not die. I kissed him back as hard as I could. A moment later he was gone.

I stood against my pillar for a long time before I moved. There is something precious in savoring those few moments in which you know your life has changed. I looked at the money. It seemed a great deal. Perhaps it would buy me freedom on a bus, a train, a plane. My fingers sought the cords at my shoulders. Thankfully I slipped the blade beneath and felt it slice. Soon I would be free!

You have thought of it, haven't you! Funny I didn't. Not until that moment. My shoulders were crying out in joy. But a knife will not cut a chain. Fazrah had forgotten the chain. He had forgotten the key. His not the fault alone. I had forgotten them too. I could have cried out. I had not done so.

With my money in my hand I waited for Mr. Rabin, or for Mr. Rabin's men.

I wept. How bitterly I wept!

Thalia is lovely. She is kind. We like each other. But she is Rabin's daughter.

"You have to punish me," I said. "Do not feel badly at what you must do."

My wrists and elbows were tied behind my back so that I hurt. It was the beginning.

"Why did you do it?" She was genuinely concerned. She did not want to whip me.

"He was young, alive. I would not be a party to his death." I caught her eye and smiled a smile of girls. "You would have done the same."

She was perplexed. "My father is so angry he will not see you. He has given you to me."

"I am glad."

"I am merciless."

"That is understood. How will you punish me!"

Thalia made a gesture of impatience. "You adore slavery. Why?"

She was right. But I could not tell her why. I do not adore slavery at all. I adore

Mark. Yet . . . it had become so natural to me to be a slave. Do I truly adore my chains . . . ? Did Mark change me. . . .

I could not answer. I simply asked: "Will you whip me?"

"No!" She was vehement. "I sometimes think you want to be whipped. I will punish in ways you will like less."

I would never deceive Thalia. She would always know. "I am ready to be punished, darling. I disobeyed."

She took me to a room. In it was but one thing. So innocent a thing. A sheet of plywood, rigidly anchored and braced so that it stood, an oblong upright. It's upper edge six feet above the floor.

Like all great conceptions it was simple. Oh, so simple!

Thalia kicked a box against its flat surface. We needed no words. Girls need few words. They understand each other. I stood upon the box. It was high. I was able to get my hands and then my arms over the edge so that they slid down the other side. The edge of the plywood beneath my armpits. Thalia bound me thus. All it needed was a cord from my wrists, already tied, to be tugged down and down pulling back my shoulders, then fastened where my fingers could not reach. She walked back round and looked at me. I was nakedly helpless. I knew what she would do. She knew I knew. She kicked away the box on which I stood. She took it far away and sat on it.

It was very terrible. I whimpered. I knew the first few minutes would be but a prelude to what would follow. I was not to be whipped. I was to be tortured. I knew that in an hour I would plead for the whip. Even now. . . .

"Is it very bad?" Thalia asked. I told her.

She nodded, pleased. "Would you sooner be whipped?"

"I would sooner be whipped, Oh, darling . . . Please whip me instead."

"Instead of what?" She was laughing at me.

"Instead of . . . this."

"That is what I wanted to know." She left me alone.

I hung upon the board. All my weight absorbed by my armpits on its edge. So narrow an edge. It might as well have been a nudity hung free. I could kick my legs. I kicked them. But to what purpose! The smooth plywood was a sterile surface bereft of hope. My feet found nothing. I let them fall and hang limp. I judged my toes to be a bare few inches from the floor.

I hung. That was my punishment. I hung on that edge. It would give me no surcease. It had no mercy. My flesh that took my weight would not go numb. There was no constriction. All of it would remain sensitive. Its nerves relaying their message of agony. I would hang there and suffer. I was a slave who had disobeyed.

I thought of Kyrexos and wept. When my tears were done they dried upon my cheeks. I could not touch them. I considered my plight and what I might do to ease it. There was nothing I could do. Nothing! I was a slave girl who had betrayed a trust. It was proper that I suffer. How else was I to know. How else to be sure that next time . . . . Perhaps I might hang thus all day. The thought opened the well of my tears once more. . . .

I closed my eyes and remembered. Remembered Miss Dorinda Matson. It was not all that long ago when the party had been such fun with such nice people that it had seemed natural to accept the invitation for a cruise on Mike Sandos's yacht. That was the beginning. This was the end! Oh sure, life would go on with a chain round my ankle or my wrist or my neck. If I was very careful I wouldn't get whipped too much by Thalia. But Mr. Rabin's customers . . . . I shuddered and wondered if Terry was any more comfortable than I.

Was I really a slave or just a prisoner! Mark's definition was correct. There is a difference. I was aching to escape. I longed to be free. Thus I was not yet a slave. But I could see what was going to happen. Little by little I would give up hope, stop looking at possibilities, stop asking the customers for help. I'd just do what I was told without thinking. I'd get what little happiness I could from Terry and Thalia and any of the customers who were a little kind. Then I would be completely slave. I would also be happier. Silly, isn't it.

I will always have a lovely dream of being rescued by Mark. Right there I have to have a good look at myself. I just spoke of freedom. But if Mark rescued me I would not be free. His chains and cords and whips are no different from others . . . except that it is he who uses them on me. He would never let me go. I would not want him to. Would I then be his slave or only a girl besotted with love. Can Rabin make me a truer slave than Mark! Well, what does it matter now.

I dream of rescue by Mark. But suppose it came in some other way, by some benevolent hand that placed me where I was the day before I met Mike Sandos. Sure, just a dream. But I've had to have a good look at its implications. What would I do! I know what I would want to do: go straight to Kyrexos. But then it's pure fantasy. I'd have the boat set me ashore. I'd walk to the house. When we came face to face I'd say: "Hello Mark," turn my back and cross my wrists.

Only Terry could understand.

Thalia came in quietly. I managed a wan smile. "Is it very bad?"

I nodded, not very vigorously. Even that hurt. "I'm sure your father will be pleased."

"Daddy would sooner not have to punish you. Darling, try not to give him cause."

"How long must I hang like this?"

"I won't tell you."

Thalia was sweet. She would not punish me for trying.

"Must my elbows still be strapped together? Is that a part of. . . ?"

She wen t round the back. I felt her fingers testing. "You'll stay as you are. There's no damage."

"Look after the merchandise!" I said bitterly.

"Poor dear. We can't expect you to feel pleased." She kissed me and went away.

I hung, and cried some more. I cry a lot.

Mr. Rabin came a lot later in the day. By that time I had retreated into a sort of daze. I did not move at all, took only shallow breaths, and let my eyelids fall.

I heard the door. But I'd lost interest. It was a little while before I opened my eyes and lifted my head.

He just stood, peering at me through his thick lenses. He did not speak. I did not speak. We looked at each other in silence for a very long time. He seemed to me to be satisfied with what he saw. Thalia was maintaining the honour of his house. But I hurt too much for even that bit of communion. I let my head fall back. He went away as quietly as he came.

It was evening before Thalia pushed the box back beneath my feet. I won't go into ecstasies about how heavenly it was to rest my weight where it belonged. She freed me completely of all bonds. Then had to help me off the box. When she produced the handcuffs I actually laughed. "You don't need those things," I assured her truthfully. "I can't move my arms at all."

She wrinkled her forehead in doubt. Then lifted one of my arms and let it fall. It was limp. It wasn't working. I'd been too long on that damn hard edge. She laughed too.

"Darling, how intriguing. A captive maiden who needs no bonds. Something new in slaves." She kissed me tenderly and led me back into life. That night I shared her bed. I wondered if her father knew.

At breakfast my arms were stiff, my shoulders still hurt. But I managed. I was honored by being included in the family meal. I wore my handcuffs demurely in the front. The conversation ignored both my offense and my punishment. The atmosphere was so warm that I could actually believe Mr. Rabin bestowed some sort of affection on his slave girls. The whole situation was bizarre. But it was comfortable. I asked no questions. I was so damn thankful that my punishment was done.

But it was not done!

"Daddy is very thorough. He likes to make certain. . . ." Thalia explained.

This one was even more simple.

"You are quite right, darling, in what you think." Thalia cooed. "Daddy does have a cynical concern for the well–being of his stock in trade." She laughed in amusement. "The poor dear has had to think up all sorts of things that girls won't enjoy, but which leave no marks. I helped. It's not easy. You'd be surprised. . . ."

A slave is never surprised.

A stone room with odds and ends, all enigmatic. In the center of the floor a solid concrete pillar. Only two feet high. Flat top. Ten inches across. Anchored on it a shackle, only two links.

"Up with little tootsie, darling."

Unhappily I watched little tootsie get a nice shining metal band locked round its ankle. That left me standing on one foot. The other was neatly held on the top of the pedestal.

"Just to keep you from standing up there with both feet, dear."

I watched as my other ankle got its bright band. Three links joined that one to the floor. Mine was now a stance much used by sober males with something serious to say. But they could always put both feet back on the ground. I could not.

"The chic ensemble is now completed by little hands behind the back."

There was the usual clicking. My hands felt right at home back there. Thalia was not a one for gloating or rubbing it in. We kissed and she left me to figure the thing out by myself.

Wasn't hard to do. I was simply going to stand there. I guess about an hour would see me ready to howl. I kicked my right foot. It would move an inch or so. Everything nice and easy but implacable. The left was more difficult. I was standing on it. I had about two inches leeway with that one. My hands, why were they behind my back! But that was easy to figure. With free hands I could lower myself to the floor without breaking any bones and lay on my back with one leg up on top. Undignified, uncomfortable, sure. But a damn sight better than what I could see ahead for myself the way I was. It must have been two or three hours before the tears began.

TERRY

When I woke up, poor Cedric was flaked out beside me on the rug. The new bottle of Mother's ruin was on the sideboard unopened. It could stay there. I sat up. Cedric snored. His mouth was open. His would be! I got the impression that it was the morning after the night before. But I felt good. I was hungry.

There was lots of food. I decided on bacon and eggs. There is something solid about bacon and eggs. They are definitely of The Establishment: 'All's well with the World . . . !' sort of thing. I'd just discovered the fry pan when the obvious hit me. It was like a real blow. There was not a chain on me. Little Terry was free as a bird.

I should have been overjoyed. I wasn't. I was angry. Life slips you these dilemmas. They keep you constantly surprised, not at life but at yourself. Here I was, happy as a lark. Just about to create a wonderful breakfast for me and poor Cedric. With good strong hot tea to wake him up with. The perfect little helpmate. Now, all of a sudden, I had an absolute duty to do an escape act. I could have smashed the teapot!

But I had to face it. Fate, or the Grand Marnier, had offered me freedom: of a sort. I sat down to sort it out. I had no fear of Cedric waking up.

First, I was naked. But maybe I could contrive something with a blanket or a sheet. I had no money. But I could steal Cedric's. I was in a strange place, a damned strange place! How far would a naked little Terry get. I had visions of the chap in the street or the taxi driver, if there was one, or the policeman, promptly delivering me back to father Rabin. I knew what would happen to me then! I longed for Dorinda. If she had been with me I'd have had fewer doubts.

There was also Cedric. The Grand Marnier had made him human. It had also joined us in a strange rapport. He had paid a big deposit . . . . Goodness knows, I didn't owe him anything. But there he was on the floor with his mouth open. It seemed sort of a dirty trick. . . .

It was pure agony. I had to end it. I knew that as long as I was free I couldn't enjoy anything, even breakfast. So I found the ankle chains I'd worn the day before and locked them on myself. The key was still in Cedric's pocket. I probably couldn't find it without waking him, so that made me safe. It was wonderful! I was chained, but the awful decision had dissolved. I felt free. It's the way you feel that counts. Even the chains felt good. Once more I picked up the fry pan.

A silly kid, you'll say. O.K. I'll agree. Just a silly little girl. But, for the moment, I was happy. A slave girl lives in moments.

"I say, this is frightfully decent of you." Cedric sat up and surveyed his morning tea with pure joy. He downed it and gave me back the empty cup. I could almost see the Union Jack flying on the mast of Nelson's Victory.

The eggs and bacon were an equal triumph. Cedric was surging forward to Trafalgar with all flags flying. He kept looking at me with ardent approval. I expected a proposal of marriage at any moment. Quite probably he was thinking he ought to marry me. You know: after the night before . . . what had happened. Make an honest woman, etc. I had just brewed a second pot of tea when there was a knock at the door. You'll never guess.

It was Mr. Rabin.

He stood in the middle of the big room, beaming at us both, but also having a suspicious dekker around. I was quite certain the old so and so had just come to cheek on his property. After all, Cedric was English and we might be planning to do the dirty on him. I was suddenly thankful for those chains on my ankles. Just shows you, doesn't it. The hand of providence! The old boy would have flipped his lid if I hadn't had 'em on. I noticed Cedric looking at them too, in a bemused sort of way. I prayed he wouldn't ask a silly question.

"Is much nice place I am renting you," Mr. Rabin approved.

"Indeed yes," Cedric gushed. "May we offer you a cup of tea?"

Our visitor recoiled as from an adder. "Thank you, no," he declined, visibly shaken.

He was sharp enough to catch that 'we'.

"Our excellent Miss Esmond has cooked your breakfast, no?"

"Yes," said Cedric. It sounded like a guessing game.

"It is a talent of which I was unaware," said Mr. Rabin thoughtfully. He was obviously wondering how much extra he could charge for a slave who cooked.

We all sat down. I presumed protocol placed me at the feet of he who was paying my rent. I reclined on the rug by Cedric. Mr. Rabin continued to beam.

"The young lady is giving satisfaction?"

"She is indeed."

"You are enjoying certain . . . er?"

Even old Rabin was ashamed to name the things his girls had to do.

"We certainly are."

Once more the old boy winced at the plural.

"My master enjoys me very much. Sometimes I do not enjoy the things we do." I felt I had to get the conversation back on the right track.

Cedric took the hint. "You ought to hear her howl," he said with fervor.

Mr. Rabin's beam widened. His faith in the rightness of things was being restored.

"You whip her if not good?"

"Several times," Cedric enthused. "But she's remarkably well behaved."

Our visitor's eagle eye pounced on the whatsit. We had forgotten to put it back in the box.

"You have been using this . . . this most nice. . . ?" Cedric blushed. But picked it up.

"A remarkable device," he enthused.

I stuck my foot out as an exhibit. There were lovely bruises. "It hurts terribly," I confessed.

Mr. Rabin was obviously overjoyed at such proof of normalcy.

"Bring the tea things in here," Cedric ordered me as befitted a master to his slave.

I said my yes master, very humbly, and did as bid. My chains clinked gorgeously. Everyone loved everyone. Cedric even had another try.

"Do join us, Mr. Rabin?"

Goodwill was now rampant. After all, the Arabs are nothing if not polite. The old boy wavered and fell. "Well . . . thank you." His tone was much that of a member of a rival family sharing a beverage at the Borgia's. He accepted the cup and saucer

dubiously. I noticed that before taking his first sip he closed his eyes. I felt sure he was having a few words with Allah on the subject of immunities.

The Americans can laugh at the English tea all they like. But it's a civilizing influence. Or perhaps it's just that it braces the British and has a reverse effect on the lesser breeds beyond the law . . . . Anyway, it numbed old Rabin's suspicions that all might not be well. Just as a clincher, I dropped an empty cup. Without pause I handed my master the cane and bent over prettily. Cedric gave me the usual two swishers. Without blinking an eye, I said a demure thank you master, and went about gathering the tea things.

Rabin's Rentals was impressed. He could not doubt his eyes. Cedric had caned me with verve and vigor. I was obviously living up to the high standards expected of a Rabin Girl. He shook hands effusively and patted my bottom. Cedric escorted him to the door. As they traversed the hall, a few words drifted back in Rabin's voice:

"A very small adjustment in the rent. . . ." Little Terry's day had started well.

After I'd done the dishes I clinked back into the living room. Cedric had been sitting staring at nothing. Obviously thinking. I stood, suddenly awkward.

There's a word for it: 'Hiatus,' that's it. We were both facing a hiatus.

After a long while during which we were each terribly aware of the other, Cedric asked: "What am I going to do with you?"

I had been wondering what I was going to do with him. what each of us were, I could only think of one answer.

"You are ashamed to torture me anymore, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"Because we got drunk and had fun together, right?"

"Yes." He looked at me owlishly. "You're so nice."

"You don't want us to both pack up and make a run for it, take me away."

He looked unhappy. "That's what the old boy was mumbling about in the hall. We are watched. Loose girls are picked up and returned to their owners. Those who help them get a knife in their ribs."

I was sorry for him. He felt unheroic. But what he said confirmed my own suspicions. "Don't worry," I comforted, "we are only back at square one."

"You are quite remarkable."

"Not really. I'm just a slave girl facing facts."

Male nobility is a high hurdle for a girl to cross. I took my first run at it. Smiling in a sultry sort of way I gave Cedric the cane, then did a beautiful bend. "Come on, Cedric. Terry's been a naughty girl. Whip her bottom."

Looking up I saw his eyes light. The hangdog look was gone. There was a key that would always unlock Cedric. He rose to his feet. I braced myself. But he threw the cane down. "No." Be resumed his seat.

With Cedric a girl has to work. I straightened up.

"Alright, darling. Only one thing to do. Take me back to Rabin."

"No!" It shot out of him like a bullet. I clinked over to the Grand Marnier. Half an hour later we were excitedly peering into Rabin's wooden box.

• • •

CEDRIC.

When I look at me I have to see how ridiculous life is.

Before I came into that bit of money I used to go mooning around England wanting to be myself. Whenever I saw a pretty girl I would mentally tie her to a lamppost or take her home and chain her in the coal cellar. There was a little wooden tool shed down the bottom of the garden, so just to vary things when I was sitting in the tube and there was a real smasher across the aisle, I'd put her in there, naked with her hands tied up to the crossbrace. It was all lovely.

Except it never happened.

I tried to make it happen. I really tried. I used to reason with myself that it wasn't all that big a favor to ask a girl. You see, the trouble is that a chap can't be honest. Society won't allow us to walk up to a girl in the street and say: "Excuse me, miss, but may I tie your hands?" It won't even allow you to ask her to share a ham sandwich. Even to ask her the time is suspect.

It was bloody awful not being able to have a girl friend! I went through enough preliminaries. There was never any trouble about that first movie or a shandy at the pub. But if I tried to tell her the happiness I found in a girl she immediately got righteous or contemptuous or wanted to reform me. You know: think nice clean thoughts with my hand on her twat. If I said nothing at all the girl jolly soon sensed there was something under the surface, that she was only touching part of me, and that was no go either. In the middle of about a million girls who probably wouldn't have minded a bit if I could have contrived the right approach, I went around starved for something that meant more to me than anything else.

I often wonder what sort of bloody awful life I'd have had if that lovely money hadn't shown up.

Mind you, even with money it isn't all that easy. Especially since, by then, I was on the defensive. But I was determined. I worked at it. I would lay a ghost or find happiness. Good gosh! To tie a girl's hands behind her back! Is it that big a thing? Does it bother them all that much? Apparently, it does. But I was spending my money in the wrong place. I went to the whores and the ads in the show windows. I will say this for those bitches. They didn't play coy. Yes, they understood, but, of course it did cost more . . . !

They'd have been a bit humorous if I'd been in the mood for laughing. They are out to swindle chaps like me. They have all the tools. But they don't intend to use 'em anymore than they can help. The one that finally put me off was a girl with a sizable house. I counted no less than six dungeons she had fixed up. She took me to one and she had chaps in each of the others. She flitted back and forth like a bee collecting honey, which isn't a bad simile, and provided each silly idiot with whatever he thought he wanted. For about fifteen minutes, that is. Then you got bunged into the street. She seemed to think if she called you darling often enough you'd had your money's worth.

It was a few debacles like that which took me over to Africa and that old rogue Rabin.

He made Terry happen. No other description: she happened. All my dreams come true, and more. Terry was a miracle. Just shows you, doesn't it! If you keep trying. . . .

But this is where the ridiculous bit comes in. The 'never rains but it pours' irony. I was happily contemplating this lovely naked Terry hanging by her wrists from a rafter, when there's a knock at the door and there's old Rabin grinning like a Cheshire cat, and standing beside him one of the most beautiful girls I'd ever seen. She smiled at me as though I existed. She was covered by one of those shapeless sheet effects. I didn't know at the time that beneath it she was naked and had her hands tied behind her back.

Think of it! A lifetime of nothing. Then all of a sudden . . .

"Without doubting you will wish to fuck this lovely girl," said Mr. R.

I expect I stood there with my mouth open.

"You may also cane her bottom," the old humbug added as a bonus.

The girl was still smiling. I had a feeling I'd turned out better than she expected.

"She may also be whipped." He was giving away his shirt. The girl winked at me.

"She much enjoys," my landlord said simply. "May we come in?"

I'm sure I acted thunderstruck and gauche. When I got them into the living room I devoutly wished Terry was there to help. So I blundered out an excuse and dashed into the other room and set her free, whispering instructions.

That girl's a marvel! Her grin was absolutely authentic.

Her ankle chains clinked merrily as she trotted behind me back to our guests. When she saw the new girl she went wild. She hugged and kissed and loved her to bits. It was then I realized my visitor was tied. She kissed hungrily. But she couldn't hug. I could see she wanted to. Old Mr. R. looked approvingly at the weals on Terry's wrists and the chain on her ankles. His property was being properly maintained.

"Perhaps if you are enjoying one, then two is better?" he fired his first

broadside.

The Grand Marnier would have been wasted on the old cash register. But fortunately we had gin. Terry served daintily. The small tray, the bent knee, the adoring eyes. I could scarcely bear it. The old boy oozed approval. "She is good to fuck?" he inquired politely.

I was still several paces behind everyone else. But I managed to indicate that Terry gave complete satisfaction with her legs open.

"If not she may be whipped," the old boy explained gravely as though passing on a useful household hint. He sipped his gin and orange, placed it on the table, and whisked away the sheet affair that had covered the girl he had brought along.

I'm not all that good with words. I don't pretend to be clever. I wish I was! That girl deserved someone better than me to describe her. She was all the cartoons, all the gatefolds, all the oil paintings I'd ever seen. She wore her whipmarks as though they were the Dior creations she did not have. I could swear she was glad her hands were tied the way they were. All her front was there for me to see. I'm damn sure she took a deep breath and stuck her breasts out as though she was getting a commission.

"Is same price for each," said Mr. R.

The goddess smiled. "I whip beautifully," she said sweetly. Terry giggled.

"Is most obedient," the old bastard hinted cannily.

Put yourself in my place. A lifetime in a desert. A lifetime of cold shoulders and breasts and quims that refused to play. Now! All of a sudden! The most glorious female flesh in all the world. With its hands tied, to boot, and the info that they put on a good show while you whip 'em.

I mean to say . . . I'm only human!

"I have here the contract," said Mr. R.

I signed it. I should have read it. But I didn't. Just checked the money figure. I was in a haze of glory.

Terry served one more gin. She held a glass to the lips of the gorgeous girl I had just rented.

"Is much bargain," said Mr. R. "Business is most slow. It is the Russians. They are very pure."

The goddess looked me in the eye. "Thank you," she said with sincerity and without guile. She did not seem to care about her tied hands.

"Is not essential to fuck daily. One each day will do." The old chap's kindly thought reminded me of Shakespeare's letter from a father to his son. Silly, isn't it you have these thoughts flit across the mind.

"Her name's Dorinda," Terry said joyfully. "I love her." Mr. R. finished his gin. "There is no charge for the cord upon her wrists," he said munificently as

though giving me a couple of oil concessions. "Do not forget to keep properly chained."

"I will remind him, master," my new slave girl said demurely. I could have sworn she was laughing.

Mr. R. accepted my traveller's cheques and departed.

It felt as though I had conquered the world.

"I'm terribly grateful," said Dorinda.

"It's going to be gorgeous," Terry said ecstatically. "May I untie her hands?"

"Not until you have chained her feet," I said severely. With Terry you have to keep up some sort of authority.

I watched the chaining and the untying. Terry did not try to cheat. She pressed a glass in to Dorinda's newly freed hands.

"Please sit down, Dorinda." I felt absurdly inadequate. This girl was so . . . . so . . . . Well, you know what I mean!

"Thank you, master." The three words gave me a bursting erection.

I had to let the silence hang. I couldn't fill it.

"Please don't feel shy or awkward." Dorinda's eyes were filled with sympathy. "I'm sure Terry and I are quite a handful all at once. But we are very grateful to be here with you. We'll be awfully obedient and try and not make too much noise when you hurt us." She smiled enticingly.

Think about that one too! She knew she was going to be hurt. But there was not a trace of accusation or reproach. I was a long way from Suburbia. It occurred to me that, even though their feet were chained, the two of them might be more than I could handle if it came to a fight. Yet I felt quite sure the idea was not in either mind. Their chain from ankle to ankle had nothing to do with me. It was to stop them from running around the streets. They were slave girls!

"We don't go out of our way to invite the whip, master," Dorinda told me gently. "Just tell us what gives you happiness."

"He likes to cane our bottoms and hang us up by our wrists. Don't you, Cedric?" Terry supplied helpfully.

"I'm afraid so." Even to me it sounded pathetic.

"Don't be afraid, master." Dorinda looked at me with pure adoration. "I have a really nice bottom, and there's been much worse things done to me than just hanging up by my wrists." She made it sound like a deviant pleasantry.

"You're . . . . You're so damn beautiful. . . !" Trite, eh!

Sure! But what would you have said! At that moment Suburbia had reached out and

claimed me. It just was not possible to do anything with all these breasts and pubic hair except worship. They were an end in themselves. Life's funny, isn't it!

I could tell that Dorinda knew every thought in my mind. An absurd notion took possession of me. I should pay Mr. R. some shocking sum, marry this girl and take her back to London. She would know every answer and take me into my own private heaven every day. She would simplify life beyond imagining. . . .

"I'm still here, y'know. Darling Dorinda isn't all that much more beautiful than me." Terry sounded hurt.

"You must whip Terry first," said my new possession. Well, I ask you! It wasn't easy, was it!

"I think we'd all better have another drink," I said, fighting for time and ascendancy.

Anything Terry does she does beautifully. Just to see her busy with her glasses and little tray was a delight. As though completing the composition of a picture, my new slave girl, Dorinda, sank gracefully to her knees facing me. I sort of got the idea that it's not considered proper for slave girls to stand in the presence of their master.

Bit different from coming home on the underground. "Would you like to hang me up again while you and Dorinda get to know each other?" Terry asked sweetly.

Right out of this world, isn't it! I felt a bit of an ass and a bit of a bastard. But for the life of me I couldn't think of any better way of getting over a damn awkward spot. I couldn't just sit there talking about the weather while these glorious houris looked at me in expectant adoration. I wasn't sure if it might be considered offensive if, having rented them, I failed to provide them with a bit of discomfort.

I managed to stifle the apology I was about to offer Dorinda for leaving her kneeling. I just nodded in a lordly fashion and led dear little Terry back to be tortured. I suppose I could have used another word there. But that's really what it is, y'know.

I'm deliberately talking in a nice rational way about what I do to a girl. Offhand and casual as though I was fitting her with a pair of shoes when I'm treating the poor kid in ways that would have intrigued Torquemada or Judge Jefferies no end. I don't think I'm cruel or a sadist or need my head examined. I've given up trying to analyze myself and what makes me tick. You are welcome to your own opinions. I only know that when Terry offered me her wrists to be tied, a quiet little smile of amusement on her face, she had for me more beauty than all the Mona Lisas or Taj Mahals or Hollywood movie queens in the whole world.

Beauty! That's the essence of it. Go ahead and laugh. Terry was so beautiful I didn't want to leave her. Seemed a waste. But I knew that an awareness would stay with me. She would be hanging in this room in pain because I had wished it so and she would think of me, wondering when I might return to set her free and end her hurting.

There's two ways you can suspend a girl. Just tie her hands together and hoist her up. Or tie her hands separately and spread them wide. This is the one I like. It's the way I hung Terry now. She helps by standing tip–toe on a box while I tie her wrists

as she thrusts them up for me. When I have them both tied nice and even I take the box a way from beneath her chained feet, and there she is, a prettier picture than any artist ever painted. She gasps a bit as she settles down and the cords bite and everything stretches and her dangling ankle chain just manages to tinkle on the floor. But she gives me a small reassuring smile as though it's me that's hurting instead of her, then rests her head against one strained arm. I almost went out on tip–toe I felt so reverent.

There is a thought that bothers me a bit. I've just told you how Terry helps. But supposing she didn't! Supposing she fought like fury. In thinking of making girls captive and punishing them I have to consider that under what most would call normal circumstances the little dears are going to put up quite a resistance. So what then! Do I bash 'em about until they agree. Or do I slip something in their coffee! Would I like that. Would it be the same. Perhaps I might even like it better. It's an interesting spec'. But I don't suppose I'll ever know. Terry has done something to me. She has shown me something I did not know existed. Something tremendously intimate and warm and wonderful. I don't think I could settle for anything else.

Dorinda was still kneeling there when I went in. She looked up, radiant that I had honored her by coming back. "How may I please you, Master?" The way she said it made it sound like a very sensible question. Nothing cringing or anxious to please. But a sincere interest in what I was going to do to her. I hoped she could not guess I did not know myself. For a chap who had always wanted to whip a girl I came up with a real masterpiece that surprised even me.

"I'd like to hear your adventures," I heard myself saying. It turned out better than I'd have supposed. Probably a lot better than the poor girl supposed herself. Though, to do her justice, she showed no sign of relief that I did not immediately administer a sound flogging. Nor did she mention anything for or against young Terry hanging up in the next room. She did the honors with the glasses and the tray with a grace of motion that almost stopped my heart. Then, quite unaffectedly, began to talk.

It was pure fantasy. I listened enthralled. The idea that this sort of thing had been going on while I was doing my bit of clerking back in London seemed impossible. When she came to the end of it she looked half apologetic as though expecting I wouldn't believe a word.

"You have a lot of courage." I just had to say it.

She shrugged and gave me a rueful grin. "A girl is not brave because she does not run with chained feet." It sounded like one of those wise quotations from a book. But I knew it wasn't. I also suddenly faced something I'd been evading.

"I should help you escape." With Dorinda I wanted to play Galahad.

She shrugged again and shook her head. "Master, it is not practical. I have come to realize it is not even possible. Not in this land. They would kill you if they had to. Terry and I would be terribly punished. Only ill could come of an attempt." She looked at me imploringly. "But if, when you are far from here, you communicate with Kyrexos . . . . That would be the greatest help of all."

"Couldn't I buy you?"

"We are merchandise. But I don't think Rabin would dare sell us outside the . . . the circle. The ones who would not tell."

Galahad's armour was suddenly rusty. I could feel myself slipping. How the Devil can a chap do a knight errant one minute and whip the girl's bottom the next! But I need not have worried. Not with Dorinda.

"Please whip me now. It will be best. . . ." I expect my face betrayed my battle.

"You need not whip me really hard, Master, if you do not wish to." She could cope with any situation. Her smile was actually sympathetic.

I took her to the room with the post. She placed one wrist against each side and looked at me with trust. I tied them there so as to hurt her. Some need to assert myself, I suppose. She did not complain. Didn't even wince when I tugged.

She was not remote, did not stare fixedly ahead or close her eyes. She watched interestedly as I found the cane I liked and took up my position to her back and side. She even turned and gave me a small smile of encouragement and acceptance before she bowed her head and waited for the first stroke. She made it plain, she was a participant in something we shared.

I don't think I'd be much good at all that stuff in the books.

You know: The splats, the thunks, the weals springing, the sound . . . Oh, they were all there alright! All there but the screams. Dorinda did not scream. . . .

I suppose I wasn't all that cruel to her. But I did lace into her bottom with a fair amount of relish. I had a quite real belief that I would diminish in her eyes if I only patted her with the cane. We were in a land where certain things were expected I had to live up to a code I wasn't even sure about.

I have to admit that after the first few stingers I had a shocking urge to go all out. It wasn't lust running away with me. It was the way in which this new naked girl handled herself in pain. Sorry to be repetitive. But she was beautiful to watch and to hear. Small gasps and very low moans accompanying the most erotic motions of her body and head that I could ever had imagined. Nothing tense or convulsive, no contortions. But every part of her a slow fluidity. I suppose really; by the standards that govern such situations, she scarcely moved at all, yet no part of her was ever still. I was able to strike her with total accuracy. But the blow was not even a punctuation in the poetry of her torment.

I can almost hear you chuckle as you say or think Dorinda loved every stroke. That she was 'one of those'! But it simply is not true. It hurt her like blazes. And when I stopped after what seemed to me quite a long time she turned and looked at me with gratitude.

"I'm going to leave you like that." I told her, still holding on to authority.

She nodded and managed a smile. "Of course, Master."

Nothing at all about 'could I loosen the cords on her wrists a bit.' She just settled herself with her pain to await my pleasure. After all, she was only a slave girl who had been whipped.

Gosh I'm a long way from London.

"I'm sure dear Dorinda is grateful, Master," Terry said when I went in to refresh my eyes with her suffering but lovely figure. "Wouldn't you like to cane my bottom now? I'm hanging close enough to the floor that you easily could. I promise to kick as much as my chain will let me, Master. I know you enjoy that."

How to describe it! You can imagine the state I was in. But it seemed indelicate to untie either of these delectable creatures for a purpose so gross as the appeasement of my need. Torture them, yes. That was within context, a clean and sterile thing compared to the demands of my tumescence. Terry actually giggled.

"Untie me, Master. You want to impale me. I know. I can tell. Set me free and enjoy me, then I'll help you fasten me to be whipped. You do want to whip me, don't you?"

"I'm afraid I do." I pushed the box beneath her feet. "It's much the best that you fuck me this time, Master dear." Terry giggled softly as she massaged her wrists. You'll get used to owning Dorinda. But I expect you're a bit in awe of her still. You can use her next." She giggled again. "By the time you've whipped me you'll probably want to. It really does work on you, doesn't it!"

She should know.

By the time I was through with Terry: or Terry was through with me – half and half – I expect. I didn't have all that much urge to whip her. Sure, sure! My lust was satiated, etc., etc! I always find that a bit of a poser. I really do hate to think that pumping away in a girl's vagina is the end result of all man's efforts. It's a bad one I haven't figured out yet.

"You don't want to whip me now, do you Master?" Terry was laughing at me. She put her hand gently on my arm. "I'm so glad I'm a girl." She confided meditatively. "I wouldn't like being a man at all. It must be awfully difficult for you: all these ups and downs. . . ." She tittered apologetically. "I didn't mean a pun. Honest. But a man's so . . . so, driven. It must be exhausting."

"Is being a lesbian easier?" I asked.

She looked out beyond somewhere as though seeing something very beautiful. "Yes Master," she said simply. "It's much, much better. . . ." Then, in a flash of contrition, she added: "I didn't mean . . . You're quite wonderful." Tears came easily to her eyes. "I didn't mean it like that. You'd better whip me."

"Do you want me to hang you up again?" I asked. What a damfool question!

Terry treated it as though I was in my right mind. "It would be nice if I could be tied some other way." She admitted, giving me an apologetic grin. "That's awfully hard on a girl's arms and wrists." She lifted her hands so I could see the indentation. "The cane hurts more if I'm bent over," she hinted.

Before we went to where the trestle was we looked in on Dorinda. She seemed very much at peace, her head resting on one arm, one knee bent. She looked up at us and smiled. "Going to get yours now, darling?" she asked Terry while she smiled at me. I

let Terry go and fondle her. In fact I left them alone together. They had earned a reward. I went to the other room and waited. I was in no hurry. I felt fulfilled, pleasantly excited. Two Houris from a Mohammedan Paradise . . . !

I looked back on my former life with benign contempt. They did everything right. Without imposing on my patience Terry showed up smiling and grateful and draped herself across the trestle, even putting her hands and feet within the straps provided. To do this she had to sort of hang herself from the hips. None of her was on the floor. Her arms dangled, her feet dangled. But when I strapped her tight the whole ensemble took on a purpose and significance that turned her bent and strained nakedness into a work of art. Terry had become a bottom, a buttock, two curved cheeks, whatever you want to call it. But she was glorious. She turned an apprehensive but radiant eye in my direction from her upside down situation. "I'm beautifully tight, aren't I Master?" she asked demurely.

She was wickedly tight. Her skin was stretched. Whoever had designed that trestle must have disliked girls. Or felt some mission to reform them. I knew a compelling urge to hear the sound my cane would make when it thunked itself upon such prepared flesh. Surely, surely darling Terry would have to scream on impact.

Have you noticed! I'm in love with Terry. Everything about her excites and intrigues me. I want her, all of her. How can I reconcile this emotion with undoubted intention to cane her. I can't! And I don't care! Why reconcile anything! What would I be trying to prove. I'd only be seeking to appease suburbia. Women are much more sensible than men: Terry was not trying to reconcile anything. She had offered me her bottom in a complete giving, a total abnegation of self in a wish to make another happy. For her that was enough. If her pain gave me joy it was an end in itself. Females are far ahead of us men in their instinct for what matters.

Closing my mind to thoughts that could only inhibit, I let her have all I could give. The results were remarkable.

Have you ever watched Americans making those things they call hot cakes! I have. They pour the mixture on to hot metal. It rises and rises as though endowed with life. It is endowed with life! It's fascinating to watch as the thing takes shape and form and reaches a dimension you would have supposed impossible. Well, that's the way with this stroke of the cane across the stretched skin of the adorable girl who had positioned herself so willingly to receive it. Up and up came the ridge of punished flesh as though in reproach at my cruelty. Or, on the other hand, as a boisterous taunt at the resilience of female flesh. Whichever way you want to take it, a truly beautiful weal made its appearance across the stretched skin of the pinioned girl.

Terry screamed. It was quite proper that she scream. The pain must have been beyond bearing. I think even though one loved very deeply such pain could not be borne in silence. Her scream beat upon my ears as the chords of some majestic organ touching something deep within my being. Needful of prolonging the ineffable I struck again. Terry's keening agony rasped upon my every nerve so that, once more I became rampant with desire. The fastened girl who looked up at me with imploring eyes was so beautiful, so very beautiful. . . . In a frenzy of possession I struck again and again. The red welts upon her taut skin rose up to accuse or to applaud. Terry's cries and moans left me without guilt that her suffering was gladly delivered to assuage the eternal seeking of the male.

Nonsense! Rationalizations! Perhaps. I am too close to judge. A lustful male and a wanton girl! Is it that simple! No', no, no! It is more than that, far more. What can I tell you to make you understand! I do not know, other than that you should find your own Terry and make your own exploration into wonder.

When I paused I was panting. All my senses were assailed by the erotic picture I had painted. It was heartbreakingly exquisite. Gently I stepped this way and that to gather the full import of that which I had wrought: red and purple bars upon the white skin. A girl's loveliness bent and strained and strapped so that it could not move. Then the two wide eyes looking up at me hopefully, but too obedient to ask if the pain was done. Terry's breath, like my own, was laboured and under stress. She interspersed it with small melodic moans that tore my heart with beauty.

I unbuckled the straps and set my slave girl free.

Terry slid gratefully from her perch of pain. Without pause she threw her arms about my neck and shed gentle tears upon my shoulder. I held her fiercely as one does a frightened child. We did not speak. Each of us fell into our roles naturally and without thought. It seemed entirely proper that we should seek comfort in each other's arms. She glued herself against me in a great need and in a total trust that made me feel both a hero and a bastard at the same time. I held her knowing I never wanted to let her go.

Crazy! I suppose so. Cockeyed and upside down. Sure! I'll agree to anything. I'm not pretending it made sense. I'm telling you how it happened. I won't even say that I was making any noble vows never to whip the dear child again. I wasn't! I was thinking of the treasure house the two of us had found. I knew with a great certainty that Terry would want me to whip her again. Nothing was changed or finished. It was simply that in those moments as we held each other we found what we are always seeking, the assuagement of the eternal loneliness. Sometimes it is called love.

I untied Dorinda. For the rest of the day the three of us were very happy. We cooked things and ate them. We resumed our loyalty to the Grand Marnier.

Old Rabin had seemed to lay down a pretty sound precept in the notion that if one girl is good, two are better. But when bedtime came round I was not so sure. I mean, if a chap's trying to do the decent thing, what's the proper drill! I am sure the dear girls would have popped in bed with me in the middle. I liked the idea but I just did not have the courage. I mean, it was taking a lot for granted. Just suppose . . . ! But, on the other hand, it seemed damn rude to pick one and bid the other good –night. Put yourself in her place! What would Galahad have done! Slept in the outhouse, I suppose. But I was not Galahad. Anyway, I needn't have worried.

"Our Master wants to sleep with me, darling," Terry informed Dorinda with about the same casualness as telling her where to look for the extra blanket.

It was me who blushed.

"You'd better chain her up for the night, Master," Terry reminded me.

Indispensable, that girl!

"Oh never mind," I said hastily. "After all . . . a guest."

"She isn't a guest, Master. Dorinda's a slave girl same as me. She has to be chained. If Old Rabin came in and found us running around loose he'd have kittens. I bet there's a clause in the contract. . . ."

I suppose you've guessed that I'm at a loss with Dorinda. She is altogether too lovely. I'd have found it easier to whip her than put her to bed like a little girl and lock the shackle on her ankle. She laughed at my confusion. Taking my hand she led me to the guest room and extended her right foot on the bed. I fitted the metal band round it and locked it tight. There was a long length of chain to the ringbolt in the floor. She would be safe but not closely confined. She pulled my face to hers and kissed me. "You're nice," she said simply. "Goodnight, Master."

I blushed some more and hoped I didn't look as doltish as I felt.

Terry was having no nonsense about chivalry. She, too, stuck out her foot and pointed. So I locked her ankle tight. Both my slave girls were secure for the night. There was plenty of slack chain. We both knew it wouldn't stop us from doing anything we wanted.

The following day Father Rabin showed up again. He was effusively polite. He wanted something. I wouldn't say he was embarrassed, but as close as he was likely to get.

"Is most strange client," he said affably.

Dorinda served the gin this time. I could swear the old boy counted the cane marks on the girls' bottoms.

"Is most high born lady with naughty child," said Mr. Rabin.

The two girls knelt submissively. All three of us gave him our full attention.

"Is wished to give bad girl much pain and much shame."

He smiled benignly on us all. "I am believing that here would be most ideal."

"What do you want us to do?" He had not mentioned money. I took it as a bad sign.

"This so bad child. She needs much whip. Is also virgin, which must be cured. Also most bad manners. Needs much train. . . ."

"How old is this child?"

"Is eighteen. Should know better."

Eighteen! A child! What on Earth would a chap like me who already had Dorinda and Terry want with an ill tempered virgin! I was about to take a definite negative stand when Dorinda caught my eye. Somehow this beautiful creature managed to convey the message that I had best say yes. "What about the parents?" I asked doubtfully.

"Madam Corbin is widow. Is most sad." The old hypocrite hastily amended his last sentence: "Madam Corbin is not sad. Is most hearty lady."

"The daughter? I take it she is unwilling?"

"Is no matter. Is for best good. What you call . . . ther–"

"Therapeutic," Dorinda prompted.

"Ah! Much thanking." I could see Dorinda's rental value had enhanced.

"Let me get this straight," I demanded. Suburbia was really giving me what for over this one! "You want us to whip this girl into some kind of submission and then I'm to take her maidenhead?"

"Excusing please?" The old boy looked a bit shocked. Terry giggled. I tried again.

"You want me to ravish her?"

"Ohhhh . . . to fuck!" His relief was obvious. "Yes please. Many times."

He surveyed his two slave girls with pride. "They are having fine tongues. They are to make her much squirm."

Terry giggled again. Dorinda blushed.

"Would there be anything else?" I asked sarcastically. Our visitor gave the impression of searching for a lost item on a shopping list. "Other hole not mention," he admitted regretfully as though having overlooked a source of revenue. He brightened: "But is free to use. Is pity to waste."

Think of it! All those wasted years keeping a ledger. "When do these, er, customers arrive?" I inquired.

I might have known the answer. "Is outside waiting now," said Mr. Rabin happily.

As usual, everything was all different. I'd expected some hawk featured Arab matriarch with a scared damsel in tow. But instead, in stalks one of those horrific American widows you see all over the world spending their dead husband's money and bossing everyone around.

"Is Madam Corbin," said Mr. Rabin as though announcing the Queen of Sheba.

"This is my daughter Pettie." announced Mrs. Corbin as though indicating a very old smelly dog.

I always refer to the Mrs. Corbins of this world as the third sex. Somewhere along the way they stopped being female: probably about the time their husband lost interest. But by means of incredible hair–do's and expensive couturiers deny masculinity, which leaves 'em sort of stranded out on their own. Their voices become raspy. They are pure brass.

Pettie had a long way to go before she caught up with mother. But I felt little doubt she'd manage. Not a bad little package actually. But the best description I can give

is to tell you that I instantly did a mental switch on her name from Pettie to Petulance.

"What's this Limey got here, a love nest?" the little darling enquired.

"You see what I mean," rasped the fond mother. "The little bitch is a smartass."

"I'm not joining any nudist colony," Petulance affirmed.

"This is not a nudist colony," Terry said acidly.

"Are those whip marks on those girls?"

"Is both whip and cane," said Mr. Rabin with pride

"Good!" Mrs. Corbin radiated approval. "Look at that, Pettie my girl! Found the right place at last."

"That old buzzard can shove his whip and his cane up his arse," Petulance avowed stoutly. But her voice lacked assurance.

"Buzzard is having feathers . . . ." Rabin's Rentals seemed uncertain whether to be flattered or offended.

Mrs. Corbin gave me a frankly assessing inspection. "I suppose you're up to the job?"

"I'll certainly do my best."

"That isn't what I asked you?"

"My Master is up to the job, Madam," Terry said devotedly.

She is a girl in a million.

"You should know, honey." Mrs. C. seemed mollified by such first hand testimony to my virility.

"Is much fine prick," said Mr. R.

I mean . . . after that! I couldn't let him down! Mrs. Corbin took out her traveller's cheques.

"I'm not staying here with this bunch of kooks," said Petulance.

Mr. R. handed me a shining new pair of handcuffs and a key. You have to give him credit. He's in business.

"You needn't think you're going to put those things on me!" Pettie Corbin instinctively put her hands behind her back. I remembered that picture: 'The stag at bay'. She glared at us all defiantly.

"With your permission, Master?" A fiendishly amused Terry relieved me the

new hardware. She exchanged a glance with an equally intrigued Dorinda. Two minutes later a panting Pettie stood, stamping her foot in vexation, her hands securely locked behind her back.

"Is most fine service." Rabin's Rentals was right there with the plug.

Mrs. Corbin was impressed. "You keep their feet chained all the time?"

"Is just stopping the running. Leaves all rest most useful," explained the father of all knowledge.

"Gonna put some on my gal?"

"She will be properly chained at all times," I said with dignity. Mr. R. and Mrs. C. were running the whole show. I felt it time to put on a bit of authority. The way things were going, the old rascal might as well have done a bit of hymen rupturing himself and let his daughter do the whipping. But I suppose a chap in his business has to maintain a certain detachment.

"You'll all go to prison." Petulance was warming up her larger ordnance.

"No sparing of the rod, eh," requested a doting mother.

"Come near me and I'll kick you in the testicles." Petulance looked at me. The threat was personal.

"She would, too!" I had a feeling Mrs. C. would have done the same.

"You're an absolute bitch, Mother! Leave me with these white slavers and I'll never speak to you again. Make them take these things off my wrists."

Mother only chuckled. "Damn fine idea. Don't know why I never thought of it."

I gave the girls the nod. They went into their act with the gin, the glasses and the little trays. I cannot tire of it. They are a pair of veritable houris. Even without a profit motive Old Rabin's eyes sparkled. Mrs. Corbin was visibly encouraged. She sipped her beverage and eyed the welts across her serving girl's bottom.

"You striped their bums?" she asked me with interest.

I have always deplored the American usage of the word bum. It is essentially vulgar. A sad epithet for the glorious curves of the feminine posterior. The English application has reference to the abdomen. One is therefore forced to make constant anatomical adjustment. I proudly admitted to having decorated their delightful derrieres.

"Do the same for Pettie, I hope?"

"It will be a pleasure."

"Oh mother, r, r!" A plaintive wail came from the back of the room. "Don't give him ideas."

"He has them already, child. Keep quiet." Mother was enjoying the gin.

"Alright! I'll promise to behave."

"Nice place you have here," said Mrs. C.

"I'll give up Women's Lib'." A cry from the wilderness.

"Think you can deliver her back to me the way these other two are?" Mrs. Corbin asked hopefully.

"I'll start dating, if that's what you want. Pimply faced boys."

"Got a couple of damn fine girls here, honey!" Mrs. C. guffawed coarsely.

"I don't want them either. It's disgusting."

"What the Hell do you want?" The raspy voice was ominous.

"I want these handcuffs off."

"That's not an answer."

"Can't I just be a woman?"

"You could if you tried. You never try. What's that thing between your legs for?"

"I use it to urinate. There is no need to insert various obscene objects into it."

"She goes on like that all the time." Mrs. Corbin looked at us bewildered. I must confess she had my sympathy.

"Please, mother! Make them take these things off my wrists and take me home. I'll try and be the deplorable creature you desire."

Mrs. C. accepted a refill from an adoring slave girl. "The cane on your bum hurt much, honey?"

"Atrociously, Madam."

"You howl?"

"Yes Madam. We try and not offend our Master's ears. But the pain is too great."

"Good!" Mother sipped and looked avidly at my slave girl's nakedness. "How many swats you figure it took to get you the way you are?"

"You mean totally obedient, Madam?"

"Yes. It ain't an act, is it?"

"Oh no Madam!" Dorinda sounded beautifully sincere. "I'm afraid I have lost count of the times I have been whipped."

"That many, eh! Do other things to you too?"

"Yes Madam. We are given pain in many ways."

Mrs. C. snorted with pleasure. She turned to me: "Make sure Pettie gets in on some of this 'other ways' stuff. Do her a world of good."

"Mother . . . ! You're being cruel."

It was as though Petulance had not spoken.

"I suppose you've been screwed left right and center?" Terry giggled. Dorinda blushed.

"We serve our Master as he may desire, Madam."

"Give him a blow job?"

Dorinda would have preferred a synonym. Unable to provide one, she fell back on a demure, "Yes Madam."

Mrs. Corbin turned once more to me. "Put that on the list too, eh!"

"Mother, you're being disgusting."

"Prissy little bitch, ain't she?" Pettie's mother inquired at large.

"He won't dare. I'll bite."

"Not if arse well caned," said Mr. Rabin from deep experience.

"Mother, please! Take me home. These . . . these, creatures are perverts."

"What's a pervert, honey?"

"I . . . I'll even get married." Obviously a fate worse than death.

Her mother snorted. "Poor bastard 'ud have to get a call girl on his wedding night."

"I shall refuse to speak to any of you." Petulance made it sound like the ultimate deprivation.

"A silent woman is beyond rubies," Mr. Rabin contributed sententiously.

"Shut your face, you old jackal."

Mr. Rabin sighed and looked my way politely. "A nice cane is having, please?"

I gave him one of my favorites. He rose and flexed it with deep satisfaction.

"Mother!" Pettie Corbin managed to make her cry for help sound like an order.

All eyes focused on the two principals in the small drama. Mr. Rabin stalked his prey

with the same cold determination in which he might have faced a cobra. Petty Corbin had backed against a wall. She was desperately fighting her handcuffs as one unaccustomed to their implacability. Her wide eyes watched the hated male advance with pure horror.

"Mother! Stop him! This old goat's going to hit me." Pettie was face to face with the unbelievable.

Mr. Rabin made a shrewd slash across the naked calves, catching the wary recipient where she had least expected. Pettie's howl was pure outrage. She leaped sideways. He contrived one more as she fled.

There began then a quaint retreat and pursuit in which a deadly intent was interspersed with humor. Consider a sizable room. It is well littered with furniture. Dorinda guards one door, Terry the other. The quarry can run, but to little purpose. Cornered, she leaps out of the trap, only to receive one more cut across her unprotected legs as she passes the man with the cane. Round and round they go in what becomes a predictable sequence. Each round produces three swipes, a couple of which find the flashing legs with deadly effect, producing quite extraordinary threats, promises and howls.

"Is much better without clothes," said Mr. Rabin unhurriedly.

In a reasoned appeal to a maternal instinct, the existence of which was in some doubt, the fugitive from Rabin's cane sank to her knees and buried her tear stained face in her mother's lap. "Stop him, mother! Don't let the old bastard–"

Pettie's appeal gave precedence to the loudest howl of all.

Always an opportunist, Mr. Rabin seized his chance and planted his best shot of the day squarely across the outthrust calves of the kneeling girl. Her position was as though she had presented them as a target. The old boy managed another real zinger as she struggled to her feet and continued her frustrated flight.

"Will accept apology," said Mr. R. magnanimously.

"Give her a couple more," advised the doting parent. Rabin gave Petulance two more of his best. It took a bit of time. But he had it to spare. Petulance yelped in pain and anger and backed against the wall, her eyes on the cane.

"Say you're sorry, honey," Mrs. Corbin suggested cheerfully.

"What am I supposed to be sorry for?" Pettie was undefeated.

"You were very rude to Mr. Rabin."

"Am not a jackal," the rentals man explained helpfully. Pettie eyed him without love.

"I'm sorry you're not a jackal," she offered, eyes glinting.

"Is also mention of goat. . . ."

"Oh alright! I'm sorry you're not a goat too."

Mr. Rabin let go one of his finer sighs. "Is most difficult child," he pronounced, and moved back into the fray.

Pettie Corbin's legs were becoming lividly bruised. The cane upon the leg is quite wicked. She would have fared better naked. Her pursuer got in another pair of stingers before the fleeing girl considered the wisdom of an armistice. Backing away and furiously tugging at her handcuffs she kept a frightened eye on the quivering cane and demanded sulkily: "Alright then, you tell me what to say."

"Just polite sorry. No smartass." Mr. R. was prepared to be kind.

Petulance looked from one to the other of her audience. She unceasingly fought the handcuffs as though convinced there must surely be a way . . . . If she hadn't been such an absolute little vixen I might have felt sorry for her. It was easy to see that, even in pain, the idea of an apology was anathema to the panting girl. "I'm sorry I was rude, Mr. Rabin," she finally contrived in bitter humiliation.

"She'd never have said that in the good old U.S.A." Mrs. Corbin conceded. "Pettie girl, we've come to the right place."

Pettie girl wept. They were tears of anger.

"Can now leave in good hands," said Mr. Rabin with satisfaction. He turned to me: "But would suggest removal of clothes. Is much best."

"You can cane her can then," said Mother.

Pettie accepted a peck on the cheek which she did not return. Her eyes were smoldering. Between the handcuffs and the cane she must have concluded her cause as lost. She did not plead. Just stood there and watched her mother go away. It was not hard to imagine her state of mind.

Returning from seeing my guests out of the house I found three pairs of youthful feminine eyes assessing each other. In Terry's and, Dorinda's there was sympathy. In Pettie Corbin's only venom.

"Your best bet is to set me free and let me go," Petulance announced in grandiose disdain, doing us a favor.

Silence.

"You needn't think I'm going to be a naked whore like you two!" More tugging at the handcuffs.

No response.

"Whatever your game is, I'm not playing." Petulance planted herself in an arm chair and studied the design in the rug. She leaned back against her chained hands as though no longer caring. Haughty indifference was to be her weapon.

Right here I have to admit that, left to myself, I'd have been a bit stymied. Petty Corbin was a very different kettle of fish to the two gorgeous creatures I had fallen in love with. But I need not have worried. Dorinda must have guessed my every

thought.

"Master, may we remove our guest so that we can talk?" Petulance did her best. But Terry grabbed one ankle and Dorinda the other. They hauled her from the room like a sack of potatoes. I need not note her comments. They were unedifying.

"We locked her in one of the rooms, Master," Terry informed me.

"Would you like us to deal with her, Master?" Dorinda's eyes sparkled with amusement. "Or would you prefer to, er, train her yourself?" She put a heavy emphasis on the word 'train'.

Once again I found myself far from my beginnings. I was now the beneficiary of a veritable cornucopia of adoring slave girls, with a hostile captive maiden tossed in for good measure. My cup did indeed 'runneth over'. Suburbia could look at its lost son and gloat or envy or mourn. Bit of all three, I expect. "Which will she respond to best?" I asked, delaying the issue.

"May I speak frankly, Master?" How glorious she was! I nodded regally.

Dorinda knelt before me, her raised eyes amused assessing the possibility of getting her bottom caned if she said too much.

"It's a lot different with Pettie," Terry butted in. Dorinda nodded. "Yes master. We are afraid you may feel brutal before us two if you do what you must with this absurd girl. She will need very firm and painful treatment. She isn't very nice."

Amazing, aren't they! Think of everything.

Dorinda concentrated. Her words were slow. "We think, master, you may have become accustomed to us. We are slaves. Real slaves. We know we can never escape. We know we must do what we are told." She smiled ruefully. "It took a lot of time and a lot of pain to bring us to where we are now. But we will do what you desire. You may tie us or chain us or whip us to your heart's content. We will try and please you." She paused and grinned in genuine humor. "Pettie Corbin isn't going to be like that at all."

"The thought had occurred, "I admitted dryly. Dorinda flushed.

"Do I offend, master?"

I was about to let go some shocking blurb about how impossible it would be for anyone as beautiful as she to give offense, when I realized I had a position to maintain. "Don't worry, dear girl," I said firmly. "I'll whip you when you cross the line."

"Thank you, master." She made the three words reek with gratitude. Then gave me a small apologetic smile for what she had to say: "In our slavery, master, we have come to learn that there are two ways in which a captive girl can give joy to men. One is to be submissive and obedient, the other is to fight him with tooth and claw so that he must beat her into acknowledging him master." She looked at me winsomely. We both knew which category I belonged in.

But I wasn't having any. Dammit! I was in the middle of everything I'd ever wanted.

I might as well know it all. "I think I'll try a spot of breaking–in," I announced bravely. "Probably not my cup of tea, but after all there's a sort of noblesse oblige. How'd you two girls like to tie her up on tiptoe with her hands far apart and high?"

"Of course, master." Was there hidden laughter in the voice!

"Oh . . . and leave her clothes on, eh."

"Yes master." Definitely laughter.

I'll admit I paced the floor feeling a bit of an ass. I'd have been just as happy if old Rabin had taken his Pettie Corbin somewhere else. From the sounds that were reaching me in considerable volume I suspected my two girls were probably feeling the same. Pettie was meeting her Waterloo noisily. When my slave girls returned they were panting and arranging their hair. "She's an absolute demon, master," Terry said with feeling.

"We think you'll find her positioned to your liking, master," Dorinda said demurely.

I had no doubts on that score, and was about to embark on my impersonation of the Duke of Wellington when two girlish voices asked: "What about us, master?" I detected sadness and pique.

Damn difficult, y'know! Figure it for yourself. Worse than having three wives. Wives don't expect much from husbands, not after the honeymoon. But with these three damsels I was obligated to play the ruthless Pasha, whether I wanted to or not. I'd bloody well paid my cash, and they were honour bound same as me. Amazing!

"What would you suggest?" I had a feeling I'd asked that question before.

"We are slave girls, master. You must instruct us." Gentle reproof!

I wasn't doing too well. I'd have been glad to have 'em read a book while I dealt with the recalcitrant vixen. But I realised that wasn't the proper drill. And besides, I didn't want them watching or walking in and out while I was doing a bit of softening up on Miss Petulance. Maintaining my tenuous hold on authority I gathered up two pairs of handcuffs and beckoned in masterful fashion. Leading the way to a room notable for its total absence of Pettie I snapped the cuff round Dorinda's right wrist and clasped the other one to a ringbolt in the wall. Then did the same for Terry on the opposite side. There they stood, captive by a wrist. About as innocuous an imposition as I could devise. But no matter how they tugged or twisted they could not get away. They would await their master's return as slave girls should.

"Thank you, master." Their lilting voices followed me as I shut the door.

Miss Corbin eyed me with disfavor. She was beautifully tethered. The girls had done a marvellous job. She was well up on her toes, her arms strained upwards. She was a pretty picture, but I did not tell her so. I could see her wrists were hurting.

"Fuck off," said my guest in welcome.

I stood in majestic mastery. It was a lovely feeling. I smiled to show tolerance.

"Look here," said Petulance, evidently having done a bit of thinking, "you've got me. I can't get loose from these damn cords that are hurting like Hell. So O.K. I admit I'm a nothing. You can hurt and humiliate me so I suppose I'll say whatever you want me to say. I'll beg. That's what you want . . . . So let's consider it all said. I concede everything. You've won. So now let me loose and I won't press charges. I'll go back to mother and tell her a few things."

Females are incredible! Petulance was looking at me with bright expectancy. I believe she honestly thought I'd buy it. She was spoiled rotten.

"That's not quite the idea," I said gently. Her face was pure dismay.

"Your mother mentioned a few preliminaries, y'know."

"You aren't paying any attention to that nonsense, surely?"

"You are grossly overdressed." Talk about cat and mouse! I should have felt a bastard. But I didn't.

The remark hit home. She tensed. She'd been thinking about that one too. "Oh very well." Her feigned indifference was laughable. "I suppose it's something you feel you have to do. You'll find I have nice breasts and there's a good growth of hair round my vulva. They are the main points of interest to sex maniacs, I believe."

I was beginning to enjoy the situation. Pettie Corbin was the sort of girl a chap could whip with an easy conscience. Anything you did to dent her massive self satisfaction was a kindness. Confidently I stepped on stage for Act one.

The heel of her shoe narrowly missed my genitals. It still hurt on the thigh. "Five strokes for that little trick," I told her casually.

"Drop dead." She had abandoned sweet reason and returned to normal.

I worked at her back. Her kicks and squirms were ineffectual. My fingers found buttons, hooks and zippers. But first I relieved her of her shoes. Their heels were a weapon.

It hit me all of a sudden. I was about to strip a girl naked. It had taken me one Hell of a while to get round to it. I savored each moment. Let me be honest about it: those moments were damn precious. One more dream come true. The tally grows. . . .

"Well, I hope you're satisfied."

When I circled her and stood out of range of her bare feet my naked captive was actually blushing.

Damned irritating, but I was too.

"Have I provided you with an erection?" she inquired icily.

"That will be two more strokes," I informed her matter-of-factly. "You are going to have to learn to curb your tongue."

"Do I get raped standing up or laying down?" She ignored my warning.

"You are now up to nine. Are you sure you're not doing it on purpose?"

"Don't be absurd! Girls haven't been whipped for a century. Forget the whole thing, Buster."

"The word 'Buster' is an opprobrium I cannot endure. It will cost you four. You are now up to thirteen."

She was panting. Never mind her emotions. I expect there was a bit of everything. She glared. Then softened enough to ask in a rational tone: "Are you really serious?"

It was a sensible question that deserved a sensible answer. I realized I'd better get on with the job before she racked up a score that would half kill her. "I am absolutely serious. I am going to start now before you earn more. Remember, keep a civil tongue."

I went and fetched my favorite cane. Pettie eyed it in fascinated distaste. "You're going to use an awful thing like that on a naked girl?"

"Yes."

"Where? I mean, where on me?"

"Your bottom."

"Like kid's stuff." She sounded offended.

"Was it kid's stuff on your legs?"

She shifted uneasily and lifted one leg. The loss of her clothes made her aware of vulnerability. She came out with the inevitable. "Can I say I'm sorry?"

"No."

She digested the negative. Then offered: "I'll make the apology as humiliating as you want . . . . You tell me what to say."

"Thirteen." I loved the sound of it. "Don't you know by now that we can't wiggle out of everything in life by saying we are sorry!" Sententious but satisfying!

Pettie twisted in her bonds, hurting her wrists without caring, realising, for the first time, how truly naked she was. Searching for the right words without finding them. She looked at me dejectedly. "But after . . . after, you've hurt me . . . I'll still be me?"

"I'll let you answer that one then yourself," I told her cheerfully.

There is something quite heartbreaking about the apprehensive female face that looks back at you over an upraised arm. The conflict of certainty and disbelief makes magic of a face. Feminine eyes are never so lovely as in that last appeal before they turn back in horror to be ready for what they can no longer evade.

I slashed the petulant bottom as hard as I could.

Pettie did not move. She did not cry. She had tensed herself into frozen immobility. Had it not been for the wound springing into livid life across the curves of her cheeks I might have wondered if I had struck her. Whatever Pettie Corbin mayor may not have been, there was steel in her.

But the second stroke turned her back into a hurt naked girl. She fought the cords and screamed. When she was half composed she sobbed: "You dirty rotten son of a bitch!"

"Fifteen."

She screamed as though I had struck her again. Screamed in fury and frustration. Contorted in hopeless determination to rob me of her nudity. Before she could spit out the words that would increase her penalty I cut into her with number three.

It was the same as before. Except that this time she flung at me in sobbing exhalations: "No! Oh no! No, no, no!" As though the negatives could erase her agony.

After the seventh Pettie made so rational a plea that I paused. "Please stop! Oh stop, if only for a minute . . . please!" I stopped caning her, but did not move. Her tear streaked face sought mine over her shoulder in wide eyed appeal. "I can't stand it!" she choked. "No one could stand this. It's more awful than I ever dreamed."

"There are eight more to go."

"Yes. I counted. I can't bear another eight like this."

"You'll bear them very easily. You'll be surprised. Think a bit. Is there anything you can do but bear them?" I swung again.

When her writhing on that one had slowed, she asked weakly: "Please don't whip me any more. Do that . . . that, other thing."

"What other thing?" I'd make her say it.

She swallowed a few times but managed to sob it out: "Do what you have to so I'm not a virgin any more . . . . Do it instead of whipping me . . . please!"

A smasher! One for the book! Genghis Khan, Attila the Hun and the current movie hero: none of 'em touched a moment like this. I was drunk with power.

"I will give you two more," I said grandly. "Then you will ask me nicely, using the four letter word."

She did not protest. Perhaps I was being kinder than she dared hope. I gave those two strokes all I had. She danced like a puppet on a string, moaning and sobbing. But she managed it: "Please fuck me, sir." That 'sir' was a real killer. Showed sincerity.

"I'll untie you. You'll immediately go and lay on the bench and open your legs wide." I was a conquerer.

"Oh yes! Oh, thank you Oh yes. . . !"

I untied her. She brimmed over with thanks, rubbing her cut wrists. I bent and picked up the cane, just in case . . . . It was when I straightened up that she got me: her heel squarely on my testicles. All the force of her lithe body was behind the kick. I doubled over and lost interest in everything except myself. I had a blurred image of my assailant grabbing her clothes and making for the door. I couldn't have cared less. . . .

It's a standard joke. Sure, I know! Bloody funny when it's someone else or a cartoon in a story. Fact is it had never happened to me before. Don't suppose it ever happens to most chaps. But it's one of the few things that's every bit the way it's supposed to be. Too damn awful for words. I hugged myself and twisted and turned in agony. Serve me right! Well, O.K. maybe it did. But it hurt!

I really don't know how long it took me to get to where I could stand up and think. When I did I was flooded in pure horror. I'd let that damn girl get loose. Goodness knows what would happen to her running around half dressed in a place like this. Then the next one: Old Rabin and Mrs. Corbin! I'd let 'em down. Let 'em down bad! But then I came to the worst of all: Terry and Dorinda! My darling girls. They'd have to laugh at me. I'd look a fool, an absolute jackass. Chain them helplessly with those handcuffs and then let that slippery little vixen make a fool of me! My Empire crumbled at my feet.

Without Terry and Dorinda I wasn't safe.

The sounds followed the thoughts. They were equally disturbing. Noises!

I had not been told that hallucinations were a part of being kicked in the groin. Or was it illusion! It did not matter. There they were, large as life and smiling broadly, at least Terry and Dorinda were. Darling Petulance looked thoroughly cheesed off. Her wrists were once more handcuffed behind her back. She was naked. She was controlled by Terry's firm grip in her hair.

"We grabbed her on her way out," said Dorinda. "She's a really terrible girl," said Terry.

Pettie Corbin said nothing. She looked scared.

"She tried to kick us in the same place," Terry explained.

"But it's not quite the same with girls. . . ."

"I'd like to shove a red hot poker up yours!" Petulance said tenderly.

Terry shook her fistful of hair vigorously. "Naughty, naughty! Mama spank."

"Oh, fuck off you naked bitch!"

Dorinda thoughtfully took one of the captive's nipples between thumb and finger. "How about another apology, you ill–tempered little beast?"

"You're another naked bitch too–Yow!" Pettie fought strenuously and uselessly. The hand in her hair was implacable. "Let that go you miserable whore. . . ." Her

ugly words trailed off into a cry of pure agony as Dorinda pinched harder. "Oh alright! Alright! I'm sorry."

The apology was obviously insincere. But the punished nipple was released. It was an angry red. Its owner looked down at it without pride. Pettie turned to me. "You going to let these lousy whores–" She let out a howl of protest as her nipple was once more put in a vise. "I'm . . . . I'm sorry! I forgot. Oh please . . . !" Once again Dorinda released the hurt bud. Pettie finished her sentence, her voice dripping sarcasm: "Are you going to let these delightful young ladies do what they like with me?" She tacked on the word, sir for full measure.

My girls exchanged a glance. This time each of them possessed herself of a guilty scrap of flesh and pinched hard, holding their captive as she went through all the motions with which I now had a sneaking sympathy.

"I'll be good! I'll behave! Honest. . . !"

"We've heard that before." Terry said thoughtfully. "We can't believe a word you say," Dorinda sympathized. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry . . . ! Ohhh! Oh please . . . anything!"

The two nipples that came back into view looked as though they were on fire. Pettie groaned. Her hands worked uselessly at the cuffs.

"Would you like us to, er, immobilize her for you, master?"

Dorinda asked respectfully, eyes twinkling.

"If you would please?" It was ineffectual but the best I could do.

They marched their prisoner out, I suspect with glee. Pettie wisely refrained from comment. I tottered to the living room and found my favorite chair.

The dear girls did not take long. "We just pulled her hands way up behind her back," Terry explained.

"It's very uncomfortable," Dorinda added with what I suspected was understatement.

I looked at them proudly. What treasures!

They seemed ill at ease. They came and stood solemnly before me. "How will you punish us, master?" Terry asked sadly.

Punish! Good Heavens, I'd award them the Victoria Cross, the Legion of Honour and the Congressional Medal.

They surveyed me with soft meek eyes in which there was the faintest glint of mischief.

It hit me like a ton of bricks. They beheld realization dawn.

They laughed. "How the devil did you manage it?" I demanded.

"I picked your pocket, master," Terry said demurely. My hand flew to my pocket. The key to the handcuffs was gone.

"It's on the table, master," Dorinda confirmed.

"We wanted to powder our noses, master," Terry supplied.

"We were just ready to lock ourselves back on our rings when little Sweetheart came leaping by. So we grabbed her."

"You mean, you had the key to freedom, but you'd lock yourselves up again!"

"Of course, master! We are slave girls. We know our place." They said it in unison. A trick, I suspect, they had deliberately cultivated.

I expect I looked thunderstruck.

"Besides, our ankles were chained, master." They offered that as if it was excuse for good behavior.

"You are utterly too much!" I told them with reverence. "Yes master. We know we must be punished." Again in unison.

I knew with certainty that if it took every penny I had I must buy these girls and take them home. With two such treasures life could offer no challenge I could not face. "I would not dream of punishing you," I said firmly. I love you too much."

They looked at each other. They were by no means twins. But there was that same empathy between them.

"We know we did wrong, master. We want you to punish us."

What would you have done! Think before you answer!

With one girl you could kiss her and dry her tears, if any. Or pick her up and carry her to the couch and arrange her legs. But two! Each beautiful beyond a man's wildest dreams. You can't do that to two, not at once.

They looked at me soulfully.

"You'd better whip me, master. It was I who stole the key." Terry managed to make the confession sound like George Washington and the cherry tree.

"We are both equally guilty, master," Dorinda said firmly. I had a feeling that, married to Dorinda, a chap would have to toe the line.

"You both want to be whipped?" I asked unhappily. I was trying frantically to think of a way out.

"Yes please, master!" The duet sounded as though I'd offered a trip to Acapulco. Happy anticipation.

Those two girls proved something I suppose we all know but don't quite believe: that females get the best of men every time. We struggle and protest – I expect we enjoy

it but relentlessly they push in the direction they want to go, and all of a sudden we are there too. Damn remarkable!

Not so! You say. Why would two girls ask to be whipped! Seems like you have a point. But you haven't. They want to be whipped because every stripe I paint on their lovely skins makes me more their captive than they are mine. Besides, women have a sense of the rightness of things. The situation called for them to be whipped. So whipped they must be! Each stroke would make them stronger and me weaker. They would weep. But their tears would melt my male armor . . . . Oh, never doubt it. Women are the stronger. Women are The Establishment.

"How would you like to be whipped?" I capitulated.

"It is for you to decide, master," the duet cooed.

A devil took hold. The male ego dies hard. "How about across your dear little quims?" I asked nonchalantly. The silence was pregnant. But short.

"Thank you, master." They sounded ecstatic.

"How do we go about the job?" After all, it was their idea. Another silent sibling sensory.

"One of the rooms has rings, master," Dorinda ventured without enthusiasm. I was glad of the absence of zest. Teach 'em a lesson. I let them lead the way.

Terry tied Dorinda. Then I tied Terry. They apologized for asking me to unlock their ankle chains. Obviously their legs had to be spread. By the time I was through there were three lovely blushes in the room.

It had the genius of simplicity. They lay on their backs on the floor, a noose round each ankle. The ropes went up and over pulleys in the ceiling. When the ropes were pulled hard enough the lovely legs rose up and spread wide so that by the time their bottoms left the floor each girl seemed to be about ninety percent sex. No one could imagine two delightful quiffs more invitingly displayed or more helplessly held. The fact that the girls had the use of their hands altered nothing. About all they might use them for would be to beat upon the floor.

"I hope you like this, master," Terry said doubtfully.

I could see her point. If I was a girl I would never choose that pose. Even on her wedding night a girl does not open it quite that far – at least I wouldn't think so! There they were, two hair ensconced vulvas screaming to be whipped. I chose a very slender riding crop that was nearly a whip itself.

Again the problem of two. Which one to weal first! Whichever you chose you left a question mark. On the basis that Terry was the most culpable I laid a truly lovely stripe flat over her sex.

She wasn't a bit heroic. But then she never pretends to be. Having so much freedom, she used it. She went wild. But no matter how she tried she always ended up where she started. The ropes round her ankles won. Even while she writhed she was open. When she lay still again her cunt screamed for attention.

I hit Dorinda. In pain the two girls are different yet the same. To writhe is to writhe, to moan is to moan. But each has their own distinctive way of telling you they hurt. Dorinda is the most voluptuous of the two. To whip Dorinda is to know an agony yourself. The agony of desire. With her first twistings and small cries I am aflame.

Two red weals bisect two female quims.

"It hurts terribly, master," Terry tells me as though I need the information.

I whip them back and forth, one to the other. Their cries merge. Their struggles become continuous. Girlish hands beat against the floor' and reach down to appease their wounds. When their eyes catch mine they smile.

Once more I am all the conquerors of all the world.

But I use judgement. I hope they would agree. I stop whipping the appealing cunts before there is damage. Besides, I love their owners. I go away. I leave them tied, moaning. They are so involved with their hurts they do not see me go.

Miss Corbin is not happy. She looks at me sideways as I enter. "Alright, beat me," she invites bitterly.

I am indeed going to beat her. But not at her request. I survey her plight. My girls have, as usual, done an admirable job. Pettie's wrists are still handcuffed behind her back. But a rope drags them up to the ceiling so that she stands on tiptoe, bent forward to ease the strain, helpless. But in pain. Rope on her wrists would be bad enough, but handcuffs . . . ! Her bottom is beautifully displayed. It exhibits nine gorgeous wounds and asks for more.

"I suppose I get whipped to death?" Pettie asks without hope.

It is a good thought. But not to death! Why waste a perfectly good girl! I tell her so.

"Fuck you, Buster!" she exclaims so that I know she has relinquished hope.

My power is complete. All three girls are helpless and exposed to whip or cane. I could make an orchestration of agony. It is at such times that we display mercy. It inflates our egos.

"You said that deliberately to annoy me, didn't you?" I ask.

"Whip me and get it over with."

"It will never be over."

It sinks in. Pettie is faced with the unknowable. Heroics are no match for the forever. Faced with it, discomfort wins: "Please lower my arms. I hurt dreadfully."

"What else did you expect?"

"I know." Pettie speaks without any of her usual sarcasms. "But I have to ask. You might be merciful. How am I to know! Please lower my arms. I'll still be helpless." She flung tears from her face by a vigorous shake of the head.

She was learning. She should learn more. "How many strokes would you ask for to gain the relief you seek?" I ask callously.

She hears my brutal question with joy. "Any number you wish, sir."

"Why call me sir?"

"It is a title of respect. I have supposed it required."

"Call me master."

"Yes master." I could sense her loathing. But she kept it from her voice.

"Well, how many?" How cruel a question!

"Five, please master?" her voice was a question mark How vividly her mind had computed. To ask for as few as possible without giving offense. I was pleasantly surprised by the five. She was learning.

"Five it is. I shall lay them on hard."

"Thank you, master." I could scarcely believe my ears. I struck the exquisitely bent derriere and watched the resultant gymnastics. Pettie's vocals were as erotic as her body.

I had expected pleas and excuses. But there were none.

Agony aplenty. But no evasions. Her bottom was to be cut five times. The vulgar hoyden was reconciled. I struck again . . . and again . . . and again. Pettie rose to heights of pain undreamed of. I shared it all. Never once did I feel other than that I was doing her a favour.

At the end of the fifth I let her agonize awhile. Hers was a beautiful pose from which a girl might proclaim her anguish. But after a little while in which Pettie herself did no prompting, Suburbia gave me a few prods. Hastily I lowered the tether. Pettie's hands fell normally behind her back.

I think she simply soaked up the relief. It was quite a while before she whispered: "Thank you master." It sounded genuine.

I let her enjoy. I was quite sure those handcuffs had been rough on her wrists. Probably a damn sight worse than the six with the cane. She didn't seem to want to do or say anything. Just stood.

"You know you have to be punished?" I asked offhandedly after awhile.

"Yes master." That 'master' had become automatic.

I recalled something. It seemed pertinent. "Do you remember asking me what good pain was: what difference it made: what point there was inflicting it on you?"

The naked girl searched her mind and shuffled uneasily.

"Yes master."

"Well?"

"You were right, master. I did not believe it then. I do now."

"When was it you found out?"

She gave my question the same careful consideration.

"With the first stroke, master."

I was awed. The power of the whip on female flesh! Had those old buffers down through history been right! Whip your woman into submission and damn the rest! Damn the niceties! Damn chivalry! A woman was a chattel. Keep her so.

"How do you wish to be punished?" I used my weakness to probe.

"It is for you to say, master."

"I am going to whip your loins."

Pettie tensed. I watched the knowledge of what awaited seep through her being. She gave me a quick sideways look as though to verify. "You are going to whip across my cunt, master?" She wanted it specific.

"Yes."

"Thank you, master." She had abandoned hope.

I went back to my girls. They were happily engaged in feminine chatter as though they had not been cruelly whipped. The words died as I entered. I was more important. They looked up at me hopefully. "I have work for you," I said, and loosed the ropes.

They untied their ankles themselves. Then stood, quite free. On impulse I asked: "Why don't you run? Why don't you jump me?"

"We are slave girls, master." They had an answer to everything.

They picked up their ankle chains and offered them to me.

"You should chain our feet, master, lest we be tempted."

"You want me to?"

"Yes master." Their female desire blended as one.

On impulse I asked: "When did you first become slaves?" They exchanged their sibling look. "When the whip first marked us, master."

It is as though all the women of the world are one. But men are scattered far and wide. I adored them. They knew I adored them. They glowed.

"I have a task for you," I said.

They adored that too. I am in danger of belonging to them utterly instead of they to me. Pettie surveyed their glowing entry without hope. "Fuck off," she requested, "I've had enough of broads."

"You prefer our master?" The question reeked of approval.

"All I want to do is get out of here." Pettie surveyed them disdainfully. "I suppose you're going to whip my bum?"

"Not exactly your bum, darling."

"You needn't call me darling, you lousy Les'."

Dorinda turned shining eyes to me. "May we, please, afterwards, master?"

I signified approval.

Pettie saw the interchange. "About the best thing that can happen to a girl in this nut house is to get her arse whipped," she declaimed bitterly.

"You'll love it, darling," Terry was enthused.

"Lick your own cunt," Pettie tugged at her handcuffs in despair.

"You're being very silly," Dorinda reproved. "Besides, if you're a woman's libber, wouldn't you sooner have my tongue than a man?"

Pettie moaned in exasperation and tugged away at her bonds. "I don't want anything. Can't you understand! All my cunt wants is to be left alone."

"Awful waste," said Terry.

"It's not going to be left alone now," Dorinda promised. I stood to one side and watched.

It was a very feminine affair.

They left her handcuffs on. It simplified their job enormously. She made quite a to–do about lying on her joined arms. But Terry and Dorinda paid no attention. The female thing delivered to them was of no consequence. They went about their work absorbed.

When they had her spread helpless as they had been, they handed me the whip and retired to separate walls.

But I sensed something wrong. Pettie expected me to whip her. Thus, obviously, she should be shocked. I handed the whip to Dorinda, and myself retired to the sidelines. Pettie's eyes widened in fear. Women are merciless with women. Dorinda struck.

All in the mind! Perhaps. But, watching, it seemed to me that Dorinda knew things I did not. The weal across the pouting lips rose up to proclaim female dominance. The keening cry of anguish was totally feminine. Pettie was in good hands.

The two girls took turns whipping her sex. Sometimes the prostrate girl with her spread legs turned to me as her only hope. "Master, oh please Master. Make them stop. Make them. . . ."

I did not make them. Pettie screamed and screamed. "Please master, I'll never try to escape . . . never!"

The whipping went on and on. Each girl intent as she accepted the cane. The female vulva staring up in mute appeal, the skin around it scarlet, turning purple.

Suddenly it stopped. "May we tie her, master?"

"Is she not ideal as she is?"

They nodded, eyes aflame. "Thank you, master. Do you wish to watch?"

I did not wish to watch. This was a female thing. "Don't leave me alone with them. Master, oh, please. . . !" I went away. I looked back only once. Dorinda's mouth was buried deep within the hair between our delinquent's legs. She was sucking lustily. Terry was not even aware of me.

I was not alone. The Grand Marnier kept me company. That and the sounds . . . . I expect it was more the sounds. I wished I had had the courage to stay. But I knew it best to allow them their own joys in their own way. I had no wish to envy them more than I already did. To be female must be wonderful. They have no need of men. I turned to the Grand Marnier. It was small comfort.

I dreamt of suburbia and longings. Of how a girl's breast beneath a sweater could send me bonkers. Of how a bit of thigh revealed in the underground could fill my day with passion and loneliness. Someone would marry these breasts and thighs and enjoy them. I pictured myself on my wedding night, taking off the clothes that had cheated me. What would I find! Nothing like Dorinda or Terry. I was sure of that. But I was curious. Why didn't I kidnap one of those self satisfied little bitches and find out what was underneath her clothes! I laughed inwardly. I had no need. Dorinda and Terry and Pettie offered me finer breasts and better handfuls of cunts than any underground. Their agonies were more rhythmic than the clickety click of the tube train's wheels.

"We have her ready for you, master."

Dorinda's words brought me back from far away. My naked slave with her chained feet was smiling at me from the doorway. "We have performed our task, master. We would not presume upon yours."

I went to see what they had done.

Petulance lay upon a bench. Her handcuffed wrists were drawn back over her head and tied. Her shoulders were also bound. Her feet were pulled asunder but not rigidly fastened. She could do much with them and her legs save bring them together. They were held open. Pettie was an invitation. She looked up at me malevolently but dared not speak. The lines of salacity were still upon her face. I knew why. Pettie knew I was aware. Her face flamed. She tugged at her pinioned ankles, seeking to close her legs and deny me entry. But she was beautifully tied. My girls had served their master well. I entered into my kingdom. Pettie Corbin moaned and moaned. I could

not tell whether in pleasure or in pain.

Perhaps there is no difference. "Should we punish her more?" I asked. It was the next day.

"She has not been punished, master," Dorinda affirmed.

"She has been made aware of womanhood. That is all. She will instantly revert."

"The whip?"

"In training, master. She must be made to speak the words. She must want to speak them."

"Bring her forth."

Twenty–four hours. For Petty Corbin it had been life. Now her ankles were chained. She wore her handcuffs like bracelets. For her, escape had become a pretty dream. She looked at me without adoration. "I suppose you are going to fuck me," she said listlessly. "Which of the thirty six positions?"

Terry whips her. When it is over she is more humble. "Tell me what to do, master."

I tell her what to do.

DORINDA

Terry and I hang by our thumbs. It is one of the cruelest punishments. It goes on and on. We hang that we may see each other's tears and share our moans. Our searching toes cannot find the floor, but the chain between our ankles loops down so that a couple of links find the contact we are denied. We are exhausted and without hope. We may hang like this for hours or for days. When we are lowered there will be something else . . . . I suppose I deserve it. But poor Terry does not. Darling Terry. . . .

It's all my fault. They trusted me. They looked to me. I don't know why. I'm no stronger willed than Terry, no wiser than poor Cedric. But he fell in love with us both: with Terry as a girl and with me as some remotely beautiful Goddess from his dream world. He was all wrong. I'm only a girl too. A girl who sheds tears and hurts the same as Terry does.

I'd seen the danger signals from the moment old Rabin rented me to poor bewildered Cedric. He was just a boy from some stuffy little nothing place in London. A little boy lost. I don't think poor Cedric really knew what he was searching for. But he believed he had found it in us. Perhaps he actually did. Certainly Terry and I possessed a power to give him tremendous happiness. He'd been so lonely. Suddenly we filled his life. He fell in love.

It was the day Mrs. Corbin retrieved her chastened daughter that we all made the awful mistake. We were suddenly alone and intimate. Two naked chained slave girls and a man who adored them. That word does not fit him. Cedric was a boy. A boy who was ashamed to whip us any more and wanted to take us back to England.

I'll never know our price. It must have been high. The poor boy looked a bit white and strained when he came back from the battle of wits with Rabin in which he purchased us. You can be sure the old Shylock would try and drain him dry.

I should never have let him go. But think of it! I'm only human. All of a sudden freedom was dangled in front of my eyes. Cedric wanted us. He would pay Rabin: not only for two girls but for the sure passage of all three of us back to somewhere safe. Somewhere outside this desert society of you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours. Even in this weird part of the world there exists the banking and wire services by which money can be made available. If you have it, and poor dead Cedric evidently had enough.

The way he explained it, I couldn't pick holes. There seemed no reason it would not work. Rabin was the key. Money would buy Rabin. Simple! There was an awkwardness when I asked Cedric what he'd do with us in England.

"I don't know," he laughed ruefully. "Can't take you there in chains," he grinned at us frankly. "But I want to. Mayas well admit it. I never want to let you go. But when we get out of the plane you'll be free. You can kiss me good–bye and go."

Terry and I cried. It was too much emotion. After slavery it just did not seem possible. No more chains or whips or cords that cut our skin. No more rotten little cells or dungeons. No more men using our bodies . . . . We looked at each other through our tears. Terry knew what to say.

"We'll stay with you, master. We'll be your slave girls there for as long as you want. We know you'll let us go sometime. That's what matters. . . ." Her eyes lit up in mischief. "Make old Rabin throw in all the handcuffs and the chains. You'll need 'em."

Cedric was close to tears himself.

So I let him go. Why, oh why, oh why!

Sudden entry into freedom takes about the same adjustment as being thrust into slavery. When Cedric came back with Rabin's blessing and all the papers and clothes for us to wear, it was an almost frightening moment when the chains were unlocked from our ankles and we could take a normal step. Talk about feeling naked . . . ! Cedric watched and shared our laughter at our exploratory steps. Then blushed with us when we dressed. Crazy, I suppose, but putting on a pair of briefs was about as obscene an act as I had ever performed. It was as though I was suddenly ashamed of something I'd been carrying around all my life.

We made such a holiday, such an occasion. We were so happy loading Cedric's car. It was like being born again. On the road we were tourists seeing the country. Each town or village we passed was a milestone back into life. Terry and I found it hard to express our gratitude. Cedric had given us something so precious there were no words. Only acts could tell him. We were glowingly resolved to perform those acts. We both wanted nothing more than to make him very happy.

Terry and I were busy with the road map. We could tell we were getting close to safety. All we needed was an American or British Consulate. We would soon be free . . . free . . . free!

The two trucks converged on us from either side. Directly we saw them we knew. There was no exciting race. One behind and one in front at a place where we could not turn. There were not even any arguments. There were eight men. They dragged us out of our car. One of them immediately drove away in it after tossing out our luggage. It was thrown into a truck, our hands were tied behind our backs and we were pitched after it. The truck sped away. We knew not where.

Poor Cedric! To him it was unreality. He tried to talk, to bargain, to promise and to threaten. The mahogany faces listened impassively. One of them struck him across the face and said gruffly, "No talk." To Terry and I it was all so familiar. The cords cutting our wrists. The knowledge of helplessness. Of being pawns in someone else's game. When they tied our elbows, savagely and tightly together, we knew there was no hope. When they do that to you they want to hurt. They want you to know you are a nothing. They want you obedient.

After a long time they stopped and pushed us out on to the sand. Just the one truck and four men. We were in a quiet sad little gully with a dubious–looking water–hole and a scattering of dejected vegetation. The four were hungry. One started preparations for a meal. The other three made arrangements for the floor show. Terry and I were the star performers. They were very confident. They untied us, even Cedric.

"Take off clothes." It was a very casual order.

I suppose Terry and I hadn't expected anything else. The first thing you do with a slave girl or a captive female is strip her. Why not? It's practical. The things you are going to do to her certainly don't call for clothes. We started to undress. Apart from being frightened and heartbroken we were almost bored. It was all too familiar.

But poor Cedric! It was all a bit too much for him. He laced into them in no uncertain way. One of the crew hit him with the butt of a gun. There was about as much emotion displayed as if he had brushed away a fly. Cedric was knocked down but not out. Blood came from the wound. He fingered it in disbelief as he sprawled on the sand. We tried to go to him. But that was definitely out. The moment we stopped our strip act dirty fingers reached out to help. We were soon naked. We did not care. Cedric was our main concern. "Don't interfere over us," I warned, and got slapped for my pains.

What do you do with a captive girl? Of course you do! The answer is the same on every continent and every century. Terry and I knew what the first thing would be. Poor Cedric did not! When the first ruffian took his erect sex out of his scrap of dirty blanket and motioned to me to kneel before him and pay the eternal female homage with her lips, I was about to obey when Cedric went wild.

Poor Cedric! He'd never been a captive girl. What I was about to do was no more than I expected. I did not want to do it. But I had no thought of fighting against the inevitable. I was simply about to pay the tribute that a few million other girls had paid before me. Cedric ejaculated a startled and shocked: "No! Oh no!" He was on his feet in a flash and had seized a gun from the holster of one of our captors when one of the other ruffians shot him. It was done with the indifference of any act that does not matter very much. Cedric fell and stared up at the sky he would never see again. Another of the four went to the truck, found a shovel, and began to dig a hole in the loose sand of a dune. Whilst I serviced the first of them, who thoughtfully pressed the muzzle of a revolver against my head to insure proper attention, I was

able to see the body of the man who had tried to buy our freedom thrust into a shallow grave and covered over with sand. Poor Cedric! I suppose those words are his epitaph.

We were two naked girls. It would be silly to pretend that we were anything other than quivering in fear. We had witnessed the ultimate horror. What we were now forced to do with our lips and our loins seemed trivial compared to our loss. We performed the age–old rituals in a daze. But I expect with competent precision. At least we earned no blows. Our function now was to survive. Thus the human entity adapts so that it may live on.

Having fed upon the flesh of girls, our four captors took no chances with their merchandise. We were tied again. Far more tightly than need be. Hands palm to palm, elbows crushed together. The cords bit with a personal animosity. Terry and I did not weep. We had gone beyond tears. We looked at each other in despair, unwilling to acknowledge what we had seen. We did not speak. There was nothing to say. We recognized our condition.

They fed us. We could not feed ourselves. The cords upon our arms made us utterly helpless. We were feminine torsos without arms or hands. Our impotence was deliberate. It pleased the four of them to tease us. To offer a tid–bit so that we opened our mouths, then eat it themselves amidst roars of laughter. But they did give us the least desirable bits of meat and bread. From their concern that we should eat we knew we were merchandise. They enlivened their meal by painting our breasts and nipples with some sweet we were not allowed to sample. They then sucked it from our skin. We sat erect with breasts outthrust. What else could we do! It did not matter. The four male animals did not matter. Only Cedric mattered. But Cedric was beneath the sand. Suburbia had given her son to the desert.

From our breasts there was an inevitable progression. We were told to lay on our backs and lift our loins. That our bound arms made it agony did not matter. We lay on them and stretched wide our legs. We were fertility goddesses playing a role millenniums old. They painted our vulvas with the sweet, being careful to open the labia to pour it within. Then each partook of the nectar and ambrosia we provided. . A desert vagabond's dessert! Whatever it was they enjoyed it. From the absence of cuffs and cruelty, what they'd consider cruelty, we knew we gave satisfaction. They threw us back in the truck.

You have never been jolted around in a truck while cords bite into your elbows. Be thankful! It is no fun. Between the pain and the memory of poor Cedric neither Terry nor I could contain our tears. We let them flow. They stained our cheeks. Our desert escort laughed. Did not some conqueror say a maiden's tears were the salt of the earth?

We knew not where we were being taken. We were utterly lost. It was early evening when we were unloaded again. I asked that our elbows be loosed, but was slapped for my pains. There is no better way to keep a girl humble than to tie her elbows together. She cannot fight. She will not even try. Our four escorts know their job. Supper was a repetition of the midday meal. Our breasts, our nipples and our vulvas contributed to an erotic dessert. There were those among the four who had experience. Terry and I are only female flesh. We had orgasms. We were deeply shamed. The cunning lips controlled us as did the cords. Our will was taken from us. Our senses were easy prey.

Men must always hurt a girl. We have discussed this before, so why bother! I expect the real answer is very simple. To whip a naked girl is to have an eternal orgasm. Much better than the real thing really . . . . Certainly for the one who holds the whip!

Pain is kept as the piece de resistance. First we service them with lip and loin. It is easy to do. We do it well. While we endure their gasps and agony we wonder why the act merits attention. It seems to Terry and I that the act, for the male, is a defeat rather than a victory.

It is a defeat they seek to counter and nullify with pain. Our pain! They get revenge for their flaccid member we have made ludicrous. They do it in many ways, all of them terrible to a naked girl. Their favorite is the whip.

The whip is wonderful. It so easily becomes a live thing in the hands of a man bent on revenge for impotence or seeking to recharge the forces he has spent. The whip or the cane. It does not matter.

Our escorts have canes. They take us into the poor abandoned shed beside which the truck is parked. They throw a rope over a beam and loop one end on our wrists. Then they pull. If it has not been done to you it is a mystery. To Terry and I it is not. It has been done to us before. It will make our bottoms stick out to invite the cane as though we had asked for it. Up and up go our pinioned hands, our arms wrack our shoulders. We bend down and down to ease the strain. But we can only bend so far. When they have us on our toes it is considered the ideal pose for a girl. She can now be caned or whipped on her bottom, her thighs and her legs. Even her lower back is exposed. She is very vulnerable. Her breasts are most available. She will kick and lunge under the cane, but she will evade no single stroke.

They cane Terry and me for a long time. It is probably all evening. Time passes very slowly for a girl in this predicament. What does it matter! A naked girl against a man's joy! They are not comparable. Joy wins. Why not? It has logic. The cane cuts into the flesh of my thighs. I scream in desolation. The scream is expected of me. I deliver the male no more than is his due. I hear Terry's screams as though they are far away. It is a very happy evening for the four men. Terry and I do not matter. We are slaves.

There comes a change. An air of purpose. Things of consequence are afoot. Our hands are lowered. We can stand erect. The agony is almost justified by the glorious relief. We stand, still helpless, letting it irradiate every nerve and sinew. Our skin is scalded from the cane. We do not care. The torture of the cord has eased.

Slave girls have no illusions. When our wrists and elbows are untied we are not surprised by the bit of wood and the loops round our thumbs. We do not fight. We do not want the cuffs and the blows. A girl hates the fist upon her face. She will do much to avoid it. We stand passive. But, oh, how bitter it is to watch our hands being drawn up and up by the rope that treats the bit of wood as a trapeze upon our toes only to find it is not enough. We stretch and strain and implore with our eyes as our toes leave the floor and our poor slender thumbs accept the punishment of our weight. We gasp and moan. Our torturers are happy with our acknowledgement. We hang.

They gathered up their gear and went away. No backward glance of pity or of gratitude. We had served them. We were now litter upon the desert's dusty face. We do not matter.

But we matter to us. We are still alive. The four men have had their sport. It pleases them to leave us hanging by our thumbs in agony. Their maleness is thus proclaimed. We will remember them! Terry and I realize we may remember them all our lives. Our lives may be close to an end. How long can a naked girl live, hanging by her thumbs! A couple of days . . . ?

As usual in torture, time does not exist. We do not know the hours by which we die. We hang, limp, helpless, in great pain. We do not struggle or strive to escape our fate. We are too utterly lost. Too totally delivered to pain and eventual death. The four are probably laughing at their final joke as they jolt across the desert road. They used us. We will remember them by the loops upon our thumbs. The hours pass slowly, but they pass. The darkness comes and goes. We do not sleep. I suppose it is unconsciousness. Nature is kind. But we may live a long while yet. We wish that we could die. . . . quickly . . . . quickly!

Rabin and Thalia walk through the door. We do not believe. We scorn reality. In the phantasmagoria of the night we have seen many things. They are but one more, their concerned and anxious faces almost real. They cut the rope. We fall to the ground. We cannot stand. Thalia hurried to their car for brandy while her father cautiously saws at the strictures round our thumbs. We begin to believe that death has slinked away.

How pathetic we are. Our hands and arms are almost useless. But we throw them round the shoulders of those who have rescued us. The brandy is potent. Terry weeps on Thalia. I weep on the senior Rabin. They pat our naked backs in a tenderness of possession. Our gratitude is infinite.

We tell our poor sad tale. They listen with sympathy. Rabin says something in their own tongue. Thalia goes to the car again. When she returns she carries chains. We do not mind. We stick out our legs thankfully and watch as the metal bands are locked about our ankles. It is like coming home. Rabin will protect us. The chains will keep up from being foolish. When Thalia produced handcuffs we hold out our hands. But are turned around and our wrists are handcuffed behind our backs. We are slave girls far from home. Mr. Rabin will take no chances. We are thankful for his irons. In them we are secure.

Thalia kisses us. She understands better than her father can. With tenderness and sorrow she tells us we are slaves. That, once more, her father owns us. We nod happily enough. We had not wanted to hang by our thumbs until we died. Even a slave girl does not want to die. We tell her we will obey. She hugs us hungrily. Her father smiles.

It is not until we are in the car and speeding back to slavery that we wonder. Is such coincidence likely! The pieces all fit. Had Rabin planned it all!
We will never know.

• • •

"Is most happy ending." The rustle of paper money could be detected in Mr. Rabin's voice.

"Damn right, old timer," Mike approved. "Hands clipped tight behind?"

"Are most tight. Dear girls will not escape." Mr. Rabin beamed on all.

Dorinda wondered if two girls had ever faced so great a quandary. It was in her mind to plead with Rabin not to sell them back to the coarse oaf who had been the instigator of their distress. She had never felt more like a piece of merchandise that at this moment standing with Terry. The two of them blatantly sold by one man to another.

"Got the 'Quest' a clean bill of health," Mike assured them genially. "Been searched, been checked, been questioned. Everything on the up and up. Safe to have you back aboard. The heat's off."

"What do you want us for?" Terry demanded glumly.

"Oh sweetheart! What d'you think?"

"To screw us, I suppose. Perks for your crew. So much a month and free tail. That the only way you can get help?"

"Mr. Sandos most kind man," Rabin rebuked. "He will give large party. Such lucky girls."

"Where's that handsome daughter of yours?" Mike inquired.

"Alas. Is visiting today and tomorrow with Aunt. You had thought to invite to party?" Mr. Rabin seemed flattered. Perhaps he scented a rental.

"Too bad. Give her my regards." He looked at his watch.

"Should get going. Let's get these two little treasures fixed up."

The fixing up was both painful and humiliating. Two Ping–Pong balls. Two wide strips of tape muted two pairs of pouting lips. A black band tight round the eyes. A strap joining the elbows. Ankles tightly corded. Dorinda knew herself no more than a package. When she was placed on the floor of the vehicle, her bound ankles were crossed over Terry's and tied again so that they were trussed together in their silent darkness.

"I am much hoping we will meet him again," said Mr. Rabin. The door of the truck slammed.

Dorinda's elbows hurt. The motion of the truck was uncomfortable. So was the position they were forced to sit in. With all four legs tied together neither could move without affecting the other. The van was warm and stuffy. They drove for an hour before they stopped, the door opened, and Mike's heavy jocularity broke their silence.

"Howl all you like now, sweethearts. No one to hear. May as well have a look at each other too. Got a little ways to go yet."

There came the sound of tearing tapes and gasps.

Gratefully, Dorinda raised her lips for release and spit out the Ping–Pong ball

joyfully. When the band was whisked away from her eyes she found herself blinking in astonishment at Thalia. The door slammed. The truck resumed its journey to their new establishment.

"I have been kidnapped," said Thalia equably.

She was bound as they were bound. She had been mute and blind as they had been. She was still partly clothed. But what she wore was torn as from a struggle.

"On my way to my aunt's, they grabbed me." Her eyes implored them to share her astonishment. "I have never been so tightly tied. It hurts. I suppose he takes us to his ship?"

Dorinda could have laughed. The Arab girl seemed unconcerned, only curious. Thalia was not easily ruffled.

"What on earth does he want you for?" Terry broke in. Thalia grimaced. "I expect he wishes to fuck me. Or perhaps to get money from my poor father. But I do not think it is for money." Her eyes widened in memory. "But you were telling me: He likes to whip pretty girls, does he not?"

"I'm afraid he does."

"Then I will be whipped."

"Darling?" Dorinda was puzzled, "doesn't this bother you?"

Thalia laughed gaily. "I find it exciting. To be bound. To be the captive of bad men. To know that things will happen. . . . If it were not for my poor father . . . . He will worry."

She saw their incredulity and was contrite. "Forgive me. Life has not been exciting. I will be expected to marry. Then it will be even less. This is an adventure. Your Mike, he will tire of me finally and let me go. I will return to Daddy. Will I look as much like a zebra as you did when you came to us?"

"Almost certainly. Oh, darling, I'm sorry!"

"Do not be." The Arab girl laughed at Dorinda's concern.

"Poetic justice, is it not. I punished you. Now it is I who will feel the whip."

"He won't just give us a medal either, y'know," said Terry glumly.

"So we are all whipped! Darlings, don't be sad. I am not." She looked at them shrewdly. "I do not suppose your Mr. Sandos will be more cruel than some of Daddy's customers? Or me?"

"Mike's got his own ways. He degrades a girl. And he's got a crew. . . ."

"I am to be the plaything of a pirate crew! Darlings, I know girls who would give much for such a fate."

"Don't joke about it," Terry wailed.

"But I'm not joking." Thalia looked at them earnestly.

"You see, a Moslem girl's life is very narrow. She does not have much fun. Even I, whose father gave her so much liberty, even I was finding life very dull before you came," she added, wistfully. "I was so glad to see you. My father has had other girls, many of them. But none like you."

Dorinda saw the irony of it all. Everything was comparative. It depended on where you were born, on how highly sexed you were, where you went to school. Perhaps you became a lesbian because of the inadvertent touch of the fingers of a girl. Perhaps you loved the whip because of an infant spanking by someone your small eyes found colorful.

She hated Mike because of his coarseness, his crass male insensitivity. Yet, she realized, this Arab girl might find a battle of wits and bodies with such a man stimulating. She felt better. Goodness knows, her plight was shocking by the standards of some. But Thalia's vitality was infectious. The coming duel would be interesting to watch.

Terry brightened up too. She twinkled at their fellow captive. "Look darling," she said brazenly, "where we are going there's a word we are up against all the time. It's an ugly four letter word. It's Mike's favorite sport – after whipping out bottoms, of course. Do you want us to use it when we have to, and we'll have to! Or do you know a nicer one?"

Thalia considered. Her eyes were dancing. "Was there not a most famous quotation from a Miss Gertrude Stein about a rose?" She laughed in joy at their discomfiture: "A fuck is a fuck is a fuck!" She laughed delightedly. "There is no word like it. Not any there. . . ."

Dorinda felt a great gladness that this vital creature had become a part of their lives. Her ready acceptance of carnality had a reassuring earthiness about it. "Alright," she challenged, "the thing between our legs. How about that?"

"Darling," Thalia was laughing with pure enjoyment. "That is a cunt. Why must you seek synonyms? It is a delightful word. So beautifully explicit. You are so silly to be ashamed. The English tongue has such delightful words. Why must you seek to clothe them in corsets?" She looked roguishly at her fellow captives. "Come, I will help you. A simple Moslem girl will lead the sophisticates: I have a cunt. It is a beautiful cunt. It will be fucked by a man named Mike." She laughed joyfully. "See how easy it becomes. Remember those first French lessons: My aunt has a green umbrella. This is the pen of my father. Just that simple. A kidnapped maiden must learn a new language. If she does not she will be forever distressed. She will have no communion with the man who has taken her. So she must say, perhaps only to herself, but she must say it: I am a captive girl. I have a cunt. He who has taken me will fuck my cunt. I have tits. He will bite them. I have pubic hair which he will pluck." Thalia laughed at their dismay. "You see! A simple Moslem girl may teach you. . . ."

"You didn't learn that at Girton?" Terry challenged.

"Learn, learn. What does it matter where we learn! We are girls. We know these things. I have a cunt. With it I can change the map of the world."

Dorinda was enthralled. Here was a woman! Here was the epitome of Women's Lib. Yet how they would hate her! Few, if any, of them would admit to possessing a cunt. They would call it something else. But then only if they were forced to. They would like to see themselves as a statuesque feminine image without orifices. Sanitary and chaste.

"Don't you hurt? We do." Terry probed.

"Of course I hurt, darling. I hurt beautifully and wonderfully. I hurt because a man has bound me. Bound me tight. And why has he bound me! Because I am his desire. He wants me enough to risk his life and his fortune to possess my body. Darlings, wake up. Here we are, tied tightly and in pain, the three most lucky girls in all the world."

Dorinda sought to clear her mind. She felt like a child in school whose bafflement with trigonometry had been solved by a lucid teacher. How absurd life was. She and Terry were being taken to a fate worse than death . . . almost. Thalia greeted the same destination as an exciting experience. Was everything only a state of mind!

"You are going to hurt worse than you ever dreamed possible," she warned.

"What if I do! I will also live more than I have lived."

"You'll hate him!"

"Why? He is male to my female. He will hurt me, yes. Tell me of any woman to whom a man did not bring pain. Tell me."

Dorinda had no answer. She wished she could share Thalia's avid curiosity. It was like watching the first steps of a child who has not yet learned the pain of its first fall. "When you are screaming in agony, what then?" She was ashamed of her cattishness.

"Well then, darling, I will scream." Thalia seemed enamoured of the prospect.

She was very beautiful and very much alive. Dorinda hated to think of her soiled. But that word, too, was comparative. She and Terry had been soiled. By the standards of a past day they would be beyond the pale. She did not feel soiled. Most certainly Terry did not. So that label, too, could be cast aside. "You are not going to like being naked, are you?" she asked mischievously.

"You are naked." The new captive judicially considered the question. "Very well, I will not like it the first time. I can understand that whether they strip you, or whether you yourself shed your clothes, the first time must indeed make a girl long for six hands. But I have a very nice body. I will be proud of that." She gave her companions a sly shrew glance. "Is not a girl who is beautiful always a little proud. . . ?"

They bumped along uncomfortably, busy with their thoughts. Dorinda wondered why they must be so tightly tied. There was no need of it now. The strap at their elbows was pure punishment. Mike had probably casually forgotten, or wanted them in a subdued frame of mind on arrival. Thalia, too, must have been irked by the discomfort. She surveyed her companions' total immobility and announced:

"Darlings, I am going to untie you."

"How?" two voices demanded in unison.

Thalia grinned wryly. "I don't know," she admitted. "But I shall try. It is something to do. I am tired of bouncing about like a ball. You two can do nothing because of the way your feet are tied. But I'm not fastened to anything."

"It will hurt," Terry warned. "So it hurts. I will bear it."

"But we are all handcuffed," Dorinda protested. "Even if you got everything else off we can't get free of them. We would still be helpless."

The Arab girl chuckled. "Darling, do not worry. I, too, have no hope of freedom. But I want to see the look on that big man's face if he opens the door and finds three girls who are not in pain. . . ."

Dorinda and Terry watched entranced. It was a diversion.

None of them had anything to lose. The elbow straps bit brutally. It would be good to be free of them.

Thalia's approach to those she would rescue was in reverse. Thrusting with her bound feet, she was able to get her fingers against the cords that joined their legs. She could not see what she must do. But they could. Her handcuffs clinked busily as she tugged and pushed under their direction. That first hurdle was easy. The cords fell away, leaving each girl separate within her own bonds. Thalia was jubilant. Her face intent, eyes shining.

"Now, darling," she said to Terry. "You lay on your side so that my fingers can reach the strap that hurts."

Once more a painful panting contact was achieved. "You see," Thalia exulted, "we are going to win."

Dorinda, the only one who could see the pinioned arms and questing fingers, gave directions with bated breath. It was exciting. It was good even to be rid of the tie from which they were already free. The concerted effort once again brought results. The strap fell away. Terry whooped in glee and sat up. Her wrists and ankles were still in thrall. But she contrived to lean over and enthusiastically kiss the girl who had wrought the miracle. "Only my ankles! Here they are, darling."

"We are going to have fun with your Mr. Sandos," Thalia said confidently.

The three girls were on their feet, glorying in their relative freedom. Each was still handcuffed. But their pain was gone. Thalia scornfully kicked one of the hated straps that had joined their elbows. She did a small dance of joy on the swaying and uncertain floor.

"He may not be all that pleased," Terry suggested doubtfully. "He'll probably put the damn things back on just to teach us a lesson."

"So what!" Thalia kicked this way and that, flexing her cramped limbs. "For

now, I do not hurt. I think that for girls who are as we are there had best be no thinking of next day or next hour or next week. Oh, how dearly I would love to unlock these things upon our wrists!"

For a little while she amused herself by testing the grip of the metal that joined her hands. She pulled and twisted, her face intent. "I know I cannot get free," she acknowledged, "but it is good to try. If I am to wear such bangles, it is best that I find out what I can do or cannot do with them. With these now I cannot do anything at all." She paused, thinking. Then sought her companions with dancing eyes.

"Darlings?"

"Yes?" She had their full attention.

"We have a little time together now, alone. We do not know what your nasty man may do with us when our journey ends. . . ."

Her lips pouted. Her eyes glowed. She discarded words. "Oh darlings, yes. We must! I'm crinkling already. . . ."

Dorinda laughed in joy.

Three girls made love.

The truck bumped its way toward the Sea.

THALIA

I did not get my victory. I think that men must never let us win. Is is important to their self esteem. But I was very angry. He was just pretending not to notice that we were free of his bits of straps and cords. He said no word at all. I knew from this that he would not be easy. The girls had told me. Terry and Dorinda are afraid of Mike. Perhaps I will be before he is through with me. If he ever is through with me. There is that to think of too.

For a little while, bound in the truck, I was excited. That thing that was done to me when I was fifteen was not like this. I was very frightened then. I expect I should be very frightened now. But the girls make it so different. Pure romance: three lovely maidens chained and captive. The perquisites of a Pirate Prince! How silly a girl can be. Even a girl like me. Rabin's daughter! I deserve to be whipped.

Mike cheated me of everything. I expect it was because of those rotten straps and cords. So I must be made to know I am a nothing. Just a little curio picked up along the way. He does not strip me. He does not strike me. He does not ask questions. He just motions with his hand and I am taken down and locked in what he calls the 'Brig'. I do not like his Brig. It is awful! I must have claustrophobia. The tiny iron box with its rivet heads was a terrible place for a girl all alone. I did not know what he had done with the others. I had been taken from them. To tell me very plainly that I was never going to escape he had my handcuffs removed, my hands pulled round to the front and locked very tight in heavy chains that joined my wrists and linked them to the wall with a tether that stopped me getting near the door. I could sit or stand or lay down on a miserable little shelf. That was all.

They call it 'softening up', don't they. I was chained in that beastly little Brig for part of a day and all night. When I was handcuffed and taken to Mike's office I knew I was not quite the same girl who had ridden in the truck the day before.

Even the little journey from my prison to my first interview with the man who now owned me was designed to put me in a properly receptive frame of mind. At first on deck it was glorious All my happiness came back. The Quest is a lovely boat. The Mediterranean is a lovely sea. For a moment I forgot my handcuffs and the big fingers on my arm. But then I saw Dorinda. . . .

I had never seen her clothed. She was not clothed now. But what was being done to her made her seem doubly naked. She was hanging from the rigging by her wrists. They were spread out above her head and tied with many strands of rope so that she just hung there high above the deck, her body swaying freely as the boat moved in the swells. As a final touch of cruelty, perhaps for the sake of shame, a wooden rod was tied to each ankle so that it spread and separated her legs. We on the deck who looked up saw first, and most of all, her pubic hair and that which it was supposed to hide.

"Say hello to the pretty lady," the man who held my arm encouraged. His name was Myron. A big burly chunk I was a little afraid of.

Dorinda looked down and shook her head dolefully as though offering sympathy for my plight. I could tell she was hurting badly. But she managed to say: "Don't worry, darling. I'm O.K. Keep your chin up," before I was hustled on to the next shock.

I suppose I can add the words: as usual, when I say that Terry was entirely without clothes. She, too, I have only seen in the nude. For one awful moment when I caught sight of her I thought I was beholding her last minute alive. Her hands were tied behind her back. I have learned since that we girls are tied like that most of the time. It makes us quite helpless and causes our breasts to stick out nicely. Thus, Mike is pleased on both counts. But the alarming thing about Terry's predicament was that she was sitting astride the rail of the ship ready to fall into the sea. She had no hands with which to save herself. Then I saw the rope on her ankle. It pulled her foot out sideways and held her tight so that she did not go over the edge. Her other ankle on the opposite side of the rail was held by a handcuff. I wondered why, until I saw that it held her foot so that she could reach nothing solid with it on which to find support. Her punishment was to sit like that, always on the brink. All her weight resting between her legs upon the rail. The rail was wide enough that the darling was not tortured. But I could tell that she was in pain. I would not have wished to sit like that. Not a woman . . . But, who knows! Perhaps one day I, too, will sit in such a way.

Terry is a darling. She is adorable. She was hurting very much, but when she saw me she smiled and called out: "Why darling, isn't this gorgeous! I'm drinking in the ozone."

The English have a joke about the ozone. They refer to it a lot. But I have forgotten why. All I could do was smile as though I was sure everything would be alright, and then that big hand on my arm shoved me up some steps. I was quite sure everything was not alright.

"A pleasure, dear girl. Your father and I are old friends."

"Then send me back to him."

We glared at each other and then laughed. He with genuine enjoyment. Me ruefully, knowing I wasn't going to win. He motioned me to a chair and lounged back himself. His eyes were very shrewd.

"I'm curious to see which role you are going to play?"

"Role?" I said it disdainfully.

"We all pick one, y'know," he grinned at me confidingly.

"Take me now: I'm a brass bound bastard. But I do a very good Hearty man of the world act. Fools even you girls the first time. Now, you're lucky. You've got a fine choice. How about the Arab Princess: 'My father will flay you alive!' That's a good one.

"You went to Girton, didn't you. So you can do the cold English virgin freezing me with silent contempt and mentioning that I wouldn't dare do it if your brother Jack was here. Then you might try–"

"Oh shut up, you silly ass! I'll just be me," I broke in on him. After seeing the girls I felt I might as well die for a sheep as a lamb. I'd soon be suffering some awful indignity anyway.

It jolted him. He knew I'd seen the jolt. "You do want to be whipped, don't you?" he asked cozily.

"How about me whipping you? Be a nice change."

I don't know what got into me. The courage of desperation, I suppose. That Brig had frightened me. On the "Quest" a girl got punished before she did anything. But the effect of my bravado was startling. He sat up, alert. "I'll be damned," he exclaimed heartily. "So that's your thing!"

"I do not have a thing."

"We'll let you whip Cuthbert. Do him a world of good."

"Anyone with a name like Cuthbert deserves to be whipped. But don't look at me." I was getting out of my depth.

He chuckled. "Done much of it?"

I am not naive. I knew what he meant. I wished I'd kept quiet. "I am not whipping anyone," I told him imperiously as though I owned the ship. "Now, release Terry and Dorinda and give us all a decent breakfast."

My breast heaved. It was fear, but I hoped he'd mistake it for something more useful. He sat back and gazed at me silently. I could not tell whether he was pleased or angry. I was getting ready to tell him to get on with it and have me flogged, when he reached out and touched a bell. It was Myron who showed.

"Breakfast for four in thirty minutes. Release the girls. Show Miss Rabin to their cabin. She wishes to wash her hands." He dismissed us with a wave of his hand and turned his attention to some papers on the desk.

I wasn't sure who'd won.

"We've been promoted," Terry told me cheerfully. "Last time, we got the Brig," Dorinda said.

It was a delightful cabin. I could understand Mike keeping a girl off balance by giving her luxury half the time and torture or degradation for the rest. He'd be amused.

Terry was making an intimate examination. "The hair's still there and my thingummy's just the same." She seemed reassured, and looked at us seriously. "It's awful having to sit on your quiff like that. You're positive nothing can ever be the same again."

I washed myself and straightened the rags that had survived my kidnapping. My hands were free. I wondered why. Both the others were handcuffed. "Leaving you free to slap his face," Terry opined.

It was delightful. Luxury. A gorgeous day. A time to savour and enjoy. A girl wonders why men have to be the way they are: the way Mike is.

He was so bloody charming. Terry and Dorinda knew him.

But he had me floundering. I refused to think. I enjoyed. Everybody helped. I wondered if I'd ever be as adept with handcuffs as the girls. The way they did everything was far prettier than if their hands had been free. There was a daintiness and precision . . . . I could see the day when they'd be all the rage.

"What are we, Mike?" Dorinda asked matter of factly. "Prisoners, guests, or slaves?"

"Trying to make up my mind about that, honey," Mike admitted. "Got any preference?"

"Whichever hurts less," said Terry brightly.

He laughed, delighted with her. "They're all a pain in the ass, sweetheart," he roared at his stupid joke. We smiled politely. I suspected ours was a command performance.

"While we're down on that subject," Terry continued puckishly, "I'd suggest you didn't put me on that rail again. You may lose a useful facility."

Mike bellowed again. He bellowed easily. "All hair and no hole, eh," he chortled.

"Slave girls are a valuable asset," Dorinda pointed out meekly. "You may wish to sell us back to Mr. Rabin."

They knew his language.

His funny spot was tickled again. "Like to see the old boy's face. You two and his

daughter. Neat package. SPECIAL PRICE." He grinned at me. "Think he'd buy?"

"If I was included he would buy. Otherwise I do not think he will ever deal with you again."

"Never mind, honey. You're worth every penny I don't get."

He swiveled his attention. "What you girls suggest for the Princess's initiation?"

"Five strokes," Terry said promptly. I guessed it was his minimum.

"Ten," said Dorinda, more conservative.

From their tone I deduced I'd be lucky if it was only twenty.

Mike pretended to consider. "Bit old hat, don't you think?"

"I'll sit on the rail," I said firmly. "I do not mind the loss of a facility."

He gave me his full attention. "Ever occur to you, honey, it ain't yours to lose any more?"

"What do you suggest then?" I demanded.

He grinned as though I'd fed him the question he'd been waiting for. He turned to Terry. "Tell her, honey."

She looked at him, uncertain. Then understanding dawned. "Oh, Mike. Don't do that to her. She's new. Besides, it's horrible. Even for me it's horrible."

I expect my face was a big question. Terry turned to me and vehemently protested. "It's rotten, awful. He did it to me. I don't mind too much. But not you! Oh Thalia, not you. . . !"

How silly we girls are! I was excited. Whatever it was that was planned for me had not left a mark on the delightful child. I was ashamed at this excitement. I hoped big Mike had not seen it. I think he knows far too much about how silly we are.

"I will sit on the rail," I said firmly. "I will climb on there all by myself. I will offer my hands and feet to be tied." I looked him very squarely in the eye. "That would please you?"

It did please him. He looked at me with the air of a man who has made a good buy. "I'll be damned. You'd do it, wouldn't you!"

"Naturally. That is my function now, is it not: to be hurt so that you have fine erections. Is it not said that a woman's work is never done."

He liked it. Men are as foolish as we. I babbled on at random. "The closer the hurt is to the hair between our legs or to our breasts the more rigid the result. Am I not right?"

"I think you're bluffing," his grin was still pleased. "This cool and collected bit. Ain't you overdoing it?"

"A slave cannot bluff her master."

"Oh come off it! You three little tricks have got nothing in your minds right now except how to manage Mike. Poor old Mike! I scarcely got a chance with you three kittens scheming away."

"You can always whip us. It wins all arguments."

"It's a lovely idea, kid. A consolation for poor old henpecked Mike. String you up and watch the stripes spring up on your skin."

"How lucky we are to serve."

He wagged an admonishing finger. "You're too big for your britches, girl. Anyone but you would have got hoisted about the time we ate our grapefruit."

"You prefer me to be dumb and quiver?"

"You got a point," his eyes glinted at me. "Y'know, you are going to make an interesting study for poor old Mike. After you've had 'bout the twenty–first stroke, we'll pause awhile and have some nice bright conversation like we're having now. O.K. sugar?"

I am not really very brave. Our little breakfast was so delightful that talking about my body being lashed by a whip was like speaking of Mars or another century. But inside I cringed. This big man, just by snapping his fingers, could make terrible things happen to me. I could believe that what he had just said could become true within the hour. I was busy thinking up some appropriate quip when Dorinda broke in.

"But, Mike. You can't keep three girls like us forever!" Heavily, he turned his attention upon her. "That will cost you five, honey. Speaking out of turn. You know better. You get 'em after breakfast. No use spoiling our digestions. But don't let it slow you down. Chatter, but no beefs."

Poor Dorinda! She looked so shamed. She made no saucy retort. Just pouted and delicately used her chained hands to butter a piece of toast. I knew she must do something or she would cry. I wondered if, a week from now, I too would have nothing to say when told I would be whipped. I noticed that Terry ignored the incident as though it had not happened.

They were slaves. It showed. I was not yet a slave. I would try not to be a slave. I realised that behind those two girls was much of slavery of which I did not know. I wondered what had been done to them to make them think as slaves. They were so attuned. I had seen it in them when they were the slaves of my father and of me. Such beautiful slaves! How willingly they offered themselves to be bound or to be chained or to be whipped. It is an art. To submit and to think of naught else but submission is a craft, a technique, to be learned and treasured. It makes us doubly female. But I did not want to be a slave. If it was indeed my fate, I wondered if it was Mike who should break me. He was so gross. But so very male. . . .

He had his own sense of the dramatic. He must have given orders. When the breakfast things had been cleared we all gravitated, a sort of fitting in of jig–saw

pieces, to a space on the deck that suddenly became a stage. We were all audience. There were no actors. The three man crew drifted into seats on a hatch or a box. We girls stood or sat as we pleased. We were a semi–circle facing the Rail, against which Mike lolled. A very casual M.C.

"You got a little job, honey. Fetch it."

My heart bled for her. Poor, poor Dorinda! She did not deserve this. It was on my tongue to intervene. But instinct told me that even she would rather I kept silent. But it was very cruel and very humiliating, this thing that she must do. She did it well. Before those men she must have hated it, but she kept her face serene and went to the companionway. When she returned she carried the cane. A cane I knew would hurt very much: I have used such things. She knelt before her owner. She was more beautiful than she knew. She kissed the cane as though it was flesh. Then offered it that she be beaten. Slowly then she placed herself where all could see, bent down, arched her back and clasped her ankles so that the link of her handcuff was very tight.

Mike struck her very hard. I winced. It is a sound all its own, the thud of a cane upon a girl's flesh. Her bottom flowered it's scarlet band. Poor darling Dorinda! How naked and alone, and how very slender she seemed there, exposed to all. I knew I would not wish to be as she was.

He was so unkind. He need not strike her so hard. She was only a girl. No need to make her sway under the impact of each blow. But, of course, Mike would always strike like that. Somehow I knew. She could not forbear to make small sounds. Once she apprehensively looked round and back as though to speak or to plead. But quickly bowed her head again to wait for the next stroke. She quivered and twisted, but was always still and receptive when the cane found her. When the five were done, she did not clasp her bottom or rub her wounds. But, once more, slowly and with grace she knelt before the man who had whipped her. "Thank you, master." Her voice was low but clear.

With surprising gentleness he raised her to her feet and kissed her hand. For a moment they gazed into each other's eyes in a communion I could not interpret. Then the slave girl Dorinda rejoined the audience. She did not sit down.

There fell then a silence. No one stirred. Dorinda had been a preliminary. The stage was bare, waiting.

It took a little time before I felt his eyes. Then I became aware that the three men were looking at me too. They knew something I did not. Shamefacedly, the two girls looked from me to him and back again. Suddenly, as though someone had switched on a light, I realised the stage was set for me.

There is a much used sentence in fiction and on the stage in which someone declaims: "The time has come!" I had known it would come. It was here! I was not ready. I never would be. I had asked myself what I would do. But I had no answer. I could obey or resist. I would not resist, the men would enjoy handling me. So I would obey. But how! A puppy dog. Or try and hold on to being me . . . . No one helped me by speaking. There was not even an order to disobey. That Mike . . . !

"Am I on stage, darling?" I inquired sweetly.

Mike simply pointed with the cane to where Dorinda had received her strokes.

So I was to be caned like a schoolgirl in front of all! It was a beginning. No worse than I had feared. I shrugged and walked out for my initiation.

Always there is a twist. I stood and looked at my master. I did not want to bend. Once more the silent cane gave a message. It did not reach me. It was not the motion given Dorinda. He flicked it up, not down. I was about to ask what I must do, when he did it again and I understood. My hand flew to the fastening of my dress, our eyes locked. He nodded. It was time for me to strip.

I had forgotten I wore clothes. It is just as Terry and Dorinda forget that they are naked. Now I was to be naked too. How clever Mike was! To make me do it in front of him, and that absurd Cuthbert, and drooling Alfred, and lusting Myron. I did not want to do it like this even in front of girls. I feared to lose my courage and my poise along with the bits of cloth I must discard.

It was Mike who compelled me. So I kept my eyes on him alone as I did away with my last defense. The others were not there: just he and I. It was easier. I stepped out of my dress, my poor little slip of a dress that had cost so much.

This time I read the message of the flicker of the cane.

Mike was so clever, so cruel. He would more than strip me naked. Obediently I tossed my dress overboard to the hungry sea. I was a girl who had no need of clothes, nor the right to wear them. Thus a slave is born.

Certainly now my naked flesh would be caned. How fitting a finale! Would I receive five, or ten! Or would I be broken to a groveling nothing. As I tossed my last precious possession over the rail I sought the order that would shame me.

"Round here, Miss."

It was Myron. How incongruous the respectful, Miss! Yet his voice held no irony. How perfectly natural that a girl guest on the "Quest" be tortured. He held pliers and very thin wire.

I held out my hands and pretended interest. But it was not pretence. I was curious, along with the fear. A single loop twisted tight on each wrist. But not so that it cut. After the first securing twists were done a smaller loop was fashioned firmly, the loose ends snipped away. Very neat and tidy. I wore thin wire bracelets with a ring. Mike broke the long silence.

"Still game to climb that rail, honey?" Oh so suave!

So I need not bend down. Bending down suddenly became precious. I relinquished it with sorrow.

"Where would you like me, darling?" I made it sound as though I could hardly wait to feel the thing between my legs.

"Can't risk losing you overboard," Mike assured me jovially. "Fixed something special."

It was simple. It was special. It was all mine. Two trestles.

Between them a plank, on edge. Three feet from the deck. It would destroy me. I had seen them used. Yet I had gaily promised to climb aboard.

I kept my promise. Very gingerly, very cautiously I climbed upon my perch. Once astride my legs clamped tight. I leaned my weight upon my hands. They buckled the anklets. How awful when they stretched my legs to either side! I knew I would split. So far. So tight. Now I could never leave the thing on which I sat. I could not even fall. But, still, I rested my weight upon my hands. When my hands were taken from me I would start to die.

My hands were taken. I did not die. Girls do not die when tortured. The torturer prefers them alive.

Clips snapped into the loops on my wrists. Up went my hands and arms spread wide and high. Much care was taken. I was to lose all freedom. But my wrists must not be cut. Ropes were made snug, everything shipshape. A talkative young lady was being punished.

I have told you of my knowledge of this that was being done to me. It has many names. Usually the girl's wrists are tied behind her back so that her hands cannot help her as she sits and longs to die. But Mike's way was worse. It would be! With my hands fastened high I was cruelly exposed. I had to sit straight, my breasts in shaming prominence, my weight where I did not wish it. But the mental torture was the wire upon my wrists. Had it been rope, how gladly I would have tugged on it to ease the pain below. But not the wire! My first tentative tensioning told me to desist if I did not want the blood running down my arms. I would hold my hands high. They would tire. I could not ease them. They could not ease me. I must hold tense. I must sit.

I sat upon the plank that was between my legs. Everyone had a good look at me. Then, save for the girls, my audience dispersed.

"Mike won't come near you," Terry told me. "If he did it would give you a chance to plead."

Mike thinks of everything.

"Should we leave you alone, darling?" Dorinda was troubled. "You must be in agony and we can't help."

They could not help. Their hands were handcuffed behind their backs.

"They let us wander," Terry explained. "We can't get into mischief. When they feel like it they fuck us."

The hated word! Or the beloved word! It could not be done to me like this. Perhaps it would never be done to me. I hurt too much to live. My four–letter words were consumed by fire.

"If you go, will the others leave me alone?" It was hard to speak.

"No they won't," Dorinda said miserably. "We won't kid you. You're on display.

They can do what they like with you the same as they can with us. The way you sit is Mike's idea of showing you who's boss. He can whip us anytime, and he will. But he likes special ideas. He calls 'em cute notions."

"Oh damn!" said Terry. "Here's Cuthbert now."

The youth with little chin carried a hammer, a couple of nails, a square of pasteboard and a whip. I was sure all were bad. He was happy with his world. I prayed his acne might be chronic. He showed me the little sign. It read: "Please whip me." He nailed it to the plank on which I sat. On the other side he drove a nail and hung the whip. He reached out and pinched my left nipple. He walked jauntily away, whistling.

"They did it to me," Terry said. " 'Cept I didn't have to sit. They whipped me when they felt like it. Not much. Just enough to keep me worried. They did a bit of the other too. But it's awkward standing up with the girl tied, so Dorinda got most of that business."

Incredible Terry! Forever chaste. The eternal maiden.

Could I bear torture! She told me that I could. We were just three girls to whom pain would happen. We would dilute it with our screams. Sometimes in between we would be happy. Was this slavery! It was slavery under Mike Santos.

I was alone. They knew what was best. How darling they were. I wondered, glumly, how I looked. Was I still beautiful, or was I stretched so that I was no longer a girl. No longer anything. I could not get a good look at where I hurt. The pain was so enveloping that I was not sure exactly where the plank sliced me. I believed it cut everything we cherish. The sophisticated Miss Rabin knew great shame. Mike had contrived shrewdly this thing that I must suffer. How I hated the threatening wire upon my wrists.

"Bit hard on the cunt, eh, miss?"

It was Alfred the cook. He bent over and examined where I

sat, as interested in the mechanics as I was.

"Please let me loose. I can't stand it."

He nodded sympathetically. "Nobody's whipped you yet?" The same thought had entered my mind. "Please take a message to Mr. Sandos. Tell him I'll do anything. Tell him I'm sorry. Tell him I absolutely must be taken off this thing. It's injuring me."

He took the whip off the nail. My eyes followed it, hypnotized. "Please don't whip me. I'm hurting enough already. Please. . . !"

Without noticeable emotion he cut the thong up under my strained thigh. I screamed. Nothing should hurt so much. It was a nightmare of the unexpected. He cut my other thigh in the same way, the thong curling full circle, its tip finding a speck of blood. I screamed again.

"Makes lovely marks like that, it does," said Alfred conversationally. "Like you

been wearin' your nylons too tight and too long, only better." He grinned amiably. "Bet you thought I'd give you a good cut across your back?"

He was right. That is what I had expected. "Please get the captain," I sobbed. I had not been able to keep back the tears. I was in full retreat.

"How come you never been whipped?" Alfred had time on his hands.

I gave him an agonized stare. "Aren't you going to help me?"

" 'Course not. You know I ain't. You're just talkin' so you feel better."

"Nobody can bear this . . . . and to be whipped. . . !"

"You're doin' nicely, love. Don't take on so. Bit new on the job, I take it?"

"Help me escape. My father will make you rich."

"Never had no luck with fathers," Alfred mused. "My experience is they got more shotguns than cash."

"You can fuck me when this is over."

"I'll do that anyway," he chuckled. "That there crack of yours 'bout escaping: the boss says to give you a real stinger every time you make the offer. Any particular spot you'd like to get it?"

I was nothing. To whip me was no great privilege. To mate with me could casually be deferred until tomorrow. He would whip that part of my person I would choose in much the same way he might give me a cigarette. Alfred was the perfect leveller. He left a girl nothing. I chose my back.

I do not know if he used all his strength or not. The shock of the pain made me jerk my wrist once too often. The wire made its first cut. I groaned in misery. I lost all hope, all pride. To be so robbed by Alfred. How bitter . . . . I wept uncaring.

"A really lovely mark. Pity you can't see it." Alfred's voice seemed far away. I flinched as his finger traced the wound he had made. "You can stop making a fuss. I ain't goin' to hit you no more."

What had I become that this clod could make me know such thankfulness. Not to be whipped again! Perhaps without the whip I could survive. I said thank you, gratefully. How I loathed myself.

"No use hurting a girl too bad," Alfred said thoughfully. "There's always another day." He shambled away to his kitchen.

I was nauseated with the pain. I longed to die.

We close our eyes when there are things we cannot bear. I closed mine. I had no coherent thought. I wondered if Mike Sandos knew of the awfulness of this thing. I longed to plead to him. Yet I was glad he had not seem my abasement before Alfred. I drifted in a welter of distress.

I heard the voices. But it was as though I eavesdropped. What could voices have to do with a girl splayed asunder on a plank?

"But she's bleeding, I tell you. If she faints those wires will cut her hands off. . . !"

There were growling sounds. Male.

"She's going to faint. Look, she's swaying. Oh please! I can't help her. I'm handcuffed." It was Terry somewhere far away.

There were many rumblings. Then Mike's voice, incisive.

"If she comes off, you go on?"

"Yes! Oh yes. But hurry. Mike. . . ?"

"Yes Honey?"

"Please not those wires though . . . ? I don't think they are very practical. . . . I mean, they're not safe."

"O.K. Sweetheart. We'll call the wires a mistake." Suddenly there were hands upon me. Blessed hands. My arms fell. Stupidly I saw they were covered with blood. I could not move them. I was lifted and placed upon my feet. The plank gone. I was in paradise. I leaned into someone's arms and put my head against a chest. It smelled like Mike. I did not want to move, ever again. If I moved I hurt. But it was a beautiful pain. I heard all sorts of sounds, odd words, exclamations, bustle. Then fire was poured down my throat and I was gently lowered into a chair. I opened my eyes.

Mike's face was very close. It was concerned. I was glad.

He bent and kissed my forehead. How foolish a girl! My pain left. "Sorry, sweetheart. Error in judgment. Shouldn't have been the first time. Too much too soon. No apologies, mind. I'm still a bastard. We ain't setting a precedent."

I did not care. I was so lucky. Dorinda was bandaging my wrists. A single cuff dangled from one of her own. She must have been unlocked in a hurry. There was a basin of water and towels. I was being made whole again. She looked at me with love. I who had punished her . . . . It was not until Mike moved his bulk away from me that I saw Terry and remembered. . . .

She sat as I had sat. But her hands were cuffed behind her back. That was the only difference. The sign was there, and the whip. She was looking anxiously in my direction, ready to catch my eyes and smile.

"Hello darling," she called gaily. "Aren't I a lucky girl! Riding horsey, horsey?"

She is in agony. Who should know better than I! Yet she laughs that I not be hurt. This darling, this most beautiful girl, she sits upon the plank and smiles at me. Oh Thalia, Thalia! I am forever shamed. I look at Mike. He grins and shakes his head. I look at Dorinda. She smiles and touches her lips with a finger.

I am deeply shamed. I cannot look at any of them. I am so small. I want to crawl

into a little hole. What would my father say! Absently, selfishly I feel the wound between my legs. I am intact. I do not know how this is so. But it is so. I am grateful. A girl loves her cunt. It makes her priceless in the eyes of men. She need feel no shame for being glad that it is in good working order. The feeling has come back into my arms. They have been cleansed of blood. Dorinda had put neat bandages upon my cut wrists. They no longer hurt. My hands are drawn gently behind my back. The handcuffs click. I have been told that I am still slave. I watch as Dorinda's hands, too, are joined behind her. The task for which they were freed is done. She must return to bondage. Both of us are slaves. Our eyes acknowledge it.

You who read can tell. I am sure you can. I long to be ravished by big Mike. I am wanton, without shame in this one thing. My loins are aflame with more than the bruise of the plank. Mike does not know, or does not care. He nods, pleased that a job is done, and goes back to whatever he does in his office. Dorinda and I look at each other, uncertain what to say. Girls know so much. They have little need of words. I look at Terry. She has bowed her head and closed her eyes. She is steeped in pain: mine!

Dorinda nudges me with an elbow, and nods for us to go.

My surrogate must be left without our prying eyes that she be not shamed with my shame. We steal away. I hurt as I walk. But it is a hurt I do not mind. I wish my hands were free. But what would I do with them! A slave has little use for hands. Not Mike's slaves. . . .

"Do not feel badly, darling." Dorinda kisses me. "You did not fail. That asinine creature damn near killed you. Don't think Terry or I could have done better. I think he is sorry. But he'll never say so." She grinned in an apologetic way. "You do understand, don't you? We can have the run of the ship the way we are," she clinked her handcuffs, "but any male who wants us can have us. It does no good to fight. It's best to lay down. . . ."

"You talk as a slave," I told her. I did not approve.

"I am a slave, darling. So are you. You simply do not know it yet."

"You think I should lay down so that silly Cuthbert or that obscene Alfred can shoot his sperm into me?"

"What else can we do, dear?" She was so gentle. She tugged at her handcuffs and made much noise with their links so that I would understand our impotence. Girls' bodies without hands. Bodies to be used.

"I will show you what we do," I said. Then I realized and turned to her in sorrow for a thing we could not share. "A thing that I can do. . . !" I amended.

I tore my eyes away from hers. I looked at nothing, not even at Terry upon my plank with my bonds upon her feet as I passed her by on my journey. I knew, with surety, what I must do.

He was there at his desk with his papers. So big. So big a man. He looked at me in wonder. No doubt he thought I would have no wish to be near him after what he had done to me. For a minute neither of us spoke. Then I told my mission.

"Dorinda tells me I am a slave, open, available to all your crew?"

He nodded as though his thoughts were elsewhere. "I do not wish to be fucked by rubbish."

He focused now. He had heard my words.

"If I am to be fucked, it should be by you. I wish it so. You are the captain. You own me."

I had his attention. He was smiling, interested.

"If I am to be communal property, at least you should be first."

He looked up at me. Amazed. Flattered. I was not sure.

"You want me to fuck you!" he asked pleasantly.

"I want you to be first."

He nodded thoughtfully. For a little while he looked at me in silence. Then, in a very tired voice, he said: "Oohhh dear. . . ." as though I had placed a great load upon him, and cocked an eyebrow. "You want this?" he asked with great emphasis.

"Please."

In an absent sort of way he got to his feet. He went to a drawer. When he turned he held a cane. The cane. "Bend over, silly girl," he said.

My eyes were full of tears. I had failed. Oh how dismally I had failed. My master did not want me. I had offended. Wretchedly I touched my toes with hands chained behind my back. Everything was absurd and impossible. I arched my back as I had seen Dorinda do. My bottom stuck out nicely. I waited for the cane.

It hurt me very much. Yet I do not think that Mike hit me as hard as he could have done. I think this. How scalding they were, those lovely stripes. My time upon the plank had inured me to pain. I was grateful. I wanted to bear his punishment with honor. I gasped. I flinched. But I did not disgrace myself. I was proud. He stopped at five. My bottom burned. But I knelt before him and said: "Thank you, master."

I stood. He did not help me. He was again seated. Now I understood. "I was wrong, master. You will fuck me when it may please you. Not when it pleases me."

He nodded, very briefly, and returned to his papers.

I went to search for Dorinda. My bottom was on fire, my loins demanding. I was only a girl. When I found her we kissed for very long. "We will find a quiet place," she whispered.

I was glad. I needed her love. She looked at me questioningly. "What did you find?" she asked.

"Only that I am a slave," I said.

We came back to her by a sort of gravitation. We could not stay away. The lovely child with her legs spread so wide upon her perch of pain. How beautiful she was, sitting quietly in her loneliness. How long would Mike keep her there! We never know. We must not ask. I learn quickly from my pain and from the things Dorinda whispers.

She senses us. She turns, already smiling. It is a small smile. But it is not tears. She has shed those. The stains are still upon her cheeks. She cannot wipe them away. We cannot wipe them for her. Our hands, too, are locked behind our backs. We may share only our lips. I do not give the darling lamentations. Or ask silly questions about the pain. These things are known. My face tells her of my shame and of my love. She speaks for me.

"I don't weigh very much, darling. So it hurts me less," she giggled. "My little thingummy won't be sideways."

"Have they whipped you?"

"Just a couple from Alfred. He says we are just getting stew today, so he has time. So kind of him." She wrinkled her nose. "I think if either of you had been in sight when he was through with me he'd have found time for you too. Whipping me gets him the damnedest hard on. I almost laughed the way he kept looking at what I'm sitting on."

I am aware of my nakedness. Terry's words make me aware of the thing between my legs that all now may see. There seems nothing that does not provoke awareness. Almost I am glad that my hands are forcibly held behind my back. I do not have the shame of trying to use them foolishly. Fastened as I am, it is by no volition of mine that men may gaze upon my body. Strangely the handcuffs divorce me from guilt. But now, suddenly, I long for clothes. Cuthbert has come into view.

"Why Cuth! Have you come to whip me?"

Incredible Terry! But Dorinda has explained that two strokes in this situation is de rigueur. A girl may absorb two and remain flippant. Cuth is embarrassed by his audience.

"Had it in mind, miss," he looked at Dorinda slyly. "Won't bother you none, will it?"

"Of course it bothers me, you idiot. You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

Cuthbert is ashamed. I can tell. But he picks up the whip. "Pity your hands are in back, miss."

"Yes, isn't it, darling! Unlock one handcuff and you'll have a free field."

"If you must whip a girl, whip me," Dorinda said disgustedly.

"Or me," I could offer no less.

I saw our mistake instantly. Cuthbert's smile grew from ear to ear. With tremendous male superiority he whipped all three of us on our thighs where the handcuffs did not impede. It hurt very much. Even with the futile Cuth, a girl cannot win. He laughed

at our chagrin.

"I got time to fuck one of you," he volunteered generously. He examined us whose feet were free. "I done you already," he said to Dorinda. He turned to me. "Guess it's your turn, miss. Come on. We'll go below."

How I hated Mike! To leave me to this oaf! I tugged at my handcuffs in fury. "If you come near me I'll kick you in your genitals," I threatened.

How awful to be a girl aboard the "Quest". Naked.

Handcuffed! Even a nothing like Cuth can do what he pleases with us. I had threatened him. But I had never felt more vulnerable.

"Leave her alone," Dorinda said crossly. "She belongs to Mike."

"You all belong to Mike," Cuthbert sneered. "Mike ain't put out no word against the boys screwing the Princess."

"You touch her and I'll kick whatever bit of you she doesn't," Dorinda promised.

"You don't know how to screw anyway," Terry taunted from her perch.

Almost I felt sorrow for Cuthbert. He flushed. He shuffled, looking from one to the other of us resentfully. But he was male. On the Quest the male must win. He picked up the whip. He looked at me.

"You don't want to be fucked. O.K. I'll make you a deal. Leastways you can make me one," he smiled the omnipotent male smile. "How many strokes you want to ask me for to get off the hook?"

Complacent. Smug. Triumphant! I hated him. I thought of turning and running away. But on a ship where can a girl go that she is not found and punished. I wanted to scream in fury. To ask to be whipped that I be not fucked! Not even certain that the lashes for which I would plead would satisfy his lechery! Now I must hate myself.

"Please give me five strokes with the whip, Cuthbert," I asked sweetly.

He smirked. "That all your little cunt's worth, Princess? Hell, it's better value for me to take the piece of tail."

"Give me five as well then," Dorinda offered. "To be able to lash a pair of naked girls ten times ought to turn you on."

"But Cuthbert was winning, enjoying our desperation.

"Let's have a bit O' serious bidding," he suggested amiably. "Five on them little rumps you got ain't nothin'."

If only he knew. Men do not know how they hurt us. They think us some pretty piece of rubber. Suddenly Dorinda turned and ran.

"Stay still, you!" Cuth pointed the whip at me. He did not mind seeing Dorinda

go. His concupiscence had focused on me. I was new. I was Arab. He was enjoying his mastery. "Come on now," he coaxed. "Make me a serious offer."

"You don't have to," Terry interjected. "You girls with your legs free aren't supposed to be whipped like that. The whip's just for me."

"You said it, miss," Cuthbert approved. "Them with their legs free: What are their legs free for?" he smirked as at some clever logic. "But the Princess here don't want to spread her pretty legs. So I'm giving her a way out . . . . Ought to be grateful." He looked at me lewdly. "Are you grateful, miss?"

"Please whip me fifteen times," I asked flatly.

"You really value that twat of yours!" His voice held genuine admiration. "O.K. You're doing better. What am I offered now?"

"Please strike me with the whip twenty times."

"Sold!"

I was frightened. He was jubilant.

"You can't do it!" Terry asserted vehemently. "Oh darling, don't let him. You won't be able to stand it. Twenty is terrible. A girl has to be tied to even stay in one place. But even then she can't endure so many. Don't be silly, Cuth. Twenty will mark her shockingly. Mike will be mad."

I don't think he heard her. His eyes had been devouring me. I expect I was cringing as much outside as I was inside. Twenty! Why had I said it. . . . But then, did I have a choice! "How do you want me?" I asked him, trying hard to keep panic out of my voice.

"Bend over, Princess. Spread your legs."

I obeyed. He meant to hurt me cruelly. The handcuffs bit at my wrists. The white hot brand found me again. I cried out in despair. I was flesh and blood. I was a girl. Twenty . . . !

"Ain't you got work to do, Cuth?" it was Mike's voice.

I dared not move. Perhaps Mike would whip me now. But a hand beneath my chin raised me upright. I saw Dorinda, panting, scared. She had fetched him. Now she would be punished. Cuth was gone. Mike grinned down at me. He is so big.

"Damnedest girl for getting into jackpots." I looked at him through tears.

He picked me up in his arms as though I was a doll. He nodded good naturedly at Dorinda. "Thanks, kid. You're home free." I saw the tension leave her. She became beautiful. He would not whip her. He carried me to his office.

I must stand before his desk. I did not mind. I had no wish to sit at just that moment. But my Master sat, lounging comfortably and looking at me with amusement. "Turn around slowly, sweetheart. All the way. I want to see your decorations."

I turned very slowly indeed. I knew the number of whipmarks I bore would be beautiful on a girl. I have seen them often on others. He nodded appreciatively when I had completed my circle.

"You're a damn lovely girl, Thalia."

"Thank you, master."

"Where did you get that 'Master' bit? I never told you."

"It seemed proper," I looked at him hesitantly. "Do I do wrong?"

"You do it damn well," he conceded.

"Am I not a slave, master?"

He grinned wryly. "Tell you the truth, girl, I don't know." He glanced up sharply. "Why did you ask that bonehead to whip you?"

I flushed. "I have told you, master. I do not wish to be used by the crew. I have told you my wish." I was afraid. "Should I bend over, master?" I was certain that I should.

Mike sat and enjoyed me. I was pleased to be enjoyed. Perhaps, after all, I should not be whipped.

"You were ready to take twenty strokes just to keep it for me?" his voice was very serious.

"Yes master."

"Suppose I fuck you now, and pay you for it with twenty strokes after?"

"Yes master. Oh, yes please. . . !"

Thoughtfully my master unlocked my handcuffs. He smiled.

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It was a delightful garden party. The napery and the ritual, the sloping lawns, even the trees, might have been a transplant from an English County Mansion. The music of Vienna drifted across the scene from some unknown source. The blue Aegean sparkled. It was a day to be alive.

The crowd was dense. It bespoke wealth. To create the House, the terraces, the grounds meant very great wealth indeed. The livery of the staff was ducal. The waiters and their helpers could have come from Claridges or the Savoy. Perhaps they had.

In the middle of it stood Dorinda, naked, handcuffed. No one stared.

It was not a nightmare. She would not wake up. It was vividly real. Her hands were prettily linked before her so that she could manage the cup of tea with her usual competence. A British type in white flannels was being frightfully jolly for her benefit. His eyes rarely strayed below her nipples.

"Frightfully decent of Sandos to bring you girls. Harriet's delighted. I say . . . are you quite sure you can manage? I mean, those things on your wrists. . . ."

"Don't you like my handcuffs?" Dorinda twinkled at him.

"Smashing! Simply smashing. The whole ensemble, I mean," he blushed. "Don't suppose you did Goodwood this year?"

"They won't let me in the Paddock in chains and sans clothes."

"Quite so. See what you mean. You, er, always wear them?"

"I'm never without them," said Dorinda truthfully. "That's a really corking girl with you. The sort of tawny one."

"Her name's Thalia. I'll introduce you."

"Oh, I say, would you? I'm most terribly impressed. Those whip marks. . . ."

"Do you whip girls yourself, Mr. Smythe?"

"Well, er, as a matter of fact. . . ."

"We get whipped regularly. Could I have another cup of tea?"

They were joined by the United States. Probably Oklahoma. "Honey, you're a sight for sore eyes. How much do you charge?"

Mr. Smythe blinked. "Charge for what?" Dorinda asked "Them whip marks. Mighty purty. I'd like to whip your ass."

"You'll have to see my owner for that," Dorinda clinked her handcuff. "I'm a slave."

"Bit of a bounder, what!" Mr. Smythe blinked after the retreating figure in search of Mike. "Took you seriously. No sense of humour. I liked that slave bit. Jolly good."

"I am a slave. Honestly I am."

"You mean, you can't . . . you can't. . . ?"

"Escape, you mean?" Dorinda looked at her companion appraisingly. He was not her first. "How would you like to help me get away?"

"I'm afraid I have no key."

"You don't need a key. Just tell the police when you get home. Or I'll give you a phone number."

Musingly she watched him mingle with the crowd, inarticulate, red faced. Mike had been on firm ground when he had brought them here.

This time it was a girl. "I think I'd die," she admitted, quite frankly looking down at Dorinda's pubic hair.

"Nudity is not fatal," Dorinda explained. "Would you tell the police about us? Or call a number I'll give you?"

"You don't really understand, do you?" the girl was amused.

"All I understand is that I'm one of three naked girls in a crowd of a couple of hundred people properly clothed," Dorinda said bitterly.

"Come on, I'll show you. No sense spoiling your day with this escape nonsense." The girl's touch on her arm was warm. Dorinda allowed herself to be led across the lawn.

It was pleasant in the trees. Even there the evidence of care and cultivation was evident. The effect was Arcadian. There were statues. But these were not out of context on a Grecian Isle. One of the statues moved and waved a hand. "Yo, ho, Tuppy," the naked girl stood by a marble column to which her ankle was chained.

"Oh good! It's Polly. She's not supposed to move. But doesn't matter with us."

"New girl, Tuppy?" Polly eyed Dorinda with friendly interest.

"A guest. The Quest's in port."

"Oh him!" Polly wrinkled her nose.

"Mr. Sandos whipped her once," explained Tuppy. "But don't let's talk about him. I'm trying to show Dorinda the Island. She thinks she can escape. Or at least, she thinks she ought to escape."

Polly snorted and kicked her ankle chain. "Nobody escapes," she said without rancour. "You've come to the wrong shop if you want escapes."

"You see," Said Tuppy eyeing her guest with amusement, "there's none of us really want to."

"Us! You mean you. . . ?"

"That's right, darling. I'm one of Harriet's stable. But she wanted a bit of help with the crowd so I get to wear clothes and to walk around without clinking: That's right. I wear chains too. But thank heavens the dear girl hasn't taken to popping us naked into her garden parties. That's probably Mike's idea. He doesn't give a damn what people think. Besides, he'll be quietly chuckling about your efforts to get someone to help you."

"Why won't they help me?"

"Because they like seeing you as you are. They are a select group all with the

same notion. You know: the good old deviant thing. They aren't about to spoil a good thing."

"But you could escape!" Dorinda was puzzled. "With all your freedom. . . ."

"Poor girl doesn't understand," said Polly.

Tuppy laughed joyfully. She reached out and tweaked Dorinda's handcuffs. "Don't tell us you don't secretly love these?"

"I hate 'em! I'm sick of chains."

"You aren't really, y'know. You just think you are. If you ever did escape you'd come right back."

"Like Hell I would!" Thinking of Mike, Dorinda was vehement. "But you were saying–?"

"Well all these chaps and women who love to whip us and chain us and lock us up: your Mike, for instance. They are in a class by themselves, aren't they? I mean, they're not just everyday." She grinned at Dorinda's frowning attention. "Well, there's one group. Why shouldn't there be a group who love the same thing in reverse! There is. The world is full of girls who love to be submissive and wear chains and get their little bottoms caned when they're bad. Most of 'em don't have the guts or the chance to make it real. But we did. Didn't we, Pol'?"

Polly rattled her chain. "Harriet's the answer to a maiden's prayer," she said fervently. "This Island is closer to heaven than most girls ever get."

"You like being chained as an ornament in here among the trees?" Dorinda asked dubiously.

"Got to take the rough with the smooth," Polly admitted.

"I'd have liked Tuppy's job today. But if I make a fuss I get caned. So here I am."

"You just said you liked being caned." Dorinda was suspicious.

"There's two kinds, darling. Six of the best can make me frantic with lust. But twelve a little harder has me weeping in buckets and promising anything if only she'll stop."

Dorinda remembered Terry. Why argue. "Who is 'she'?"

" 'She's' Harriet, of course. She adores caning. She hardly ever lets us girls do any." Polly tittered. "Of course, sometimes when she isn't looking. . . ."

"But how did you get here in the first place?"

"You can see how many friends she has. They carry the word. The head of the firm I used to work for introduced me. Harriet makes us sign a contract. Don't suppose it would hold up in Court. But it makes us understand what we are getting into. We renounce everything: mainly freedom and men. We enter a wholly lesbian

society, from which we know for sure we will never be allowed to escape. The chains we love become very real. Even if I now, the way I am, attempted to use my bit of freedom as Hostess to get me off the Island, I'd be delivered back to Harriet. The punishment is pretty awful. I tried it once. I never will again."

"But why did you try if it's so damn good?"

"Same silly state of mind you're in. You get to thinking and feel claustrophobic. And then there's a nutty feeling of guilt, that you really ought to try . . . . Harriet canes it out of us."

"Why don't you ask Harriet to make a deal for you with Mike?" Tuppy suggested brightly. "He probably just kidnapped you, didn't he? I mean, he didn't pay any money for you?"

They were interrupted by the advent of two male guests, strolling.

"Into the trees." Tuppy nudged Dorinda. "Watch and listen."

Sound carried well: "Woman's a genius." The male voice was almost reverent. "Dungeons! Oh absolutely, nothing's faked."

"Those naked girls?"

"Understand they aren't on staff." A chuckle. "Not inmates. That chap Sandos lugs 'em around the Mediterranean in his Boat. Sort of floating bagnio. I say! What have we here . . . ."

"By George, she's real!"

Dorinda peeped. Polly stood quite still, holding a truly charming pose.

"Damn well done, old man. I must say . . . ."

"I told you. The woman's a wonder. Always something . . . ."

"I'm going to feel this and see how warm it is." The voice was husky.

"I wouldn't if I was you, old boy. Not if you want to be invited again."

"Oh. Like that, eh. Ah well. . . ."

The voices and their owners drifted off into the trees. Polly visibly relaxed. "Come on," Tuppy urged. "You might as well have a good look." Following where she was led, Dorinda looked back. Polly was sitting on the grass, her chained foot awkwardly outstretched. She waved a cheery good–bye.

"There's other things besides the cane," Tuppy explained. "Harriet won't use a whip. So we don't get flogged. But if we've been a nuisance she uses all sorts of imprisonment and immobility. Sometimes it's fun and really lustmaking. Other times it's bloody awful."

A small door into the lower regions of the house. Passages! The place was undeniably a dungeon. The door alone was frightening. Inside was pure gloom. It

held two naked girls. They faced each other from opposite walls, their narrow waists confined and constricted by a metal band that locked into the stone and held them clamped to it. That was all. But it was enough. They were totally prisoned. They greeted Tuppy with sounds of joy and longing.

"You lucky cat."

"Oh Tuppy, get us out of this."

"They were impertinent," Tuppy explained. "They're not really as unhappy as they pretend."

"We are . . . we are!" The voices wailed. "Oh Tuppy, don't be a beast."

"Couldn't free 'em if I wanted to," Tuppy admitted cheerfully as they returned to the Party. "Harriet keeps the punishment keys." She looked at Dorinda's face curiously. "You noticed there were two in there. Harriet is decent about that. She won't lock us alone in a dungeon. If there aren't two girls deserving punishment at just that moment one of the rest of us gets elected and bunged in there to keep the guilty one company. Bit rough sometimes. But she says it's for the good of our souls. We don't complain much. Certainly not when she's listening."

Dorinda's mind was whirling. More than anything else she longed for the tranquillity of Kyrexos and of Mark. Dear Mark. Mike and this absurd Harriet were pure phantasmagoria. No sooner did she get her mind adjusted to one condition of servitude than she was plunged into another. She thought, wryly, that for her a chain was a chain was a chain. The person who locked the other end of it to something mattered little. Most of them whipped her. Those that did not gave her no key. "I still think I'd like to escape." She said dolefully. "But thanks anyway, you've been kind."

Truly there was no escape. Suddenly it was Harriet herself. A chunky woman with a genial eye and great authority. Tuppy melted away.

"What d'you think, darling," the voice boomed. "Like to enter my stable?"

"I'm not a horse," Dorinda temporised. The question was an awkward one to answer without giving offence.

"You're a damn trim filly. Bet you twitch under the tongue." The laughter was hearty. Dorinda managed a smile.

"I'm afraid I belong to Mr. Sandos," she said formally.

"Hell, girl, Mike would sell his mother if the price was right. He doesn't need three of you. And anyway, he's the most adept kidnapper this side of Chicago."

"There's Terry . . . ." Dorinda wanted to explain. But it was all too absurd.

"Like that, eh! Makes it even better. What the Hell does Mike want with a pair of sixty–niners."

"I don't think he minds. What we want doesn't count."

"Wouldn't you sooner be owned by someone who did mind?"

Dorinda found herself beginning to listen.

"But it's all the same . . . . Being whipped . . . and dungeons."

"Hell, girl. You need a holiday. You're pooped." Suddenly Dorinda found herself embraced. Harriet was very warm and smelt of woman. She tried to use her locked hands to return the hug, but failed. Suddenly she was weeping on a capacious shoulder.

"Sure he's a bastard, child. He's famous for it. Given you all a bad time by the look of your hides."

"But you'd cane us." Sob, sob.

"Of course I would, girl. If no one touched that pretty skin of yours any more you'd be lost. Don't kid yourself. You're too far down the road. I can tell by looking."

"Would you really buy both of us?" Sniffles.

"I'll have a damn good try."

"If I ever have a chance to escape, I'll take it."

"You'll never have a chance, sweetheart. So don't worry." Dorinda looked about her once more. Harriet grinned cheerfully and kissed her soundly. The milling throng politely failed to notice their hostess's intimacy with a naked girl.

"I been looking all over," said Mike grimly. "Thought you'd made a run for it. Was just about ready to loose the bloodhounds. What you think of her, Harriet?"

"I wish to buy her, Mike."

"What!"

"And the young one too."

"You're kidding!" He looked from Dorinda's tear stained features to his hostess's genial contemplation. "You ain't kidding, are you." He did not sound angry. "What's the price?"

"Damn it, man. Don't you know what you want for 'em? Got 'em for nothing, I don't doubt."

"Don't make 'em any less valuable."

Dorinda felt there should be an auction block, with her on it. Her tinge of amusement was dampened by her fear that should the negotiation fail he might punish her terribly for her part in it. She was burningly aware of his handcuffs upon her wrists. Under an impulse she could not control, she implored: "Give us to her, Mike. You stole us, you've used us. You wouldn't lose. . . ."

He surveyed her enigmatically. "You know you are going to be whipped to a fare–ye

–well for this, don't you?" he asked her somberly.

Dorinda buried her face in Harriet's shoulder and wept again.

She listened to their bargaining. A repartee with a deadly serious undertone. When the final figure of her price and Terry's price was agreed upon, it was so huge that she felt pitifully small beside it. Knowledge of it left her with a fearful understanding of the value of a female body if it was young. How could any girl be safe with so great a price upon her sex!

She had changed owners. She was only a slave.

The tumult and the shouting dies.

The Captains and the kings depart. . . .

Dorinda remembered Kipling's "Recessional". Harriet's Island was at peace. The day was done. Of all the guests, only Mike, she herself, Terry and Thalia remained. The rest had gone.

They sat now at dinner. Harriet enchanted and hearty. Mike pleased and sardonic. Thalia and Terry baffled. Dorinda unsure whether she was on her head or her heels. The girls wore their handcuffs as they might have worn an evening gown. There was upon the table an air as of tremendous events. . . .

Harriet turned her attention to Thalia in benign understanding. "You don't want to come here. Do you child?"

"Oh no, madam!" There was no doubt in the Arab girl's response.

Harriet laughed, enjoying her privileges as hostess. "Doesn't his whip hurt you?" Her tone was sly.

"Indeed yes, madam. It hurts very much. I scream."

"But as long as he holds it: that's what counts, eh?"

"What you getting at?" Mike asked good humouredly.

"He is my master," said Thalia demurely. "You must ask him."

"The girl's in love with you, you big ox!" Harriet laughed immoderately. "How the Hell did you manage that! You're about as lovable as a water buffalo."

"Dammit, Harriet. That the best comparison you can make?"

"How about a saber tooth tiger?"

"My master is very strong," Thalia said.

"You've just about whipped the ass off her too, haven't you! I can see the evidence," Harriet chortled. "Really these girls. . . !"

"Does 'em good," Mike agreed with satisfaction. "You better lace into them two

you're getting. Dorinda 'specially." He guffawed coarsely, "She's liable to start thinking about men. You wouldn't want that."

"Dorinda is sweet," Thalia interjected. "She should not be whipped at all. At least not much." She added hastily.

"Holy cow! We've got more damn love affairs going than you can shake a stick at," Harriet proclaimed delightedly. "I wouldn't have missed this for the world. How much for the Arab, Mike?"

"I am not for sale," said Thalia, blushing.

"That's for me to say, Honey," Mike reproved.

"I am sorry, master. Should I bend over?"

Harriet roared her enjoyment. "The damn girl's got the hots so bad for you, it's a shame to waste the lust. Why not give her six. There's a cane on the sideboard."

Thalia did not wait. Docilely she rose and positioned herself where all could see. Her chained hands clutched her ankles. As though in a daze before so much concentrated femininity, Mike found the cane and implanted six ringing stripes upon the girlish bottom offered for his attention.

"Thank you, master," Thalia rubbed her wealed posterior and looked adoringly upon the man who had striped her with the cane. She replaced the instrument of her punishment for him. Then both resumed their places at table, Thalia seating herself with a delicate sigh.

"You're a lucky bastard, know that, Mike?" Harriet was impressed. "What the hell did you do to that girl to deserve it?"

"My master is very strong," said Thalia.

"He's still a first–class S.O.B., honey."

"I do not mind. He is my master," said Thalia happily.

"Damn it, Harriet, I ain't all that bad," Mike demurred. "This charming girl has discerned depths we cannot see,"

Harriet frankly taunted him. "Such a jewel is rare. You should marry the child."

"I been thinking about that."

The table froze. All motion stopped. The pin, had there been one, could have been heard to fall.

"Well, it ain't the first time a man's married a girl, is it?" Mike looked round the startled faces belligerently.

"I am not even pregnant," said Thalia demurely. Harriet was entranced.

"Hell, this makes that damn garden party seem like a Salvation Army rally," she

enthused. "I never thought I'd see the day." She focused on the prospective bride. "He'll beat you, honey, you know that, don't you?"

"He is my master."

"See," said a vindicated Mike. "She thinks I'm all right."

"The female mind is quite illogical," said Harriet happily. "Thank heavens I know how to deal with it." She turned to her new purchases. "I think I will cane you both soundly tomorrow to restore a proper perspective . . . ." She looked at their bewildered faces sharply. "You aren't in love with the silly bastard too, are you?"

Their negative was in unison.

"That's good then." She turned to Thalia. "You wouldn't like me to give you a damn good hiding to knock some sense into your pretty head?"

"Oh no, madam. Thank you. My head is most clear."

"Humpf! A matter of opinion. I think you've got a hot snatch."

"You leave her snatch out of it," Mike suggested without heat.

"I'm sure you have plans for it," Harriet retorted tartly. "What do you prefer? A church wedding?"

"That would be very nice," said Thalia. "We could have the Islamic one afterwards."

"Holy cow!" Mike looked concerned. "You mean I got to walk down two aisles in order to get up one cunt?"

When his bellows of self–admiration had subsided, Harriet reproved, "You are shockingly coarse. But it would make me happy to offer my home. Would you like to be married in this house?"

"Yes, please," said Thalia.

"That's settled then! We can get the church chappie over from Naxos."

"Don't I have nothing to say 'bout this?" Mike demanded.

"Nothing!" Harriet avowed firmly. "Weddings are for women. You can beat her afterwards. Are you going to lead her to the altar in handcuffs?"

"Yes, please," said Thalia.

Harriet turned an indulgent eye. "That's twice you've said that, child. I'd go easy on it if I were you."

"A chain on her neck too," Mike said dourly.

"That would be very nice," Thalia agreed. Her eyes shone. Harriet swiveled to her recent purchases.

"Sickens you, doesn't it! Girls in love: pouf! They are a pain in the butt. You don't know how lucky you are."

"Don't kid yourselves," Mike warned. "It's your little butts that's going to get the pain. She swishes a mean cane. 'bout this time tomorrow you'll be wishing you was back on the Quest."

"Sour grapes," Harriet declared. "Now, how'd you like to spend the evening?"

"I was thinking of locking the princess in the brig, so we'd be free for a bridge game." Mike's eyes twinkled.

The Arab girl was suddenly tense, her eyes upon her plate. She was very silent.

Their hostess chuckled. "You son of a bitch, you know her weak spot, don't you?"

"I will go in the brig, if it pleases my master," said Thalia breathlessly.

Harriet shook her head in admiration. "Honey," she said tenderly, "you ever tire of this big lug, you come back to me. A cute can like yours is wasted on the heathen. The things I couldn't do with you!"

Thalia just smiled.

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Dorinda idly followed the curve of her inside thigh, over her knee and down her leg to where her ankle disappeared into the neat hole provided in the heavy wood. She twitched her toes. They were just visible above the plank. She did the same with her other leg. They were widely separated.

"Gets to be an awful bore after awhile," said the girl with red hair.

Dorinda said she was sure it did.

"You can bet on something rotten when it's the dungeon. I was an idiot to drop that vase and then cheek her. It's not that I don't know better."

"At least it doesn't hurt," Dorinda consoled.

"Call me Scarlet. Everyone else does," the redhead said absently, "and don't kid yourself about the hurting. Getting our ankles clamped in these damn stocks is just the beginning. If our legs were stretched any wider our cunnys would be winking at each other. She's a bit of a bitch, y'know. We're only about eight feet apart. We get a perfect view of each other's quiff, and there's not a damn thing we can do about it."

Dorinda admitted to the same reflection.

"I do envy you your bush. It's gorgeous. I've always thought we redheads get cheated down there. I say, I'm awfully sorry you drew the short straw. I mean, you're a new girl and all, and here you have to share what I get when you haven't been bad.

You must be really cheesed off!"

"It was a fair draw," Dorinda said cheerfully. "Besides, it's in our contract. Maybe you can sit with me sometimes."

"We don't always sit," said Scarlet darkly.

"It's not so bad. They haven't even tied our hands." Scarlet gave her companion in distress a wry grin. "S'pose I shouldn't tell you, darling. You know, ignorance is bliss. But I've had this before. They start you out thinking how lucky you are. You can sit this one out like a breeze. You look at your little tootsies stuck out in front and neatly nipped in the stocks. About the time the sight of the other girl's quim gets to be more than you can bear and the two of you decide to use your finger, they show up and tie your hands behind your back. So now you grin at each other, shrug your shoulders and think, 'So what?' little clitty will have to wait and you'll get a numb bum. Then, when you are sure you can't bear it anymore, someone comes and hoists your bound hands up so high you know for sure your shoulders won't take it. Then, later, when you're sure you're dying, you get a blindfold." Scarlet pondered. "I really was an ass to talk back like that. . . ."

"You really mean they'll do all that to us?" Dorinda's day was spoiled.

" 'Fraid so, darling. If it isn't that it will be something just as bad. A girl only gets in the dungeon if she's really dirtied her diapers."

As always when confronted with some new rigor of her slave state, Dorinda's thoughts turned to Mark. She was sure he would never punish her with the sort of distress now in prospect. She longed for Kyrexos. Here with Harriet they were closer to the beloved island. But to what avail! Since becoming one of Harriet's girls Dorinda had quietly explored possible avenues of escape. There were none. In the process she had narrowly escaped penalties. Harriet would not countenance even the thought of escape in one of her possessions so totally owned.

Today was a bad day. But most were not. The girls got caned a lot. None escaped. They wore chains most of the time. But not always. It was a beautiful privileged place. Harriet loved them all. Dorinda could understand how easy it would be to accept and then to love Harriet's Island and those who dwelt thereon. She had Terry. Their owner acknowledged their love with approval. She did not sunder them save for punishments.

She wondered about being female. She had never previously been so aware of her sex as she had become as a slave. Thalia's transformation was a never–ending source of speculation. Yet, had not her own behavior been much the same with Mark? She longed to immolate herself for him. That was femaleness: to be always aware of your desirability, aware of your body and your limbs and your lips as a source of joy to others. The whip made it all very real, and somehow orderly.

Dorinda explored further. "Suppose a girl is sincerely sorry for having offended, and really goes all out in asking pardon, does she get it?"

Scarlet shook her head sadly. "No. She's for the high jump regardless. We've most of us tried it both ways. There are two ways, y'know. One sincere the way you say. "The other just trying it on. When Harriet knows a girl is sincere she may even shed a tear or two with her. But she gets the punishment just the same. I suppose, when

you think of it, that's the only way to handle an island of girls. Females are natural born twisters." Scarlet sighed. "I'm honestly sorry for what I said. Harriet knows I'm sorry. But it isn't gong to do either of us a particle of good . . . . I feel an absolute bitch about you!"

Obediently, Dorinda leaned forward on her hard bench and crossed her wrists behind her back. Always when her hands were in the process of being bound thus she felt some psychic intimacy with the deft strong fingers that rendered her helpless. To hold still and offer her wrists and to feel the bands snugly circle and grow tighter and tighter was a thrill of submission she unfailingly recognized with a twinge of guilt. She had been forced to admit to herself that to have her hands bound behind her back had become an erotically satisfying experience while the actual tying was being done. Afterwards it might be otherwise . . . !

She tested, now, the tension and skill with which she had been tied. It was tight and competent. Her questing fingers could find no knot. She could not turn her wrists or separate them. She was fastened! Having satisfied this instinctive need to test she relaxed, sat up and watched Scarlet making the same ineffectual struggle.

"Damn!" said the girl with red hair, "Now we're going to start feeling sorry for ourselves. I say, Dorinda, are you any good at getting out of ties?"

"Not unless they are real sloppy," Dorinda confessed.

"Me neither! Of course, I'm sure that's the real reason they don't use handcuffs all the time. Handcuffs are much the simplest for them, and a girl never has a hope of getting out of them. But to be tied is tantalizing. You have hope. You feel quite sure that if you twist a bit more, or just get your fingers 'round the corner you'll find the weak spot. You never do. But I've spent hours and hours trying. Gives a girl something to do at times like these, that and a pair of chafed wrists."

"I'm afraid I don't struggle much after I've satisfied myself it's hopeless," Dorinda confessed. "I've sort of recognized that I'm a bit of a natural slave."

"I suppose we all are here on The Island," Scarlet admitted, giving her wrists a further exploratory twist. "But the dungeon affects us all differently. Outside I'm submissive as blazes. But put me in here, and all I want to do is get out at any cost. If I could wriggle my wrists free, and pull my ankles out of these stocks, I'd do it like a shot, even though I knew for sure it would get me into some really awful trouble."

"That's the punishment. That's why the dungeon. That's why we are in it."

"S'pose so," Scarlet agreed unhappily. "Say, did Harriet cane you two the day after she bought you from Sandos? It's a ritual she has."

Dorinda remembered it well. Neither she nor Terry had taken the promise seriously when it had been made at the famous dinner. It had seemed good–natured banter. But the following day they discovered they had an appointment.

"Always take me seriously, darlings," Harriet adjured them as she zestfully swished the limber length to test its weight.

Terry had been mischievously curious. Dorinda felt silly. Harriet's predilection for the cane had about it a juvenile coloration in the context of a naughty little girl who

should now take down her most intimate garment. To both girls the quality of the cane was a shock. It would hurt bitterly.

"A real zinger," Harriet enthused. "Let's see your bottoms, girls."

How ridiculous to feel shame! After all they had suffered, to feel shame over a few strokes with a cane held by a woman. It was a tribute to Harriet's understanding of the feminine psyche that both girls did feel shamed as they presented their derrieres for inspection. Both were very well striped.

"Perfectly gorgeous," Harriet exclaimed. "Six good stingers on top of what you have will be like the icing on the cake."

"We are really awfully sore already. . . ." Terry offered tentatively.

"Yours will now be seven, love. Any more comments?" There had been no more comments.

"Don't suppose I have to tie you, darlings?"

Actually Dorinda would have preferred to be tied. She was still tender from the inflictions aboard the Quest. She was uncertain how well she would behave. She wanted Harriet to like her. She didn't want to disgrace herself this first time, but to ask to be bound seemed ostentatious. "We'll try and be obedient, thank you," she said meekly.

"You first then. Darling, you're really a beauty."

The slice shattered. Dorinda blindly fought for control into the second. It exploded. Every nerve cringed and twisted. There came a respite. Strong hands mounded her bent nudity with immodest competence. Her back was thrust down, her hips pulled up. The cheeks of her bottom more than ever vulnerable. "Truly exquisite," Harriet said with reverence, and struck the third time. . . .

When it came Terry's turn, Dorinda unashamedly caressed her stripes as she watched the darling child positioned with the same loving care. Terry gasped at the firm pressures, the knowing thrusts. A hand which for a moment cupped her sex. Yet the six strokes and the one extra were no less severe upon the younger flesh. Dorinda winced in sympathy at each.

Ruefully Dorinda told of it now. Scarlet listened with amusement. "It's a beautiful experience with Harriet," she reflected. "If only it didn't hurt so much. I hold on like a little heroine up to the third or fourth, but then I usually make an awful ass of myself. Often I earn myself an extra. But every time I go to her to be caned I'm quite sure that now I'll make a perfect score. But I never do. . . ."

Her companion sounded so dolorous that Dorinda had to laugh. "I've wondered about this insistence on holding the pose," she said slowly. "It would be so lovely to just roll on the carpet and howl and rub the place. But I do have an awful suspicion that the discipline is good for us. I think that, finally, it helps us cope. We come face to face with ourselves and what's going to happen to our bottoms."

"Dorinda?" Scarlet looked awkward. "I say, d'you mind me asking? Did you . . . . did you, get fucked a lot on that ship?"

"About every time we turned 'round – no pun intended," Dorinda admitted without embarrassment. "The crew enjoyed free use of us."

"Gosh!" Scarlet continued to look awkward. "Didn't it. . . . I mean. . . ?"

"It didn't make us a damn bit different from what we were before, if that's what you're getting at," Dorinda said with certainty, "that 'soiled' and violated bit is pure hogwash. We wished we didn't have to. But when we lay down on our backs we mostly managed to think of something else so that we scarcely noticed . . . . We got quite good at it. Of course, once in awhile one of 'em would be in particularly good form. We always felt a bit guilty over those. But not for long. Terry doesn't look soiled, does she?"

"Neither do you. I was just wondering. . . ."

Scarlet was cut off. This time by the hoist. Dorinda was a little frightened now. Her crossed wrists were circled by the cord which was drawn painfully high so that she leaned further and further forward until this relief, too, was denied by a backward pull which left her strained against her locked ankles and the cruelty of the cord. Both captives were whimpering for pity by the time the knot was tied. There was none. They were alone with their wrenched shoulders and gasping breaths.

"See, I told you . . . ." Scarlet groaned. "Oh, I was a fool. . . !"

The darkness followed soon after. As the blind was fitted upon her face Dorinda had to fight down the pleadings that rose to her lips. They demeaned. They did no good. They only embarrassed the girl who was doing her job.

This was punishment indeed! A strange unreal punishment: to suffer in the dark. Dorinda soon found herself floating in a sea of indigo that had no up or down, only steady unrelenting pain.

She, too, wished Scarlet had not dropped the vase.

What they referred to afterwards as 'the Great Hunt' brought vividly home to the two girls the full depth of their captivity. They answered the summons and stood with all the rest of Harriet's stable to be briefed.

"Silly little bitch. Thought she'd more sense." Harriet was perturbed. "Can't find hide nor hair of her. Julie Ransome! Why the Hell she'd run away beats me. Anyway, spread out and search. Plenty of hiding places, dammit! Girl that finds her gets to use the cane. Hurry. I want results. If nobody finds her I'm liable to warm you all up behind," she chuckled. "If the filly comes into view you can shout 'Tally Ho.' "

It was fun! Dorinda determined to see it as no more than that. Secretly she hoped that Julie had escaped. If one girl got free a second might do it too. The thing would be to find out how. But she had little hope. By now the silly girl was probably scared and lay trembling behind a rock or bush.

It was a fruitless search until they saw the boat. A small fishing craft from another island, it drifted about a mile offshore. It had been less easy to observe the small head of the swimmer . . . . Julie was half way to her hope of rescue. Dorinda's heart went out to the fugitive in a surge of pity. Someone had a signal gun. It's blast

echoed across Harriet's kingdom and over the water. The girls gathered on a small hill to watch. Harriet arrived.

It was quite heartrending. The shot had been heard. A sail was hoisted, there was the chug of a distant motor. The fisherman headed for home. The slight swells were sufficient to enable the swimmer to witness her defeat. How bitter a moment it must have been! How bitter, now, to swim back to what awaited her!

Each watcher with her own vivid images in her mind, saw the flashing arms cease their ploughing of the sea. Saw the pathetic head bob for a long time before it turned and began it's admission of defeat. Julie wasted no futile effort in striving to elude the girls and the woman who waited. It would have been useless. She would tire. Struggling through the surf and on to the beach, she paused for a moment to rid herself of surplus drops and to arrange her hair. Then, obviously braced, but with head high she walked over the sand to the woman whose property she was, and from whom she had tried to steal herself.

Dorinda was an aspen leaf, quivering in sympathy as she watched the small drama come to its heroic end. When the escapee and her owner confronted each other their eyes locked. There was no need of words. All that would now transpire was understood. Perhaps there was some communion between them as they stood, the cynosure of every eye. Then, defiantly, Julie turned her back and crossed her wrists.

There came the click of handcuffs.

There was no trial. But there was a sentencing. Each girl should learn her lesson! Julie's agony must be shared.

It was in the big hall. Two lines of naked girls. Each variously chained. None free. In the centre the prisoner without defense, hands still cuffed behind her back. It was but a little while since she had toiled up the beach. Beyond her the Judge.

There was no anger. No vindictiveness. Only a task. "You tried to escape?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

A flutter of wracked shoulders and locked hands. "I do not know."

"Don't be absurd. You risked your life."

"I wanted to go home."

"Aren't you happy here?"

"Yes. I am happy."

"Then why?"

The prisoner obviously fought a battle within herself. She raised her head and flung defiantly at them all: "Because I'm a bloody fool, that's why!" She surrendered to tears.

A girl was delegated to deal with her distress. A girl whose ankles, only, were chained. A girl armed with two handkerchiefs. When she retired the voice demanded. "Do you plead other than guilty?"

"No."

"Nothing to extenuate?"

"Nothing."

"You will be branded."

Dorinda saw Julie's nakedness tense.

"You will be caned for as long as seems judicious." Were there tremors in the flesh of the naked girl who stood so straight to learn what she must bear!

"You will spend a week in the dungeon without company. Each day you will be painfully confined."

The indrawn breath. The closed eyes!

"On release you will again be beaten to the limit of your tolerance."

A trembling of lips that must not negate.

"All this to be witnessed by those who love you." It was done.

"But you've seen the brands, haven't you, darling?"

Scarlet was amused by Dorinda's horror. "There's at least six of the girls who have them for trying to escape. Any girl who has a go at it can be quite sure of a brand. Mark of distinction, really."

Dorinda had seen the brands. A large "H", but had asked no questions. In this community it was not impossible . . . ! She had wondered if she herself might be required to wear one. Now she was to witness the burning of the flesh.

Julie was strapped so that she could not move. A table with straps and buckles strategically placed. She turned her head from side to side as though in wonder at what was happening to her. It was all the motion she could make. Beside her was the brazier and the iron. Every naked girl in the company quivered at the sight. They stood waiting for the High Priestess. It would be by her hand that Julie would be marked.

"They never gag them," Scarlet whispered. "Their screams stop the rest of us. You wait."

Harriet's advance matched that of a Sovereign to her coronation. Her clothed condition emphasised the nakedness of her slaves. Julie saw her approach and groaned.

There was much testing of the iron. There was a minute inspection of the thigh where it would burn through the skin to proclaim for life the ownership of she who

pressed it home. And then the act.

Dorinda saw the smoke and smelt the burning flesh. She saw the naked torso and limbs strain against the bonds, yet move no whit. Watched those agonized moments as the steady hand held the iron the requisite time that its work be perfect. Then heard the screams. The lovely wonderful screams that went on and on and on. . . .

Each girl who listened learned. They would not seek escape! Each knew herself a slave.

Dorinda wanted to be a slave. A slave much loved. She did not wish to wear a brand.

It was the next day. Julie wore a neat bandage round her thigh. It would not impede the cane. Passive, without hope, she placed her loins against the bar of the pedestal which would hold her. Ankles firmly strapped, she leant over and down, her bottom rising as she went. Down, down, arms strained, hands reaching, then straps around her wrists. Tight, so very tight! Now the small of her back, the narrow waist. How wonderfully the leather band exerted its force, curving Julie's slenderness until, when the buckle was clasped, the lush rotundity of her girlish bottom seemed all that was left. It stood up like a beacon, pleading for punishment. To demonstrate the immobility achieved, the girl who had cinched the straps bent and pinched both the victim's nipples. The head jerked. Nothing else moved. Next she thrust against each hip. There was no motion. She sought to agitate each of the two cheeks. They were stretched taut. She stepped back to her place among the watching girls.

Harriet sauntered forward with the cane, her lips curled, not in cruelty, but in amusement as her eyes sardonically surveyed the lines of hushed femininity, each depicting on her features the emotion engendered by the scene.

"Could be anyone of you," she suggested genially. "Don't all look so damn solemn. Relax and enjoy it. Make believe this is you." She tapped the waiting bottom with her cane. "Make you feel real good when you realise it's Julie instead," she chuckled at her pleasantry.

Dorinda did indeed, mentally, place herself where the frightened Julie was. She realised that the girl to be caned had been reduced to zero. No one had spoken to her. Hands had compelled her, not words. The straps had diminished the girl she had been whilst, at the same time, they enlarged that portion of her she least desired in view. Soon she would scream, but the screams would emerge from somewhere below the rearing flesh that would be mute.

The first blow sang and cut.

Julie had not recently been caned. Her flesh was virgin.

The scarlet weal demanded. Each girl paid it tribute with a gasp. Julie made no sound. Dorinda understood the protocol dictating silence for at least the first.

At the second slicing scald Julie screamed. Her screams were continuous then throughout her time upon the pedestal. They were interspersed by pleadings, by sobs, by tears. Harriet acknowledged the vocal accompaniment with amused nods of confirmation, but paused not for a second in her rhythmic flow of shrewd and searching strokes. Julie's bottom was for beating. It was beaten.

A cringing Dorinda saw the weals become a grid that slowly merged into a single area of red and purple. Here and there were overlaps upon the hips. On these were small drops of blood where the cane tip had bitten a wound. She lost count of numbers or of time. She thought only of how it might be known or decided when the time had come to stop.

The time came. Julie had to be helped to stand erect. She was led away to antiseptics and the dungeon.

Terry's eyes sought Dorinda's beseechingly. "Oh, darling, I'll never, never dare." A tear started upon her cheek. "We'll never escape. We'll be here always. . . ."

Each day the girls were filed in and out of the dungeon so that no nuance of Julie's punishment be lost to them. For these occasions Julie was gagged so that she might not plead. But her wide hurt eyes above the gag were as eloquent as her lips. Julie would never do it again. Never! Each day they found her in a new and different discomfort.

It was a strange Community, dominated by the genial but demanding Harriet whose zestful enjoyment of all she did, and caused to be done, infected and governed the girls whose lives and actions she controlled. When Harriet played games it was pure fun. When she punished it was without animosity. Terry and Dorinda soon discovered that the incessant canings were now a feature of life. A girl might be caned for a misdemeanor. Or she might have to bend over for no other reason than that Harriet was in the mood. Either way the pain was about the same. The woman who used the cane took a mischievious delight in always, with complete candor, explaining either the fault to be punished, or the fact that there was no fault at all: she simply felt an appetite for that particular girl's bottom. Even Dorinda and Terry soon found themselves accepting these inflictions as a natural order of things.

Harriet's "Sports Day" was her favourite device for arriving at a compromise in the motives that employed her cane. It was a Gala affair widely patronized by friends much in the manner and style of the Garden Party of many memories. Whilst "The Girls" were the principal competitors there was also guest participation in certain of the events. In all cases there was a prize. It was in reverse. The loser got six of the best immediately on the spot. It was an incentive to win or to be runner up. There was enthusiastic applause, both for the winner and the awarding of "The Prize". Except when required to be on the starting line the girls were encouraged to mingle with the crowd. The sporting nature of the affair had attracted the English contingent in force.

"Shocking hard lines, old girl, that stumble in the two twenty yards." Cadaverous features eyed her earnestly above the inevitable cup.

"Yes, wasn't it." The fall had cost Dorinda the race and six of the best from which her bottom was still smarting.

"Mustn't lose any more, eh!" a chuckle of complicity.

Momentarily he enjoyed her nipples with an intent stare at each in turn, then rose to Dorinda's politely attentive features. "What I mean to say, you're a big girl, what! Bit long in the tooth for six on the bare?"

"At what age do you feel employment of the cane should be terminated?" Dorinda felt like a Head Mistress at St. Swithen's.

"Dashed if I know really. About thirteen, I suppose. You must be every day of nineteen. I say, doesn't it hurt frightfully?"

"Yes."

"Would you mind if I had a closer look?" He gulped the last of his tea.

Dorinda flushed. They were in the middle of a crowd. "You wish me to bend over?" She had been warned to be polite.

"Jolly decent of you. But not here, old girl." The cadaver was perspiring slightly, his solemn features pink. "Just walk up a couple of steps, then . . . er, back up. Should suffice, what?"

Dorinda obeyed, slowly, certain that all eyes were upon her shame. She was rewarded by a fresh cup of tea. "You are really a very beautiful girl." In spite of the absurdity of her situation his sincerity touched her.

"You enjoy a well caned bottom, a girl's of course?" She smiled up at him.

The cadaver took a deep breath. "It's the most beautiful thing in the world," he said simply.

"Do you cane many girls?" Dorinda inquired politely. His earnest concern aroused the Pixie in her.

"Not even once," he admitted morosely. "Don't seem to have the gift for getting 'em to bend over." He had the look of a bereaved alligator.

"Would you like to cane me?"

Her simple words stopped the cup half way to his lips. He put it down slowly, dazed: A man who had beheld Paradise. He gaped at Dorinda in disbelief. "I say, old girl, would you. . . ?"

Dorinda remembered in time. "We'd have to go and ask Harriet's permission." She twinkled at him and managed to look coy. "You see, my bottom's not my own. It belongs to Harriet along with the rest of me. If she did not want you to use mine, I'm sure she might lend you another girl's. She's not really short of them."

The cadaver downed his tea, seeking strength. Dorinda took him by the hand.

"Good heavens, Cyril, what d'you want to cane the girl's bottom for? Aren't you ashamed. . . ?" Harriet boomed at her perspiring guest.

Cyril made ineffectual sounds and motions. Harriet transferred her attention to Dorinda. "Dammit, girl. Who told you to go around peddling your bottom to my guests?"

"You said to be polite. . . ." Dorinda could see yawning chasms.

"Peddling without a license earns you six. You get 'em tomorrow." Harriet disposed of that small matter, but was not yet done. Dorinda cringed.

"Cyril, my boy, admit it. You're a secret lecher. Driven by lust."

The cadaver turned to go, a broken man. "Come back, you!"

Cyril doubtfully resumed his place and glanced guiltily at Paradise who, absentmindedly, was rubbing her bottom. His hostess handed him her wand of office. "Six of the best. Right here." Her voice brooked no argument.

Cyril took the cane and looked at it with awe. His stricken gaze travelled from Harriet to the naked figure of the girl whose bottom had just been presented to him as a gift. It was obvious he had an urgent need of Tea.

"Would you like me to bend over?" Dorinda asked sweetly.

She was furious with herself for getting them into this pickle. She could have done without the six that awaited her on the morrow. But she could not imagine a man with a name like Cyril hitting hard.

The cadaver looked in piteous appeal to Harriet.

"Don't dither, man. She's all yours for six. I'll make the little beauty dance tomorrow, never fear. How d'you want her? Standing straight with hands behind her neck, or bent over touching her toes?"

Cyril was nothing if not conventional. "Toes is the usual, eh. But I say, not in front of everybody. . . ?"

"Why not? The girl's already had six in front of everybody. What difference does six more make?"

"Well, er. . . ."

"You mean you're ashamed for them all to see you doing it. Go on, man. Be a real bastard. Enjoy yourself."

There was no gainsaying Harriet. Dorinda sighed and touched her toes. She heard the familiar whrrr. . . .

The cadaver was nervous. He was not adept. His first stroke had vigor without accuracy. It bit into the softness of a thigh. Dorinda squealed and stood up rubbing.

"Hurts more there," Harriet adjudged. "The girl's excused."

The crowd went about its affairs. There were curious glances aplenty, but not the circle of avid faces Dorinda had feared. Once more her fingers sought her toes. Cyril hit her again in the same place.

"You doing that on purpose?" Harriet asked heavily. Cyril was distraught. "Really, I'm most frightfully sorry. Not much experience, y'know." His eyes roved blankly as though seeking confirmation of his amateur status.

Dorinda rubbed feverishly with one hand and flicked away a tear with the other.

"Well you've had some experience now," Harriet advised sarcastically. "See if you can't hit her arse for a change."

"He did. A blow filled with irritation and the pent up frustrations of a lifetime. It bisected Dorinda's proffered cheeks with a solid thunk. Its agony was the old familiar one she knew so well.

"Right on target. You've got the range, Cyril old boy. Three more to go." Harriet had regained her good humor.

Cyril reestablished his maleness by vigorously lapping the docile bottom with three that undoubtedly could be described as of the very best indeed. Within her pain Dorinda so labelled them.

More tea was undeniably indicated. Whipper and whipped made their way to the Marquee. The caned girl sipped. The man who had done the caning gulped his cupful gratefully. "Needed that!" he admitted. Then looked down at the naked girl in contrition. "Expect you can use it too. I say, old girl. I'm frightfully sorry. Don't know what got into me. Dashed bad form. I bet you're hurting?"

"Of course I am," Dorinda said cheerfully. "But I'm used to it. Please don't worry. I'll be alright." She offered a wry grin. "At least, I will be so long as I don't lose again." She felt sorry for Cyril.

"You mean she'd give you six more on top. . . ?" he was aghast.

She found pleasure in his incredulity. "She'd give me those six and six more as well if I lose enough," she assured him, amused by his consternation. She enjoyed his male concern for her skin. "Harriet's a stickler for the rules."

The two of them drifted away from the crowd. Dorinda noted their direction as being towards the trees. She wondered and looked sideways at her companion. Surely not . . . Not Cyril! But she was not to know. The public address system announced a race. "I'm sorry." She gently touched his arm. "I have to go."

Dorinda never knew the details. But two of the female guests had been persuaded to enter. There was much chaffing and a good deal of vociferous betting. It was obvious that neither entrant was enthused by their escort's confidence in their athletic prowess, but were good naturedly allowing themselves to be pushed forward with much banter and repartee. Dorinda suspected the group of having imbibed something stronger than tea. Two pairs of high heeled shoes were reluctantly discarded and left lying on the grass on the way to the starting line.

The race was routine enough. But for Harriet's girls as deadly serious as any other. None wanted to be last. Dorinda leaped across the grass with a firm determination. The outcome was predictable. The naked contestants were all younger than the guests. They were in better condition, their incentive was keen. Above all they were naked. A naked girl is likely to run better than one who is clothed, even though the clothes be scant. A panting guest, flushed and embarrassed, was the last to breast the tape.

"Hard luck, old girl."

"Damn good try, Betsy."

The consolations came thick and fast. Money changed hands. Repartee was swift and cruel. One of the girls thankfully merged back among her friends. The loser stood defiantly uncertain of her next move. Harriet, armed with her cane, came to her rescue.

"Over you go, darling."

Betsy started as though shot. She looked appealingly at all concerned. Dorinda guessed she had been aware of the penalty but had not expected to face it. Or that, even as a loser, she would be excused. "Ha, ha. Very funny," she said unconvincingly.

"Face the music, old girl," a voice taunted.

"Six of the best," said Harriet as though it was indeed a prize.

Betsy instinctively clutched her bottom. "I wouldn't dream of such a thing," she retorted righteously.

"One extra for quibbling," Harriet announced.

There was polite applause and cries of 'where's your sporting blood' and other similar appeals. Betsy's scarlet features turned this way and that seeking moral support. There was none. Quite the reverse. She could have no doubt of what was expected of her. She faced Harriet and said flatly: "I won't do it."

"Another extra for contempt!" Harriet was enjoying herself.

The watching girls felt sorry for Betsy. True, she had entered the race knowing its rules. True, she should now be a good sport and accept the penalty with good grace. But she seemed so alone standing there. Shame at what she was expected to do and to endure before this audience was probably her greatest inhibition. Dorinda was glad such an ordeal was not her's.

With a gesture of resignation, Betsy bent over and touched her toes. There were hoots, much laughter, admonitions. "On the bare, old girl. On the bare!"

"Off with your pants, darling," Harriet demanded peremptorily.

Her face reflecting a welter of emotion, Betsy removed her shorts. Directing a look of pure venom at her party she then discarded her briefs. She was naked from the waist down. Her pubic hair pouting as defiantly as her other lips above.

There was spontaneous applause that gathered momentum as she bent over and presented herself to Harriet and the cane.

It was a shameful performance. Betsy felt herself imposed upon. She felt shamed. She was deeply shocked at the flashing pain so far worse than she had dreamed . . . . Each stroke brought a break in position, a declaration of Independence, a refusal to continue, remonstrance. Comments from the crowd were constant. Few flattering. But, one by one, each under protest, Betsy paid her eight strokes. Immediately they

were done she dragged on the garments she had been forced to relinquish, and with stoney face, looking neither to right or left, strode through the crowd in the direction of the wharf and the shelter of whatever craft had brought her to Harriet's Island.

"Bad show, what!" Dorinda allowed Cyril to guide her back to the Marquee. The emotion packed incident had produced dry throats. "Staff of Life." Cyril approved, putting down his empty cup. "Damn girl made a spectacle of herself."

"Well, what would you have done?" Dorinda demanded quizzically.

Her companion considered, then delivered a judgement worthy of Solomon. "Couple of the girls could have held up a sheet, y'know. Got her six with a bit of privacy. Not easy for a girl like Betsy to expose her, her what d'you call it, in public."

"You mean her cunt?" Dorinda asked innocently.

Cyril was shaken to the core. It took another cup of tea to restore him to the point where he could ask: "I say there, do you girls actually use words like that? Thought it was just us chaps."

"I used it," Dorinda said mischieviously. "After all, us girls have to call our various parts by some sort of name. I've always felt that vagina sounds obscene."

"Another race starting any moment now, I expect," said Cyril in full flight.

Dorinda had no mercy. "What do you men call a girl's breasts and nipples?"

"Could we talk about the weather?" Cyril bleakly waved the white flag.

He was saved further tribulation by the P.A. announcing the next event. A three legged race for all comers. The female section of the team alone subject to penalty. It was with evident relief that he escorted Dorinda to her next test.

Three legged races are fun. They are popular. They lend themselves to the party spirit. This one had been enthusiastically supported by the male guests who, Dorinda felt certain, were more anxious to hold, and be attached to, a naked girl than for the sport itself. The result of much partnering left her standing without Terry who had already been allocated. Together the two girls would have had nothing to fear, separated they faced risk and hazard. Dorinda stood, feeling foolish, while the P.A. invited a partner.

It was bound to be Cyril. There was an inevitability about Cyril. He came bounding up, pink cheeked and certain of ensuring her victory. She showed what gratitude she could muster. After all, if she had to be paired with a male, he was probably as good as any. She joined in the hilarity as, with arms entwined, they watched a referee bind her left ankle to his right.

Had it not been for The Prize it would have been good fun.

The fettered males roared their enjoyment and gave much verbal encouragement to their naked partners. No records were established. It came closer to a melee than a race. It did not take long for Dorinda to realize that her partner was in distress. . . .

In extenuation of Cyril's failure it must be borne in mind that tussles with naked girls

had never been a part of his previous experience. To be actually holding one, and a very beautiful one that, was a shattering event. To have their legs tied together was an erotic dream. Further must be considered the fact that the girl to whom he was so intimately attached had, but a short time before, presented him with a naked bottom to be caned. An in all it is understandable that his libido should respond. Dorinda knew, without doubt, that her partner had a hard on. Possibly his finest ever erection.

Erections and races do not mix.

Races create motion. Motion engenders friction. Friction itself generates . . . . But let us draw a veil.

Cyril and Dorinda lost the race.

It cannot be said that Cyril's partner felt anything but irritation and dismay. Her bottom already had twelve. To add this new Prize to the rest made a formidable infliction. An infliction which a girl would, normally, have received only had she been a very bad girl indeed. She would accept her penalty. She would not complain. She was mostly concerned that the pain should not be such as to cause her to disgrace herself before so many: particularly Cyril. For some reason she did not wish Cyril to see her grovel and plead.

But it was Cyril himself who became her greatest cross. He was bereft, shamed, abandoned to guilt. She had gone to Harriet, and was obediently awaiting the nod that she position herself, when his distraught voice was raised.

"I cannot possibly allow it."

"Go away, Cyril," suggested Harriet amiably.

A ribald voice from the crowd did not help. "Off with your trousers, Cyril old boy!"

"But the poor girl. She has suffered enough . . . all my fault."

"If you don't dry up I'll give her twelve." There was an edge to Harriet's voice.

"She could never stand the pain. It's altogether–"

"Shut up you silly ass!" Harriet broke in on his plaint.

"This poor little girl could stand twenty if she had to. Couldn't you, Honey?"

For Dorinda the conversation had taken a turn in the wrong direction. But thus appealed to she must respond. The Island had its code. She made a somewhat mechanical: "Of course I can," and then turned to a much disturbed Cyril. Placing her hands on his chest she looked into his hurt eyes and said, as sweetly as she could, "Please Cyril. I want to be caned. Can you understand: I want my six of the best. Please don't fret so. It just makes it more difficult." She made her eyes imploring. "I don't want twelve. . . ."

For a moment they stood thus. Then, with a muttered something that no one understood, Cyril turned and made for the Marquee. He could not bear to watch. His need of tea had never been so great.

Pensively, Dorinda bent into her pose.

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Between it's occasional eruptions into revelry, The Island was a peaceful and beautiful place in which to be. A girl whose feet were not chained could roam at will. She could romp in the surf with others whose hands only bore the chains of slavery. Or she could find a pleasant spot overlooking wood and beach and Sea, and there dream her own private fantasies and memories.

Dorinda cupped her chin with her handcuffed hands. To have them chained in front was, for her, almost freedom: so used had she become to the metal bands upon her wrists. Her eyes roved upon delight. Her thoughts were of Mark. Always of Mark. She could not forget Kyrexos. She had given up hope, but not her dream. It was hard to comprehend her new ownership. That her life would be spent here without hope of escape. Always chained by chains that were not Mark's chains, scourged by a whip that was not Mark's whip. She wondered how she would have borne her slavery had Terry not shared it. Yet how cruel it was that Mark should have had his beloved nymphet of a sister stolen from him forever. A small Eden violated by an oaf named Mike–

"What's his name, Honey?" Harriet's voice was softer than usual.

"Mark . . . Oh. . . !" Dorinda was engulfed in Chagrin. Harriet laughed.

"Don't be shy, child. That we love a girl doesn't mean we cannot love a man." She examined her slave girl musingly. "Are you happy on my Island?"

Dorinda was confused. How speak of such things without hurting or being hurt! The older woman sensed her quandary. "Don't be scared to talk, darling. I won't use this on you. I promise." She held up the ever present cane. "I only carry it just in case."

Dorinda grinned apologetically. "If I say that I am as happy as a slave can be, I seem to have qualified it enough to make it negative," she admitted, "but slaves can be truly happy. I often am." She lifted her handcuffed wrists and clinked the link back and forth. "Take these, for example, most of the time I forget I have them on."

"D'you want 'em of!?"

"No. I would feel no more free. I belong to you. Wearing these helps me remember."

"You going to pine for this man all your life?"

"I don't know." Dorinda raised an amused eyebrow at her Mistress. "Maybe you shouldn't have bought me. All your other girls except Terry came to you sort of psychically attuned. But I was a pig in a poke. Men and thoughts about men don't belong on this Island."

"You belong, Honey."

"So far as being a slave goes, yes. Much slavery was imposed on me before I was brought here. I seem to have been adaptable. It's made me wonder."

"This man business. Don't think I don't know all about it. I've had my own aches. And there's more of the girls with memories than you'd suppose. They tell me sooner or later." She chuckled reminiscently. "There was one poor kid who came here on the rebound from a blasted love affair. She felt so terribly guilty about carrying a torch for the guy – she hadn't expected to. It crept up on her. She had no wish to go back. But he was under her skin. So she made a pact with me. Whenever she found herself with the blues about him she would come to me, confess, and I would punish her. Believe it or not, it worked."

"How could she be so honest?"

"Because she wanted to be, of course! Don't get the idea she came to me for her penance every day. You know how these damn moods take us. We can go a week or a month, and then all of a sudden, bam! We are dropping tears all over. With this girl it took about six months: gradually lengthening the intervals. When it got bad enough she would come to me. She never knew what penance I would impose. It wasn't always the cane. I think we were completely honest with each other. It made a tremendous bond. You know: the way sharing something does."

"Her pain must have been a sort of counterirritant?" Dorinda was intrigued.

"That's a medical term that probably could apply to thirty or forty percent of her cure. Remember, she felt guilt about me. She saw herself as betraying the trust I'd imposed in accepting her slavery. So, for that, she wanted true punishment. She's a very clear–headed girl."

"Do I know her?"

"Oh sure."

"Were you thinking I should ask for penances?" Again the raised eyebrow and bright eye.

"Only if you wanted to very much, honey. It's something that has to come from the girl. It wouldn't work if I thrashed you every time I caught you making calfs eyes at the moon."

Dorinda could see the logic. There was almost temptation! Harriet amusedly watched the expressions flit across the lovely face.

"Careful, darling. I won't make a pact with you until you have thought about it a lot. It would be something very real for us both." Harriet laughed companionably. "There's something showed up that other time. The penitent still gets her usual quota of stripes. So when I come to add the penances it can be more than her little bottom has room for. So you'd have to figure on a good deal of imprisonment and what goes with it."

"But wouldn't a girl sitting in the dungeon think even more?"

"Not if she's hurting enough," Harriet said grimly. They sat together, sharing the view in a way they could not share their thoughts. Finally, apropos of nothing,

Dorinda allowed a question to slip past her guard. "Have you ever thought out why you love caning us?"

Some of the boom returned to Harriet's answer. "Same reason as Mike and about a million others, I suppose." She laughed good naturedly. "Makes me feel good. I have the money. So I do it. I'm not sure we can pin a real significance on it. But one hell of a lot of people have asked that question of a lot of people. It means so much to a lot of us that you feel there just has to be a good answer." She grinned confidently. "Believe it or not, back when I started out on this island and got my first few girls we actually ran a class. We all sat down once a week and went at it hammer and tongs. Kept the little dears handcuffed, of course, but apart from that it was a free–for–all, no penalties for frankness." She paused to reflect. "The damnedest things came up."

"For instance?" Dorinda's interest had been captured. "That's the hell of it, love. I've got you ready for big answers. But there weren't any. Just a lot more questions. The drama was in the telling. Those girls had got themselves into more jackpots than we could sort out in any half dozen sessions. From being a class, my bright idea ended up as a sort of confessional." Harriet laughed. "We wallowed in it, of course. We all had an emotional involvement in what we were listening to. So each story reached out and grabbed us in an individual way. Hate to say it, but some of those tales got me so horny I had to take a girl off someplace, cane her can, and do a sixty–nine."

Harriet gestured deprecatingly. "Not your thing, maybe. Terry would understand. But here's one I remember pretty well, I'm going to tell it in the first person. So now I'm seventeen. Remember that. Here we go:

"You've got the money. What about me?" I wasn't scared of his gun anymore. I was wondering what he looked like under the mask.

"What about you, kid?"

"What happens to me? You're not just going to go, are you?"

"Disappointed because I didn't fuck you? They call it rape at your age?"

"Well, if you don't do something to me they'll think I was in on the steal."

"I can bat you with a flowerpot. But, hell, I ain't goin' to do that to some kid babysitter."

"I'm not a kid. Please do something to me so they'll know I didn't help." I suddenly had a gorgeous idea. Real hot pants. "I know where there's a clothesline cord."

He looked at me as though he'd just noticed I was there.

"You want to be tied up?"

"Oh yes!" I expect I sounded more eager than I wanted to. But no more eager than I really was.

He laughed at me as though I was a kid wanting candy. "O.K. Go get it. Run!"

I ran. I was scared he'd be gone. He wasn't. His lips twisted in amusement when I dragged out the old wooden chair with arms. "You do this regular, kid?"

"You're the first, honest! Do me tight."

I glued myself into that chair and lay my forearms along the rests. I kicked off my shoes. He looked at them. "Why you do that?"

"I don't know." I was frankly excited. I really didn't know. He seemed to find everything I did and said vastly funny. I wished he didn't see me as too young. Without much concern he went to work with the rope.

A fire started to burn inside me as I watched. It was so beautiful. I knew I'd been waiting for this moment all my life. I'll always remember the way I nagged at him, and his amused tolerance of my demands. He cinched my tummy in first. That was easy. Then he tied my ankles. But I had to tell him the proper way. Not just down on the legs, but bend the knees and bring the foot back up each side and then tie the ankles to the rungs. It shucked my dress up so he could see my pants. He hadn't looked at the books the way I had. So I had to explain about just two or three strands for each tie and then how to really make them into a neat tight circle. He grumbled about having to get a knife so as to cut off the short lengths and loose ends. I was very insistent about loose ends. It had to look as though me and the cords and the chair were all welded together.

Why? I don't know. I'd always dreamed of it like that. Next he tied my elbows back in tight to the angle of the chair. This left my hands sticking out nice and straight on each arm where I could see them. I could hardly bear the ecstasy of watching him loop and tie them down. By now, he'd got infected with my own excitement. He was taking a pride in his work. I don't think any girl anywhere had ever been more neatly and tightly bound to a chair than I was. When he had both my wrists tight on their separate wooden arms he was going to call it a day. But I begged for my shoulders. He shrugged and said "O.K. baby, it's your hide," and went to work on them. I told him how to do the underarm and cross at the back so there wouldn't be anything over my chest. I think that's a beautiful way. When he had tied the last knot on I couldn't move anything but my head and fingers.

He stepped back and admired what he'd done, as though making a discovery. "Damn it, girl," he said grudgingly, "I think you got something. You look a damn sight prettier than you did running around loose." He looked at me shrewdly. "You get hot pants out of it?"

My pants were more than hot. They were wet. I was at that age when a girl is still making discoveries about herself. I was almost panting when I demanded the obvious. "You'll have to tear my clothes."

He treated this in about the same way as my other importunities. "Let's humor the kid" sort of thing. But I could tell he enjoyed tearing my dress off. It took quite a bit of tugging on account of the ropes. But he was strong and the cotton stuff wasn't so it was soon in rags on the floor. My pants were easy. He jibed at me when he saw my wet hair. My bra took only one good yank. I was naked in front of a man, and I couldn't move. It was the most wonderful moment of my life.

My breasts aren't floppers. They weren't big then. But they were lovely firm cones on which my nipples were screaming aloud for attention. When my burglar friend

looked at them I knew for sure he was wishing the same as me: that I was spreadeagled on a bed.

"Horny little bitch, aren't you," he sneered.

I looked up at him adoringly and gasped, "Thank you." I meant it. I was so grateful. He must have thought me a little idiot. I suspect he was a bit peeved at the way he'd let me use him to get something that he could see, now, I must have wanted pretty bad. He disappeared into the kitchen. When he came back he clipped a spring clothespin on each of my nipples.

It was a shock. It hurt. I gaped up at him. "Why?"

"Just a finishing touch, kid. Something from me to you." A moment later my burglar was gone. I had never seen his face.

Consider my predicament. I sat there, melting with desire, but suddenly demandingly conscious that my joy or my ordeal had really only just begun. It had taken him fifteen minutes to tie me. The Johnsons might not be back for hours. How was I going to like just sitting there and waiting! Suppose the baby woke up and howled! Suppose the house caught fire! Suppose . . . ! You know how the mind words.

However, none of the terrible possibilities could roll back the throbbing glory that tingled in every crevice of my body and my mind. I knew I was the happiest girl in the world. Sure my nipples hurt! But I couldn't keep my eyes off them. I was fascinated by those clothespins. They had become a part of me, sticking out and up jauntily: small erections! The knowledge that there was just no way I could ever take them off was devastating: devastatingly wonderful!

Oh sure! I thought of what it was going to be like when they found me. Imagine! In their living room! A naked girl with her legs spread so wide her quim would stare them in the face. I knew that was the first thing they would see. My twat! I giggled and squirmed inside at the thought. But the killer would be the clothespins. Those clothespins on my nipples were right out of this world! They would knock the Johnsons right out of theirs. I could hardly wait.

But, of course, I did wait. The cords began to hurt, especially those on my shoulders, and my nipples settled down to a steady burn. But it was lovely gorgeous pain! I'd never known pain could be like that. I was a mixture of new and strange and conflicting emotions. I did not want it ever to end. I knew that, no matter what happened to me now, I would have to make this happen to me again and again for always.

I was intrigued about the Johnsons. But more from what I'd feel when it actually happened: that was what made me quiver with anticipation. Naked for my first time before adults: spread wide open. The questions and the being untied. It would be another experience all over again. There was also a little rational query lurking: would I be a heroine, or would they think I'd made a botch of my responsibility. I was not sure about that one. But I refused to worry. I did a bit of struggling just to find out that I couldn't move at all and had no hope of getting free. Then I settled down to wallow in pure sensation. I was terribly, terribly happy.

They were like two great big question marks with wide eyes.

"What the hell goes here!" Johnson demanded.

"I don't believe it!" Mrs. Johnson said emphatically. They didn't recognize me. All they saw was my gaping pubes and those clothespins.

"What sort of game d'you think you're playing?" He was angry.

I told them about the burglar.

They left me sitting while they scurried around and confirmed that they indeed had been robbed. I didn't seem to be a heroine yet. All my lovely gorgeous sensations were fading fast. I felt even less of a heroine when they came back.

Mr. Johnson made a move to untie me. I think he was going to unclip the clothespins first. Then his wife said: "Hold it, Phil. Something odd. . . ." Her voice was hard.

"Stand back and look at the whole thing," she demanded.

"It's too damn pretty. Look at the way she's tied. Somebody took a lot more trouble over that than any burglar would. Look at the knife and all the bits of cord that have been neatly clipped. Can't tell me a burglar. . . . And her clothes: they' are torn more than need be. . . ." She turned on me furiously. "You little bitch, what's the big deal?"

There I sat with my clothespins. I wanted to get loose now. The glow had gone. I was scared. I started to cry.

"Call the police, Phil. They can see her just the way we found her."

The police. With me like that!

The officers enjoyed every moment. Polite, considerate.

They sat me on the chesterfield, wrapped in a blanket. Mrs. Johnson grudgingly gave me a pair of step–ins. Her bras were no good to me. Then the questions.

The end of it was that the officers didn't like it any better than the Johnsons had. It was decided that they'd take me downtown and call my parents. Then came the juicy bit. They had to get me there. All the Johnsons would part with was the blanket. I was not a friend of the family anymore. So it was thought best to wrap me in that and put me in the back seat of the officers' car. But I was suspect. I had to be secured. It was the second most heavenly moment for me when they turned me round, took my arms, and locked handcuffs on my wrists. I was sorry I could not see the lovely metal things at my back. But oh, the feeling! I started to melt again. . . .

There was a tinge of sadness in Harriet's chuckle. "That was one of 'em. More or less as she told it to the class. I won't say: 'heard one you've heard 'em all.' That would not be so. But their stories were really only the particular path they had travelled in order to come face to face with themselves. Once they had done that they were ready to come to me. Grab you at all, honey? I mean the kid's feelings?"

"Yes. It touches me. I don't really want it to. But it does."

"You'd like to have sat in that chair?"

Dorinda grinned and gestured with her handcuffs. "I can see a distinction. No. I would not have wanted to sit in that chair. But once I was tied into it I'm afraid all my sensations would have been the same as that little girl." She looked at her owner quizzically. "Am I a half and halfer?"

"Honey, whatever you are you're right. For me anyway," Harriet sighed. "I have to admit that sometimes these little slips of girls with their quaking quims are just too bloody juvenile. Old men like 'em young. But you are a hundred times more satisfying. I'll always be glad I bought you."

"It's sort of a nice feeling: being purchased. Makes me feel special."

"You wouldn't want me to sell you again, just for the thrill?" Harriet was curious.

"No. Never . . . . please!"

The mistress was satisfied. "Been thinking about you a lot," she admitted thoughtfully. "How'd you like to share The Island with me?"

Dorinda froze. Her eyes were wide. The question was a small bomb.

Harriet enjoyed the sensation her question had created. "I mean it, sweetheart. We can think up a name. But be my second in command: my assistant: my companion. Stop wearing chains: be a slave mistress. . . ."

Instinctively, Dorinda's eyes flashed to her handcuffs before seeking those of the woman who had just made so surprising an offer.

"But, how could you trust me?" It was her first thought.

"I considered that," Harriet admitted slowly. "I'd sooner you told me I could trust you. But if you say otherwise it won't matter all that much. I mean it wouldn't cause me to think differently. You would not be able to get off the island any easier in that capacity than you can now. Besides," her voice became sardonic, "you'd still be subject to the penalty for an attempt."

"A branded mistress?"

"If you chose it that way, darling."

"Would you still cane me?" There was mischief in Dorinda's voice.

"Of course!" Harriet examined the naked girl shrewdly. "You don't even want me to stop caning you."

"Doesn't that about put it in a nutshell?" Dorinda asked reflectively. "Only a slave girl would want to be whipped. There's even more of the slave in me than I've been admitting. I wouldn't make a good slave mistress."

"The offer stands, darling."

The two women sat, staring. There was no subterfuge between them. Nothing . . . . Suddenly, without volition, the naked girl was clinging in the arms of she whose property she was. Her loveliness wracked by sobs. Harriet held her fiercely.

A long time later the older of the two fumbled in her pocket. "The key, sweetheart. I'll unlock those handcuffs."

Harriet felt the girl in her arms go tense. Breath paused. There was a stillness almost frightening. Then a wailing cry. Words burst forth with vivid emphasis between the sobs. "No! Oh no! Don't take them off . . . . please. Don't take them off me ever. I want to wear them always and always and always. . . !"

It was Dorinda's answer.

They walked back to the big house together. They were happy. They had explored, and found that which they sought. I was as though a quest had ended. For the rest of the day, and for the night, no one saw either of them again.

The slave girl was dazed by her discovery of herself and of the bond which her mistress had woven. She lived in the moment, refusing to think back or to gaze ahead. When she was taken to the dungeon the following morning she was happy enough to place her ankles and watch them locked into the familiar grooves of the stocks. She was not bound. She sat upon her bench and dreamed of slavery. No one disturbed her. That night she was returned to her mistress's bed. She wore her handcuffs.

Harriet's boat was not the size of Mike's, but it was big enough that it could not be beached. From its deck Dorinda recognized The Island. Her heart thudded, almost painfully, as her wrists were handcuffed behind her back. It was with a sense of unreality that she stepped into the dinghy.

Harriet herself used the oars. They faced each other in the small craft. A naked helpless girl; a strong older woman with kind tired eyes. The love between them was almost tangible.

With a final heave of the oars Harriet drove the keel high on the sand. Silent, they stepped on to shore and, for but a moment, stood irresolute. Then she who was chained was clasped fiercely. Lips met and clung.

They could not speak. There was no need. All had been said. To speak now meant tears. Neither wanted them. They had agreed on what to do. The embrace ended, Dorinda turned and strode with purpose towards the trees. Harriet turned the dinghy and rowed towards the ship. Neither looked back.

There are degrees of happiness beyond the telling. Dorinda knew them all. She tugged at her handcuffs for their certainty that this was real. Her steps were quick up the path and on to the road. She almost ran up the rise to where there was the view.

Mark stepped from the rock where he had sat so long ago.

"Lovely view, don't you think?" She remembered that they were the same words he had used then. He was still the smiling sun–flecked boy with glowing eyes. She turned her back and wriggled her hands. "Unlock me please."

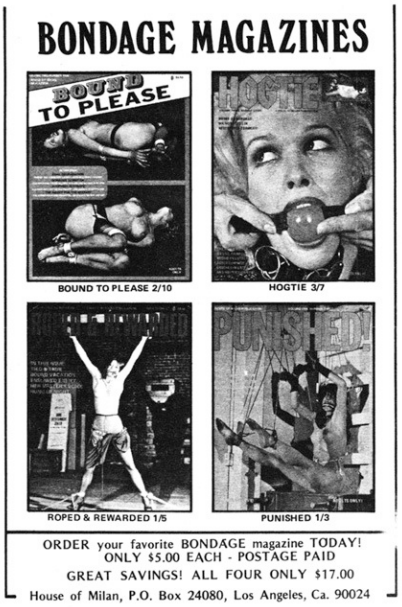
Taking her shoulders her turned her about and looked down into the imploring eyes. "No." The single word said everything. He found her lips and possessed her brutally. Then led her to the house.

On the terrace, against a fluted marble column, a naked girl was chained. A picture of grace and insouciant joy. "Hello darling," Terry chanted, "Look what the awful brute's done to me already. . . ."

With male amusement, Mark watched his sister and his slave blend their lips, watched their fruitless tugging at their chains as they strove to clasp. Then he took Dorinda by the arm.

The chained sylph stood at her pillar and watched them go. Her eyes shone. "Don't leave me too long before breakfast, darlings." Terry's plea trilled after them unheeded. Her silver laughter followed as her master led his slave girl back into captivity.

Terry settled herself contentedly within her chains. It would be a long, long wait.



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