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Girl on the J-Bar-S



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Chapter One

BONDS OF MATRIMONY

The light was comfortingly muted in the big room, clothing the naked girl and the man upon the bed in enhanced intimacy. Brooke lay face down, her husband sat, surveying in whimsical amusement the grid of whip weals on female flesh.

“Etta did a good job on you.”

“She said you told her to whip me hard. She’s a good girl. She worships you the same way Quince does.” The feminine voice was low but without complaint. “Oh, John…!” Brooke sighed luxuriously. “There were times when I thought I’d never last out.”

“I never had any doubts.”

“Whipped a hundred times!” The girl’s voice rose in incredulity. “Even though I can still feel every stroke I can’t quite believe it’s over, that it’s been done to me.”

Scanlon traced a hard finger gently across ridged skin to make his wife wince and gasp. His tone was solicitiously curious. “What’s the reactions, Brooke?”

She did a partial turn to face him. “Mostly relief. A kitten full of cream feeling. I’m gloriously luxuriating in just being here like this—and I’m horny as hell.”

“I’ll deal with that in a minute. Right now I’m luxuriating in you too. Lay flat again, I don’t want to miss a single purple line.”

“Sadist!”

“Masochist!”

“I hate that word.” Brooke obediently flattened her breasts against the sheet and frictioned her hips lasciviously. “Poor old Sacher Masoch was a pathetic male. There’s nothing pathetic about me.” She cocked up an anxious eye. “Or is there?”

“Hell no! The word for you is splendour. Along with your musk—which is pretty damn strong! You radiate glory.”

“Thank you, master.” She glinted mischieviously. “I’m not a bit sorry about my musk. I’d make it stronger if I could, just to drive you crazy. It’s all my smell, y’know. None of it came out of a bottle. It affects me too.”

“How bad did Etta hurt you?”

“I can’t tell you. While she was whipping me it was so bad I don’t have words enough, or maybe not the right ones. You’re looking at what she did to me. Can’t you tell?”

“I can guess.” Scanlon grunted. “Didn’t waste any available skin. A hundred strokes just about uses you up. Still sore?”

“Tender’s more the word. It’s going to take several days. I’ll

be marked for a month. John… please? Don't have me whipped again until this lot's disappeared?"

"Hell no! I'd be crazy to spoil your wedding present to me."

Scanlon bent and kissed lightly the raised welts on her most obvious curves. "Thank you, sweetheart. I'll treasure it."

"Well, I was a bad girl—or don't you remember?"

"Huh! Think you'll lick any more cunts?"

"No! Honest, I promise!"

"Take your word for it."

Brooke basked in affection. Her whipped back and buttocks had reached the stage where their hurt was a pleasant hurt, a vivid sensory awareness to be treasured. It would flare anew when she turned over on her back, but she would not mind…! In the meantime her tone was diffident: "John, we're married, and we're still using first names. How do we sound?"

Scanlon chuckled dourly. "We sound damn good. You're one helluva lot younger than me, but you're a woman. You deserve a name, not some pretty, pretty kid's talk. And no one in their right mind is going to call me 'darling'. We're Brooke and John. I like it."

He was right. He would always be right. Brooke sighed in

deep content and lifted another eyebrow. “I love you absurdly. Are you going to send me to Quince tomorrow?” Hurriedly, she added: “I wouldn’t mind. I mean, I won’t complain.”

“You asking for it?”

“No.”

“Sounded like it.”

“What I want is for the decision to be all yours, John. I’m just female and curious. I’ll obey you either way.”

“Don’t ever be humble, Brooke.”

“I won’t. I’ll be constantly impudent, and I’ll run away often enough to assert my independence. Are you going to keep me handcuffed?”

“Probably.”

“Thanks for not handcuffing me now, John. I wouldn’t mind, I’m so used to them. But tonight I’m going to rake your back with my nails while you fuck me. I’ve been wanting to for so long—you’ve no idea how frustrating it is for a girl…!” She paused for effect. “But what about sending me to Quince?”

“I’ll send you. I’ll choose the times. You’ll get no advance notice.”

“I’ve married a monster.”

“With your eyes wide open. Sweetheart, I’d thought of punishing you myself now we’re married. But I can’t see it thataway. We’ll leave it as is.”

The whipped girl knew a great happiness. Scanlon had mastered her and would maintain his mastery. It was a nice feeling. Curiously, she asked: “What about my old place? What happens to Atherton Acres?”

“It was yours. It still is.”

“But, John, I thought you wanted it?”

“I did. But I’ve got you.”

“Yes, but the title—?”

“I can always whip you until you sign the deeds.”

“Yes you could.” She mimicked his laconic assertion. “But you didn’t do that when I was your captive, so I don’t suppose you’ll do it now I’m your wife.”

“Don’t bet on it.”

“I don’t have to. I’ll sign anything you want. Surely you understand by now, you big oaf, I’m glad I belong to you.” Brooke raised herself on her forearms. “Dammit, John, I’m in love with you!”

“Whip and all?”

“Yes, that too. But, tell me, what about Randolph and the

oil? Is there oil under the Acres? Am I a millionairess?"

"Yeah. You're a well whipped millionairess. How's it feel?"

"As though I've been well whipped."

"There's oil under Atherton Acres and there's oil under most of what I've been herding beef on. Under that dirt we own there's more millions than we can count." He grinned sardonically. "That accounts for all the attention we get from the state capitol and Washington."

"John, you've got to run. I don't want you to allow my breasts and my whipped skin to divert—"

"You aiming to be First Lady, Brooke?" Scanlon chuckled. "Wonder if you'd be the first dame in the White House to have a sore ass."

Brooke's eyes sparkled back at him. "That doesn't matter. I'll let you use a riding crop on my bottom every day in the Oval Room if it's an inducement to get you there."

"I'll use a crop on your ass whenever I want to, girl. Don't ever forget that."

"O.K., O.K., but I want you to accept the nomination. I'm so terribly proud—"

Scanlon kissed his wife and pressed her down against the sheet. "I wouldn't mind." He admitted reflectively. "But the capitol is my second ambition. You're my first."

“So! O.K., you’ve got me!”

“You know damn well what I’m talking about, sweetheart.”

Brooke knew! She sighed. John Scanlon’s absorption in the punishment of her flesh was the dominant factor in his psyche. That she was now his wife would make no difference at all, it was a point both had agreed to and understood. She had neither wish or intent to change the strange harmony of their explorations in her pains and prisonments. They were lucky to possess a faculty of enjoyment in sex beyond most people’s comprehension. Without conviction, she suggested: “You could leave me here during the times I’d be a nuisance. You’d know Quince and Etta would keep me prisoner, and I’d be properly punished every day—?”

“Hell no!” There was no mistaking the emphasis in Scanlon’s rejection. “Look, you ambitious little so and so, I’ve got you and I’m not parting from you. If you nag too much about the nomination I’ll damn well accept it and send you back to the Hibernia Woman’s Correctional Institute for safe keeping. How’d you like that?”

“Thank you. I’ll shut up.”

They shared the laughter of total communion as John Scanlon added a warning: “And I don’t want to hear about those two who are still in that admirable facility. Forget them. I’ll get young Susan out of there as soon as she’s made some money. If I leave her in there to enjoy all those

tortures you tell about…! Hell, I wouldn't have enough cash to pay her off for her red rump. And she isn't coming here either. She gets shipped back to her family."

"Yes, master. Of course, master. Thank you, master—"

"You really must be horny." Scanlon laughed down at his new wife with love. "Turn over on your back and spread your legs, you saucy bitch, you need a lesson—"

The heat between Brooke's legs flared to incandescence. She rolled over and cried out in agony as she raised her arms imploringly to the immense and satisfying maleness of her owner. When she was pierced the agony ceased to be agony at all. Her cry, then, was a delirium of joy. In between thrusts she gasped: "They were right about a whipped back. It's better… it's better… ohhhhhh!"

In the morning, before breakfast, Brooke found handcuffs and kneeling prettily, presented them to her husband, offering her wrists.

"Get up and set those things aside, you little idiot." Scanlon laughed to her chagrin. "Don't ever think ahead of me or drop hints. I'll tell you the when and how."

Brooke tossed the offending steel onto the couch and, sulkily, took her chair at the table. Sniffing in a pretense of hauteur, she enquired, "You forgot to tell me about clothes, so I came naked?"

"So I noticed."

“You don’t have to be so damn Big Shot.”

“Yes, I do. Get your ass off that chair and bring me those handcuffs.”

“But, I just—!”

“Do it!”

Brooke obeyed. Her mouth was sulky but her heart was thudding joy of Scanlon’s mastery. He always did things so absolutely right. Breathlessly, she watched him click the metal round her wrists. “You’ve put them on a notch too tight. Is that to punish me for being sulky?”

“Yeah.”

“Then I’ll stop being sulky.”

“They stay as they are, girl.”

Again the flooding joy! Adoringly, Brooke gazed across the table at a husband busy with toast. Her wrists hurt only slightly, they did not matter. She reached two linked hands towards her own needs, well aware of Scanlon’s amused scrutiny of her return to bondage. “You’re right.” She admitted winsomely. “I shouldn’t be sulky. After last night I should never be sulky again. I couldn’t imagine it could be so wonderful. Or maybe it was just you.”

“Pays to whip you, Brooke.”

“I wouldn’t mind every day, if I had enough skin.”

“Could always turn you round.”

Her heart thumped. “I don’t think I’d like that.” She admitted thoughtfully. “Do girls really and truly get whipped on their fronts?”

“Can’t prove it by me.” Scanlon munched cheerfully. “Want to try?”

“Gosh, no!” Brooke’s hands instinctively sought her breasts. The handcuffs clinked a response to her dismay. “I couldn’t bear the thought—my nipples…”

“Other things you’ve got in front,” Scanlon offered cheerfully. “How about lower down?”

“Do you mean what I think you do?”

“Sure. Just have to tie you upside down with your legs well apart.”

“John, I think that’s horrible. Even last night isn’t worth something that bad.”

Scanlon was in a teasing mood. “Well, sweetheart, if your whipped back made it that good, think what a whipped thingummy might do for you! I mean, that’s getting right close to home?”

“J-O-H-N-… you wouldn’t do that to me… would you? And don’t call my pussy a ‘thingummy’. It sounds so offhand as though it’s something that doesn’t matter.”

“Thought you didn’t like the four letters?”

“I don’t. But it’s better than ‘thingummy.’” Brooke’s voice was anxious. “Please don’t ever have those things done to me… John… please?

“No promises. Could save it in case you ever get bored in bed?”

“John! As if I would! With you!”

“Well, it was our wedding night.”

Brooke blushed prettily. “I seem to recall a few other occasions.”

“Touché!” He grinned at her earnestness. “They were damn good occasions too. Even that first time when you were sure you were going to die.”

Brooke sniffed. “I wasn’t sure I was going to die. I simply thought it would be the decent thing to do.” Her blush deepened. “At least, I was thinking that way up to about half way through.”

“You sure were a mad little girl.”

“Wouldn’t you have been! Kidnapped, stripped naked, roped like a steer, raped!”

“Like a steer?”

“Very funny. I was raped by a man I finally fell in love with.

I ought to be ashamed of myself."

"I'll rape you again this evening."

"Please do. I'd miss it terribly if you forgot."

John Scanlon nodded; proud of her, glad she was his wife. His tone was casual. "You'll be going to Quince soon. How'd you like the walk now you're a respectable married woman, naked or dressed?"

"I'm very far from respectable. Both of us are outrageous. If I put on a dress for my walk to my punishment I'll simply have to take it off when I get there."

"Gives the poor chap a thrill."

"Very well, I'll put something on. May as well give him the erection getter of bra and panties too, and a pair of shoes." She paused, hesitantly. "I take it you've decided I should continue my daily punishments?"

"If I send you today, it doesn't mean I'll send you tomorrow. Don't try and box me in with wifery."

"Sorry. Maybe you'd like to award me demerits when I transgress? I could expiate my sins once a week?"

Her husband nodded. "Not a bad idea. No whip for a month though. Any other penances you'd like Quince to inflict?"

"John, I really am not a masochist. I don't want to be sen-

tencing myself. You do it."

"What about some of those notions they sprung on you at the Hibernia? You told me something about a horse affair…?"

"Oh, not that!" Brooke wrinkled her nose in distaste. "That isn't a penance, that's torture—sitting on a sharp edge with my feet a mile apart, tied so I couldn't move."

"You'd look damned amusing."

"No I wouldn't! I'd look awful, all stressed and strained, and moaning. I made the most shameful noises."

"It wouldn't have to be all day." Scanlon mused thoughtfully. "If your demerits weren't too serious you might get off with just one hour?"

She sniffed disdainfully. But the talk was making the heat smolder between her thighs. Amused, she pondered: "I wonder what an eavesdropper would make out of our conversation, John? He'd think we were out of our tree."

"We've simply got a better tree."

"I hope you were teasing about that horse thing?"

"No."

"Oh, John, please! Don't say it like that. It makes me sure you mean it. I absolutely die on that wooden horse."

“You and your cunt thrived on it—far as I can see.”

“We didn’t, and I’m sorry I ever mentioned demerits. I’ve changed my mind about them.”

“You’d have got ’em anyway. Maybe by another name.”

“If I obey you implicitly I don’t see why I’ll never get any. I intend to be very well behaved.”

“I’ll give you some anyway, just to witness your indignation. Wives are entitled to indignation: not that it will do you any good.”

Brooke glowed and clinked her handcuffs at her husband. Their repartee was pure treasure, in it just sufficient menace for spice. She knew it possible for her to again sit astride a horse. But it was a penalty she would inhibit with every wile at her command. But her pulse quickened as Scanlon asked, “How wide was the edge of that plank?”

“John, I wish you wouldn’t. I think they called it a two by ten. With me sitting on the two.”

“Thanks, that figures. If I have Quince make one, he’ll make it pretty for you.”

Brooke pouted. “If you do intend to be that unkind to me, couldn’t you make the edge I have to sit on four inches instead of two?”

“Have to do things right, sweetheart.”

“I hope it ruins my thingummy for you. Serve you right.”

“What’s a thingummy?”

“Oh, John, don’t be such a tease. It’s your name for my cunt.”

“But you hate to say it?”

“I only do it because I know how it amuses you to see me cringe.”

“A model wife!”

“So alright, I’m well trained, well broken, and I’m terribly in love with you. Must I go to Quince now?”

“May as well.”

Brooke rose. With handcuffed hands she dragged her husband from his chair, then thrust her nudity hard against him, her linked hands going over his head to embrace him as best she could. Her whisper was beside his ear. “I love you so much. John, you’re under my skin. Tell me you love me?”

Scanlon’s arms robbed her of breath. His whisper was fierce. “I love you, love you, love you! There is no more love than I have for you.” He paused, speaking with his arms and hands, then added: “Go to Quince. Go now. Run along.”

“John, I’m horny again. So are you.”

“It can wait ’till night. Go.”

Brooke chose her bra and briefs with care. Quince was a simple soul deserving of rewards. He had never laid a finger on her carnally. If Scanlon said her flesh was sacred, it was sacred. In his own way, Quince adored John Scanlon as much as she worshipped him in another. Quince punished her scrupulously. Brooke knew he got sexually aroused in so doing. But he had never raped her. Since she belonged to John Scanlon he adored her too. He appeared to see nothing wrong with Brooke’s punishments. If Scanlon ordered them it was enough.

She picked a frock with less concern. It would lay on the straw of the barn throughout the day. She had never been punished with clothes on, it was unlikely she would start now. The girl who had once been captive had accepted the word ‘punishment’ for what she must endure through her days. She had rarely done anything to warrant punishment, but the word served their purpose. They had to name it something. Blithely, she walked across the ranch yard, past the whipping post, towards the barn. It was a walk full of memories. It had its beginnings in pure fear, now she paced it in love. Her name had been Brooke Atherton once, now it was Brooke Scanlon. Her world was wonderful.

“Morning, Quince.”

“Gee, it’s good you’re back, Mrs. Scanlon,” Quince beamed

sincerity. “After the way Etta whipped you, and gettin’ married—”

“Getting married didn’t change a thing except my name, Quince.”

“Etta and me’s so pleased ’bout you and the boss. But I was sorta’ mad ’bout the way she laid them hundred strokes on you with the whip. I told her so. I had her cryin’.”

“Don’t be angry with the poor girl. She only did what she was told. She’s sweet.”

“And you’re wonderful, Mrs. Scanlon: back here today like nothin’ happened.” He grinned. “I keep wantin’ ter call you Miss Atherton.”

“Call me Brooke, if you like. It’s my name.”

“Oh, I couldn’t do that, maam. Mr. Scanlon mightn’t like it.”

“Well, never mind my name. D’you want my clothes off?” Quince blushed. “I bin’ wondering ’bout that. You bein’ a married lady now?”

“I told you: nothing’s changed. And, honest, I don’t mind a bit. You’ve been punishing me naked for months.” Brooke sparkled at the shyly embarrassed ranch hand. “I know you enjoy my breasts.”

“Well, if you don’t mind, maam, it is sorta’ best. I mean, we allus’ done it that way.”

She slipped out of her frock. Arousing Quince's male response was a small dividend she got out of her punishments. He was naive enough to tease. Provocatively, she posed, "I'm wearing these specially for you today. Like 'em?"

"Gosh, Miss Atherton, you're the most beautiful thing I ever did see. Don't wonder the boss married you. Geeze, I gone and used your wrong name—"

The briefs followed her dress, then the bra. Brooke Scanlon kicked off her shoes and stood bare before the boy's worshipful gaze. Slowly, she turned round, and heard his gasp. "Gosh, maam, them marks you got… all over…!"

"I think they're beautiful. I've been admiring myself in the mirror."

"They sure are, miss. But so many, and all over—!"

She turned again. "See, none on my front! Neither of my breasts—no cuts. Your sister's a clever little girl."

"All purple…!" Quince was awed.

"That's enough about my whipmarks. What do I get today?"

"I bin thinkin' 'bout that." Quince shuffled awkwardly. "You figure I can do the same things to a married lady as I did to a girl?"

"I'm still a girl, y'know. Want me to show you?"

“Oh, miss, I can see real good.” Quince was delightfully flushed. “Seems like it oughta’ be somethin’ real simple?”

“No. I told you, no change. If my husband comes and finds me walking around with my hands tied, or something childish, he’ll be mad at you, and at me too. Cmon, think of something?”

The ranch hand brightened at the magic name. “Yeah, I suppose—” His preoccupied regard worshipped her breasts, her thick black triangle, the curves of waist and thigh. “How’d it be I’ll hang you up, you ain’t never minded that too bad?”

It was a shade more severe than Brooke wanted, but it would do. Quince meant well, and it would be routinely familiar. If Scanlon came, he would be pleased. With forced cheerfulness she responded “O.K. It’s a good choice. Get the rope.”

It was always heating to her loins to hold out her hands and watch them bound. She did so now, grateful for the bandages wound round and round her wrists by intent male fingers. When the metal hook slipped under the cinch between, she strove to dilute her companion’s doubts. “Don’t worry about my feet saying good-bye to the floor, Quince. D’you want to tie ’em or let me kick?”

The rope tightened from above. Brooke’s hands and arms shot up in quick response. Her wrists took the stress of her weight as her feet left the floor. Her nudity swayed and

turned gently from the end of her tether.

It was all tremendously familiar.

* * *

Chapter Two

DISCIPLINE FOR DOROTHY

Dorothy Winthrop was frightened. Too many days had passed, and an endless succession of pain. At first she had believed Reese Branson would be satisfied with a brief infliction of cruelties and a spirit breaking saturation of shame and humiliation. But optimism had died after her first week in the basement prison of the Hibernia Women's Correctional Institute. She had not believed Miss Halloran's statement that her sentence was for life. Now, she was not sure. Female flesh can only endure so much...! Dorothy Winthrop knew herself broken.

Her hands gripped the thick heavy bars through which she peered into the brighter light of the passage. The cell behind her was forever in gloom, she hated it. Along the corridor were other cells and other naked girls, but she was allowed no converse. The cell next to hers was unoccupied. It was useless to whisper or call out, it only got her punished. She looked, disgustedly, at the handcuffs on her wrists. The disgust arising from her rueful knowledge of familiarity. They kept her always handcuffed, she was scarcely aware any more of linked hands. They no longer mattered.

The nakedness was different. Dorothy Winthrop was not ashamed of her body, it was a beautiful body. But in this place in times now aeons past it had been immaculately clothed in the trim uniform of female authority. It had been the discreetly tailored body of the competent and cynical supervisor who had perpetrated a terrible mistake. Now, it was a pale chained nudity fighting for identity behind bars. Looking down at it Dorothy beheld the whipmarks, and shuddered. They were so clever with the whip, it never cut her skin. They were equally clever with all the other things she was subjected to. Maximum pain, but leaving her intact for tomorrow and tomorrow.

The footsteps were expected and on time—but not two of them! The chief warden's controlled features regarded the captive from behind Amy's self important grin. Miss Halloran's tone was faintly cordial. "A bit of news for you, Dorothy. Thought I'd deliver it myself. We can talk when

you're under discipline. Amy can hurry—"

"Under discipline!" How correct! How formal! The term exactly fitted Miss Halloran's sense of what was proper. She never used the word "torture" and rarely spoke of punishment. Dorothy Winthrop shrugged and walked ahead of them to the punishment room. It was a familiar path.

"Amy has something new for you today, dear."

The rope and the heavy snap on her handcuffs single link drew a started gasp as her hands and arms were jerked above. "Please… oh, please! Don't hang me up by handcuffs, they'll cut my wrists to pieces!"

"It's only for a minute, dear."

The agony of the steel bands made it hard to focus on Amy. The pleased trusty pushed beneath the suspended girl a broad based pedestal, the single feature of which Dorothy Winthrop beheld in alarm. It was an immense rubber phallus, pointing up. It was obviously greased to leave her in no doubt as to its destination.

"Please… not on that thing! Oh, N-O-O-O-O-…!"

"We will guide you carefully, Dorothy. The prong is jointed below so we can adjust it to your needs—"

"I dont have any needs. I don't want that awful thing—!"

“Do you want to be gagged?” Miss Halloran’s query was sharp.

“No. Nnnnnnno… I’ll shut up.”

It was a simple impalement. But it followed no historical precedent. She would not die. But the suspended woman was tense and breathless as she was gradually lowered upon the thrusting male erection in which there was no life. Dorothy gasped and winced fearfully as the huge head entered between her plump lips.

“It will cause no injury, Dorothy. I am guiding it. You think it too large, but it has been used before. We know what we are doing.”

Her wrists were bitten and protesting, but their owner paid no heed. The former supervisor of the Hibernia Women’s Correctional Institute was shrinking in horror at what was being done to her. She found no comfort in the warden’s words.

“You are coming nicely, dear. Half of it is inside you. Now, very slowly, Amy, as she lubricates.”

It was hateful, beastly, impossible! But it was happening. Dorothy felt herself distended by the invasion between her thighs… bigger and bigger…! More and more…! Steadily she sank upon the prong… Miss Halloran’s fingers were busy on her flesh.

“The phallus is not your support, dear. There is a tiny sad-

dle for your crotch."

Motion ceased. The impaled girl dared not move her legs, she dared move nothing. When the agony of her wrists lessened it was replaced by a fresh misery within the cleft of her thighs. She had come to rest on a small contoured seat she could not see. It was totally inadequate. It was going to hurt.

"Strap her ankles tightly, Amy. They can give her a little support."

An ankle each side of the pedestal, her reaching toes well above the floor, leather bands tightly buckled. Dorothy Winthrop had become a part of the pedestal and was thankful for its broad base. When her hands were lowered a single cuff was loosed and they were locked tight again behind her back. She made no demur, it was no more than she expected.

"Excellent, Amy, excellent. The poor girl looks quite charming." Miss Halloran slowly circled the impaled nude, her eyes seeking flaws. "I think bound elbows tight together would add a nice final effect, Amy. You can use a moderately broad strap or half a dozen bands of rope. Watch out for her circulation."

Amy chose rope. Dorothy hated her for the choice. Rope hurt. But she stayed mute as her arms were bound. She was not yet sure how terrible this punishment might be. The prong within her belly felt the size of a tree trunk.

“I like that. Look at the way her breasts come forward. She’s a damn lovely woman, Amy. Pity she has to waste her life down here.”

“Sure is, Miss Halloran. I wish I had a body like that. Would there be anything more now—?”

“No. You can run along. Shut the door, and don’t bring any of the other girls in here until I tell you. I’m sure you can arrange a bit of discomfort for them in their cells.”

They faced each other. Two women. One under discipline. Dorothy’s stressed bound nudity was an erotic statue rearing its curvatures from the pedestal’s broad base. Even if she could move she would not dare.

“Reese Branson wants to see you.”

Miss Halloran dropped her bomb, fully aware of its effect. The impaled beauty stiffened in shock.

“When?” Dorothy found it hard to articulate.

“Today.”

The enormity of it was like a blow. Dorothy’s query was incredulous: “You mean, like this! Is this why I’m fixed—?”

“You know Reese Branson, Dorothy.”

“The greatest possible humiliation—that’s it?”

“Yes, that’s it.” Miss Halloran smiled kindly. “On the other

hand, dear, you look quite lovely."

"I can't possibly! Not with my breasts cut a mile, and sitting on whatever it is I'm on—it hurts like crazy."

"Most women would envy you those breasts, and I've told you about the saddle. I admit it is quite small. It's really a little shaped base for the phallus."

"And he'll know, won't he? He'll know that awful prong is way up inside me?"

"He'll know. Branson was most insistent about shame and humiliation for you."

Dorothy tossed her hair distressfully. It was the only motion she could make. "You know what's going to happen, don't you?" She muttered resentfully. "I'll have an orgasm right in front of him. I'll simply die."

"Mr. Branson will be amused, dear. The last girl to sit on there for a day claimed she'd lost count of how many times —"

"It's working on me already. I'd have thought this pain would have killed it, but it hasn't. I can feel it starting. Oh damn!" Dorothy Winthrop looked pathetically at the head warden. "Isn't there anything I can say or do...? Debase myself some way—to get off this blasted thing?"

"You know there isn't, dear. Discipline is discipline. Don't fret. As I told you, you look delightful."

“I’ll do anything! Oh… please?”

“They all say that Dorothy. You should know that as well as I do.”

“How are the mighty fallen, eh?” The bound girl shook her head again in frustration. “I suppose it serves me right. A sort of poetic justice. I’ve stood where you stand now often enough.”

“Bit of a bitch, weren’t you? So I’m told.”

“Sure I was. Rub it in. Look, Miss Halloran, what’s Branson want with me? Is he just coming to gloat?”

“I really don’t know, dear. It doesn’t matter. He’ll be here anytime now. I’d best go and be available.”

“But, Miss Halloran, just a minute. What should I call the son-of-a-bitch? When he was commissioner I used to call him ‘Sir.’ But when we got friendly we used first names.”

“Sir should do nicely—happy orgasms!”

The nude and impaled ex-supervisor of the Hibernia Women’s Correctional Institute looked woefully at the closed door. She was as alone as any woman could be who was hostess to a vast phallus within her sheath. She wondered where its hateful head was inside her belly, and wished she could think some clean and pure thoughts to repel its creeping tumescence. To flower into climax before the sardonic eyes of her enemy would be the ultimate

mortification. Deep within her crotch the tiny saddle hurt bitterly and steadily.

“Dorothy! Good to see you again.”

He was a handsome bastard, always with the right word and the correct handshake. Reese Branson radiated power and a breezy goodwill. The goodwill was less authentic than the power. Dorothy Winthrop, naked and impaled for his pleasure, met his smile with a clear eyed caution. She made her tone even: “You’re seeing all of me there is.”

“And very nice too. Always said you were better than Playboy.” He circled her slowly and with approval. “Damn fine pose. You hurting on that thing?”

“Yes. It’s a beastly sort of pain.”

“Good! Got a prong up your cunt, I believe?”

She flushed. Vulgarity was not his forte. It was perpetrated for her benefit. And he knew about the phallus! She wondered if it showed—or perhaps it was he who had ordered it! With affected carelessness she admitted: “Yes. It’s about the size of a fire hydrant. But I expect you know.”

“Feel free to have an orgasm anytime, Dorothy.”

“Thanks, Reese, I will.”

The battle lines were drawn. She possessed no initiative, so kept silent. With jocular concern he asked: “Are they

treating you O.K. here? Good service?"

"You know how they treat me. I'm kept naked. I'm tortured every day. At night I'm handcuffed in a cell." She choked on pent up emotion. "Reese, forgive me? Get me out of this?"

"Why should I? You got yourself into it."

"In the name of humanity—" Her voice was breaking. "Reese, you realize a girl isn't likely to live out a year when she's tortured the way I've been since you sent me down here?"

"Discipline, dear girl, not torture. You're looking well on it. Never seen you more beautiful."

"Reese, you've done what you wanted. You've broken me. If you'll get me off this beastly contraption, I'll crawl, I'll kiss your feet, I'll lay back and spread my legs—"

"Quite a change, my pet. Never mind about your legs. I couldn't compete with what you've got right now. You're a damn lucky girl."

She hated his bland complacence and her own frustration. Desperately, she pleaded: "Isn't that what you wanted, to have me lick your boots and beg forgiveness? Reese, I'll do it."

"Give me a sample. Make it good."

What had she to lose! Hating herself, Dorothy Winthrop

enunciated: “Please, Sir, I beg your forgiveness for humiliating you in front of others, for slapping your face, and the things I told. Thank you for having me punished. Please let me lick your boots and give you my body for your pleasure.” She paused, then said brokenly: “Reese, I’m licked.”

“I’ll be damned!” He was genuinely intrigued. “D’you realize what a tribute that is to the Hibernia Women’s Correctional Institute? I’ll have to mention it to that woman upstairs.”

“Reese, please? Take me away?”

“Where?”

“I don’t care, as long as it’s out of this awful place.”

“About all I can think of is a good whorehouse where they’ll keep you on a chain?”

“O.K. I’ll take it. Even that—”

He was impressed and pleased. “What the hell have they done to you? Dammit, Dorothy, you were the naughtiest bitch—?”

“They’ve done everything. Look at me now! I’ve been whipped and whipped again—look at the marks on my skin. I’ve been hung up by my thumbs and by my feet and by my wrists. I’ve been tied on a rack and stretched so I was sure they were going to kill me. I’ve been made to sit

on that lousy horse affair. Reese, please have mercy!"

Reese Branson nodded slowly. "Sound's excellent. I've forgotten how long you've been down here?"

"I think it's about two weeks. I lose track."

"Not much out of a lifetime, Dorothy?"

Her heart contracted. "What do you mean? Miss Halloran says I'm to be kept here for life. But you wouldn't…? And anyway, I'd die…!"

"Miss Halloran was right. And you won't die."

She could do nothing. She was held firmly as a statue on the pedestal. She wanted to slump, to fall on her knees, but could not. She probably looked erotically beautiful, a far cry from a girl imploring mercy. The hard rubber implement frictioned her clitoris without cessation. Tonelessly she said: "I'm in agony. Another girl who wasn't used to this place would be screaming. Would you feel better about me if I screamed?"

"Interesting. Go ahead."

She could not. Everything was wrong. Elbows, wrists and crotch pained her viciously but she could not scream. She had become inured. Miserably, she said: "I was your mistress before…! Let me be your mistress again? I'll be a good one."

“No good. Not after this. Besides, I’ve already picked one up.”

“Then take me as a slave? Chain me. I’ll do the housework? Whip me as you please?”

“Sorry.”

Dorothy Winthrop was not a child. She glimpsed intent. Listlessly, she said: “I can never believe the life sentence, I’d find some way to kill myself if the tortures didn’t.”

“Handcuffed? Naked? Locked in a cell? How?” His questions were a mockery.

“I don’t know, but I won’t live. Reese, you came here for a reason. What is it?”

“I want to see you climax on that prick.”

“Oh, please! You’re not that childish.”

Branson did not answer. Instead, he stood before her helplessness and began to play with her hard and distended nipples. His manner was intent, purposeful.

“I’d rather you didn’t do that.”

He paid no heed. His fingers and the palm of his hand frictioned with a gentle insistence she remembered all too well. Urgently, she protested: “Look, Reese, I’m helpless, I can’t move. You’re taking a mean advantage—and you know what’s going to happen.”

“So what! I’ve seen you climax a hundred times.”

“This is different.” Her breath was quickening. Vainly, she fought the rising flame in her loins. “Please stop. Getting me sexually excited when I’m like this demeans us both. It’s a mockery of what we had.”

“Getting close, eh! Dammit, Dorothy, I’m being nice to you. What you beefing about? I could just as easy have you whipped—and don’t tell me you’d sooner have that.”

To twist against Branson’s too wise fingers was to invite a more speedy climax. Any motion she made encouraged the enemy within. The naked supervisor held still, her taut breasts arrogantly thrusting to meet the skilled male hands. She could do nothing…! At her back, her bound elbows ensured her breasts could not retreat. Distressfully, she began to pant. Reese Branson could do as he pleased with her.

“Always loved your orgasms, Dorothy. You’re close. You don’t want me to stop.”

Dorothy Winthrop screamed, an animal sound she would later regret. She heaved and bucked on the tiny saddle, uncaring of pain. Her nipples screamed too under the male compulsion, her whole being exploded in a violence beyond the orgasm of love or lust. It was a cataclysm of torture. When she panted her way out of the final spasm she heard her tormentor’s casual comment.

“I’d say you were in the best of health, Dorothy my love. Wonderful response. You’re full of sap. You always did need fucking several times a day.” The tone changed. “Oh, and by the way, do you know a girl named Brooke Atherton?”

She fought her way back to awareness as a swimmer fights a tide. Her climax did not matter. It was done and she was suitably shamed. But Branson’s question mattered. Striving for control of the female bundle of pain that was Dorothy Winthrop, she admitted.

“Yes, I remember her. She was a prisoner here in the same way you’ve got me.”

“Like her?”

“Yes. I was terribly sorry for her. She had some sort of phobia about the bars of her cell. I’m not sure I don’t have it too.”

“Go on.”

“She was sweet—and so damn lost. She’d been put in here by some lousy gangster, and for life! Just the way you promise me.”

“I’m not promising, Dorothy. You’re here. Your life sentence is two weeks old. But go on. What about this Brooke Atherton?”

“Nothing, really. We’d just got her to the rough stuff when

some guy, she was branded with his initials, tracked her down and got her out. The gangster got killed. The Hibernia wasn't much concerned, they'd got their money."

"Yes?"

"It was sort of odd. Reese, won't you let me off this thing? If you want to talk—?"

"No. Carry on."

"Well, the guy who'd rescued her sent her back. For two weeks. The mild treatment. She was a privileged prisoner. But by the time that you and I had our run in and you'd sent me down here. She and I were fellow prisoners. I remember how distressed she was over the things they did to me."

"How'd you like to be her prisoner?"

Dorothy Winthrop tensed. Hope flooded. "How can I be her prisoner?" she asked doubtfully.

"Easy. The bozo who rescued her has more money than I have. Guys like him and me trade favors. He can do me one. I don't value your hide or your screams that high. I'm thinking about it. But the way you tell it she's too damn sweet."

"You mean, I can get out of here by becoming someone's prisoner? Oh, Reese…"

“Only if he or she’s mean enough, and I show a profit.”

“Yes. Oh. Please… yes! I’ll be her prisoner. I think it more likely it’s her owner who wants me. He’s an unusual man.”

“Anyone with his money has to be unusual. He’s John Scanlon.”

“Sell me to him—or whatever it is you men do with girls like us.”

“Where’d you get this ‘owner’ stuff?”

“Brooke Atherton was owned. There was never any doubt in her mind about it. She adored the guy and couldn’t wait through those two weeks to get back to him. Sell me to him… or whatever.”

“The thing is: how mean is he going to be to you?”

“I’ll be tortured. Brooke told me that much. But Scanlon’s motives are different from yours. I admit I don’t understand.” Dorothy Winthrop weaved her trussed shoulders distressfully. “Reese, please untie my elbows. I’ll still be helpless, and they’re hurting so damn bad.”

He dismissed it with a wave of the hand. “I never interfere. You’ll stay as you are, presumably for the day. But this girl, Brooke? How’d you get to know her so well?”

“They locked us in the same cell.”

“Ah, ha! Some luscious nibbling, no doubt?”

“So what! Girls do it. Doesn’t mean any more than the orgasm you just forced on me. There was something she said though. Seems this guy who owns her has a thing about it. He just doesn’t go for girls nibbling each other. He’d caught her doing it with a servant, and she was under sentence to get a hundred lashes for her fun. For some reason I’ve forgotten she was still going to get them when she went home.”

“A hundred lashes? Bare skin, I suppose?”

“It puzzled me, Reese. That many would half kill a girl but she didn’t seem worried.”

“She’s in love with Scanlon.”

“Was that it? Well, I suppose we’re that crazy—the fool things girls do. Reese, are you going to be kind to me?”

“Hell no! But I’ll think about this Scanlon deal. If I can find out he’s mean enough…”

“I know it’s hackneyed. But I’ll do anything?”

“You’re right. That one’s been worn threadbare, Dorothy. But there’s one thing you’re going to do for sure. You’re going to have a real bad time.”

Every sensitivity of the impaled nakedness was vividly alert. For all Dorothy Winthrop knew she was fighting for her life. She had little hope that anything said would influence this man who owned her so completely. But still…!

Against the pain and shame today she could balance Branson's presence. He had come for a reason. Striving for an even tone, she asked: "So I'm to be given a bad time. What is it?"

"No advance notice, dear girl." Reese Branson pinched her left nipple to make her wince. "I've thought up a little psychological pleasantry for you. Three bad, bad days."

"I wouldn't call this one exactly fun."

Branson consulted his watch. "You'll be here for hours yet. I predict at least half a dozen more orgasms." He chuckled. "One might describe you as a fortunately placed young woman."

"Have your fun."

"Three things will be done to you in three days." He grinned amiably. "The kicker is you won't know if it's the grand finale of your travail here, with release to follow, or whether it's simply three more days like today. Think of it, girl. I'm donating you three days of wonderful hope."

She thought of it. Reese Branson was a bastard! He would know that no matter how she tried to quench false hope it would blossom in her mind for the next seventy-two hours. Then, when the hope was taken from her and she faced a lifetime of what Miss Halloran called "discipline"...! Dorothy Winthrop shuddered.

Dismayed, the impaled girl gazed at the closed door and

knew she preferred the mocking presence of Reese Branson to the misery of pain in isolation. Twisting her shoulders fretfully against the cut of rope deep within her flesh, she became shamingly aware of another mounting tide of sexual heat. The immense thing protruding its bulk within her sheath was again imposing its sly but inevitable will upon her flesh. She was helpless. She could not move. She could do nothing. The hours of her day would goon and on. When her climax came she cried out against it in a wail of anguish against an unkind fate.

Being released from her pedestal perch was almost as bad for Dorothy Winthrop as being mounted in the beginning. Even Amy gasped when she peeled the bindings from captive elbows.

For the captive herself it was one more bitter pain against which to moan. Listlessly, she allowed her hands to be changed from back to front. She was still helpless. Even without the impediment of any bonds at all she could not have got herself off the prong. The hard phallus held her in the strangest of all restraints.

Amy giggled. “How many times you come, Miss Winthrop?”

“I think it was five. Does it matter?”

“Lot better than some of them other things, ain’t it?”

“I suppose so.”

“They didn’t have this thing when I was being punished.

Wouldn't mind tryin' it."

"Don't! It's hateful."

Again the agony of her wrists as she was raised and the leather anklets unbuckled. In the final inches of elevation there were sounds... humiliating sounds, and one more shaming orgasm as the slick length frictioned her secret bud in its retreat. Her wrists were cut by their steel circlets as she writhed.

"Gosh, Miss Winthrop, that rubber dong sure did make you flood."

She was still panting and spasmning when her feet found the ground. She stood limply in a great thankfulness. Before her, the rubber monument to her shame stood erect, slimy with her secretions, ready for its next entry into female flesh. Amy was conscientious.

"I was told you gotta' suck it off real clean, Miss Winthrop."

What did it matter! Dorothy Winthrop fulfilled her assignment demur. She was still feeling only the wonder of release, and there were worse things a girl could taste than her own flavor. She polished the simulated male thing with her tongue, holding its base with handcuffed hands, below which was the scarlet stains of blood from the cut of chrome.

"That guy sure don't like you, Miss Winthrop."

“He’s angry with me. I hurt his pride.”

“But to keep you here for always, and with all these things I have to do to you…!” Amy was awed by the immensity of male revenge. “He don’t even want to fuck you, does he?”

“That has to be bad,” Amy vowed wisely. “I’d be willing to have him fuck me if it would get you off the hook.” She gazed woefully round the room. “Gosh, Miss Winthrop, this sure is one helluva place for girls like us. I can’t get outta’ the Hibernia any more’n you.”

“At least you’re a trusty and don’t get daily discipline.” Dorothy signed wanly. “Am I in for something worse tomorrow, Amy?”

“Fraid so, miss. I dunno’ what. But that gentleman and Miss Halloran sure did a lot o’ talkin’. Wish I could open a door and let you run.”

The only door was the barred grid to her hated cell. Dorothy always shived when she walked within, then flinched as Amy clanged it shut and turned the key. She was caged! Alone after her torture, Miss Dorothy Winthrop flung her nakedness upon the cot and wept.

Beyond the bars her sentence stretched forever.

* * *

Chapter Three

PAIN

There was an atmosphere of consequence about the morning. Amy freed her from the cell and led the way to the room where Dorothy would suffer pain, but they were followed immediately by Miss Halloran and Reese Branson. It was an occasion.

Captives live on hope, they clutch at straws. Almost without volition, Dorothy Winthrop cast herself on her knees at the feet of the man who could do as he pleaed with her body. She was beyond either pride or shame. “Please, Reese, let me go? I beg you, forgive me. I’ll say I’m sorry a hundred

times…”

There was only silence. The Brooke Brothers shoes did not move.

“Don’t torture me again, I can’t stand it—”

“Dorothy, be sensible. Back on your feet. Mr. Branson doesn’t want you behaving like a schoolchild, and neither do I.”

“I’m… I’m sorry.” The nude girl rose and stood, passive, head bowed, meeting no eyes.

“The ‘X’ frame! Get yourself on it.”

Dorothy obeyed. She had been strapped to the massive timbers before. In itself, the ‘X’ meant little beyond immobility. She backed against the wood and raised her arms.

Reese Branson was intrigued. “She obeys you. I mean, she walks willingly into punishment—?”

Miss Halloran laughed. “All our girls do. They fight for the first few days, then get resigned. Makes it easier for us, and them too. They only get hurt and punished when they struggle.”

“This is an education,” Branson said expansively. “You give a man his money’s worth.” He turned to the nude girl. “How you feeling today, sweetheart?”

“Frightened. How else?”

The strapping was simple. Dorothy stood on a box while Amy unlocked the handcuffs. Her wrists were then strapped tight at the limits of the extended arms, then her arms above the elbow, then her waist. When the box was taken away the 'X' held her by the leather bands. Her feet could not reach the floor. They were pulled widely to each side and buckled. Dorothy Winthrop had become one with the timbered frame, her belly flat, her rib cage prominent. She was ready!

"Arrange the equipment, Amy. Then you can run along."

What Amy arranged sent a thrill of fear through every crevice of the strapped nakedness. It was something new, something awful. Her eyes sought Branson's in a mute appeal for mercy.

"I'm just here for the ride." He explained blandly. "Curious to see how they do things. Miss Halloran is being very kind."

"Forgive me—let me go… oh, Reese!"

Amy had gone. The table was in place. On it lay things to make a girl shudder. Miss Halloran's voice was prim. "Would you wish me to arrange her for you, Mr. Branson?"

"Please."

It was simple. Four wires trailing from a terminal box, four metal clips. The chief warden carefully fingered one lip of the helpless girl's sex, then positioned the open jaws. When

the clip closed on flesh that should have been secret and inviolate the bit was bitter pain. The other innocent flesh was served alike.

Looking down, the naked victim saw the wires snaking from her own sex to the box. She was panting in the grip of an awful suspense. Her pussy burned distressingly under serrated teeth.

“The effect is quite bizarre,” Miss Halloran said musingly as she backed away. “I think a girl strapped to this frame is shown at her best. It has always been a favorite of mine. It is useful when you wish to whip their breasts. But these wires…! They have a piquancy all their own.”

The teasing of her nipples was inevitable. Angry with her own flesh, Dorothy Winthrop looked down at her breasts and watched Miss Halloran’s fingers excite the twin buds to hard erection. She was helpless to defend herself. She could not move.

“She’s a beautifully responsive young woman,” the warden said approvingly. “I’ll now clip these two little treasures and she’s all yours, Mr. Branson.”

Pain, then pain again. The girl to be tortured flinched against her straps as her nipples accepted their martyrdom. She was now wired in four places and all of them hurt. Her anguished gaze followed Miss Halloran from the room, then turned questioningly to the amused regard of Reese Branson. “It’s useless, I suppose…?” she said patheti-

cally. “You won’t show me any mercy—?”

“You’re right girl, I won’t. Know how this thing works?”

“I can guess. It’s a beastly thing to do to a girl you loved.”

“Not loved, pet. A girl I used to screw.”

“Have it that way then! But I gave you pleasure. Now you’re going to burn the parts of me you loved most.”

“Not burn, sweetheart. You won’t like this little box. But it’s been tested on other tits and twats. It won’t injure a girl. It won’t leave marks. Ready to try it out?”

“You’re going to electrocute me, aren’t you? Reese, please…”

He chuckled over her word. “Not exactly, dear girl. Haven’t tried it myself but I’m told it provides odd sensations. It’s got controls, maybe I can get you another climax.”

Being able to watch was cruel. In a terrible fascination her focus centered on his fingers and the knobs and little switches. Suddenly the current invaded her flesh, and the former supervisor of the Hibernia Woman’s Correctional Institute screamed and screamed again. The straps creaked under her heavings but held her firm.

It lasted for centuries before Branson flicked the switch. The punished nakedness slumped, gasping. Looking at her body Dorothy saw the gleam of sweat. It seemed impossible

she could be still alive.

“Tell me about it. I’m curious.” Branson’s query was unconcerned.

“You mustn’t do it to me again…! You mustn’t—!” He did it to her again.

When Dorothy had finished screaming and had caught up with her breath, she muttered brokenly. “Alright, Reese, I’m broken, I’m finished, I’m anything you want me. But I don’t think I want to live any more.”

“That bad!”

“Oh, yes… yes!”

“Interesting. You’re probably more alive than you’ve ever been. But you girls love to dramatize.”

“I’m not dramatizing. It’s a beastly, horrible, unbearable sort of feeling… It doesn’t have the decency of a whip.” Dorothy looked up wearily. “If you’re going to keep doing that to me all day I’d sooner you killed me. Maybe it will—”

“Sooner have a hundred cuts with a whip?”

“Yes… oh, yes… please?”

“Dammit, you have been impressed. Every husband should have one of these little gadgets. Want a third go?”

“No! What do I have to promise to get you to stop?”

“Can’t think of a thing. Leaves you boxed in, eh?”

“I’ll marry you, I’ll be your mistress, I’ll perform any kind of rotten sexual act… please?”

“You’re missing the point about punishment, dear girl. It isn’t negotiable. It’s payment for something you’ve already done. You can’t reconstruct an act that’s long gone.”

“But there’s mercy and kindness—?”

“Don’t notice much around here. I don’t have any.”

She moaned without shame, twisting against leather. “You spoke of a brothel? Send me there. It’s an awful fate for a girl but it’s better than this place.”

“That’s why I won’t send you. I want you hurting.”

“That makes you a sadist. Reese, are you a sadist?”

Branson settled himself comfortably on the table beside the wicked box. “No, I’m not a sadist.” He judged musingly. “But as far as I can figure it pain is the only thing you girls understand. You start out in your teens all hepped up to love and be loved. You don’t know it then, but you’re suffering from demanding glands. Nature wants you well and truly screwed and pregnant. You make a real big thing out of love without even knowing the real meaning of the word. What you think is love is only hot pants.”

“Don’t be beastly. If you want to talk, Reese, couldn’t you

take these clips off me and give me a break?"

Branson flipped the switch, watching her writhe, hearing her scream. Shutting off the current, he said flatly: "Don't give me orders, don't nag, don't keep asking."

"I-I'm sorry. I'll try—"

"Like I was saying," Branson continued slowly. "The little girl gets a man and gets herself pregnant. She's fulfilled. That's all she ever was anyway, a receptacle for male sperm and the ejection of progeny. She now loses interest in the man, except on paydays or when she wants to get pregnant again. All the poor silly bastard gets out of the deal is bills."

There was some truth in what he said. Dorothy did not care enough to argue. Sadly, she asked: "Was it that way with us? Was I like that?"

"The pill saved you. That's the only difference."

"I'd be good to you. Maybe I'd be good for you."

"You'd nag and nag. Maybe slip me a kid by cheating on the pill," Branson shook his head disgustedly. "No. It's like I say. A whipped girl listens. Girls respect the whip. They may hate the guy who uses it on 'em, but it gives 'em direction."

"Alright then, take me home with you and whip me into whatever kind of woman you want."

The current burned again, dissolving her being into a thousand points of agony. Branson watched with clinical interest. After a long time the sweating girl gasped. “I’m sorry. I forgot.” Panting, she pleaded, “If I ask one question will you promise not to punish me?”

“Go ahead.”

“Why didn’t you whip me when you had me?”

The man considered, then laughed. “Damned if I know. Mostly you behaved yourself.” He chuckled. “Could have been the influence of that uniform you used to wear. The idea of whipping what was underneath just never entered my mind, it was so bloody smart and correct.” He winked as though they were still friends. “I used to get an erotic charge out of watching you take it off and then fucking you. It was like screwing a prison full of cunts.”

“Is that all I ever was to you, a cunt?”

“No, sweetheart, you got under my skin a bit. That’s why it hurt when you went sour.”

Dorothy Winthrop breathed distressfully in the clutch of straps. It was hopeless. If anything had existed between them, it was gone. She was nakedly helpless in his power, he would do as he pleased with her. Anything she said might provoke another jolt of current. She kept silent, a silence hanging between them like guilt.

“This Atherton female…? Tell me more.”

There was intent behind his question. In it, she slimpsed hope. “I told you.” She replied slowly. “Brooke was a nice girl. I liked her enough that first time to go easy on her. On her second visit I was a naked prisoner here myself.”

“Sure, I know. But her relations with his man… Scanlon? What did you pick up?”

“You’d see it as romantic nonsense.”

“Tell me anyway.”

“He kidnapped her and broke her down to what he wanted, sort of the way you talk about, the way you’ve broken me. But he did it differently and over a long time. She fell in love with him. She admitted that no matter what he had done to her she adored him. I think there was a good deal of admiration there, and she found security in being his prisoner. She knew where she was at. She said she was rich, so it wasn’t his money.”

“He had a servant punish her? Didn’t do it himself?”

“So she said. I think she liked him, too. Could be she’s a bit of a masochist. There’s a streak of that in girls… I don’t hate you the way I should.”

The current engulfed her again, wrecking her in male vengeance. Dorothy Winthrop screamed her way through it once more and emerged the other side. She looked piteously at her tormentor, weaving her head from side to side in negation. Her heart was pounding, she was

frightened.

“D’you get any sexual response out of it, girl?”

She could care less, but muttered: “No, it destroys everything. It’s not like anything else anyone’s done to me.”

“I’ll see what I can do. Should be possible.”

“No! Oh, Reese, please, no! I can’t stand any more. I’m begging you. If I was free I’d be on my knees.”

“Nice thought. Stop worrying, it’s not killing you.” Branson slipped off the table. “Let’s have a look at that pretty cunt of yours. I haven’t had a good close-up for awhile.”

“I don’t know why. With my legs like this it’s wide open.”

“Well, yesterday you were sitting on it—I sure did like that prong idea and you on the pedestal. Today Miss Halloran did the honors with those clips, but the damn things do obscure the view.”

Every bit of her was his. Branson could explore any crevice or orifice of her body. Dorothy yelped in misery as the clips released her labia. Their sudden removal was a momentary agony. The man knelt, enjoying his task. “Pretty pussy,” he said gently. “I always said you had the most symmetrical slit in the world.”

“You loved it once.”

“That doesn’t mean I can’t punish it now.”

“But, please don’t. It hasn’t been unfaithful to you.”

“It hasn’t had the chance since you flew off the handle. You’ve been down here.”

“Use it. I don’t understand why you don’t. Even if you hate me I’m still a woman. I’d suppose there’d be a charge in it for a man to rape a girl he hated.”

“Too much like a reward for you, my sweet. Besides, you’d immediately suppose you had me back in your pocket.”

“I never had you in my pocket, Reese. It was the other way round, you had me.” She paused, then plunged. “Doesn’t it mean something, the way we can communicate. It has to mean something the way we’re rational in between me being tortured.”

“We’re both intelligent, that’s all.”

Pink slowly suffused Dorothy Winthrop’s cheeks as she pleaded: “You’ve got this thing about watching me climax. It shames me horribly but I know how it is with men. Look Reese… please? Don’t give me an orgasm with that awful electricity. Make it happen some other way?”

Branson laughed in surprise. “What! Me muff gobbling to oblige you! Forget it.”

“I didn’t mean that! Oh, Reese, you must know I wouldn’t mean that. It’s… it’s—”

“You do it with dames?”

In frustration and anger Dorothy Winthrop struggled vainly against the straps. It was a motion of protest without hope. “You’ve got a hand, haven’t you, and fingers?”

“That’s still under the heading of rewards.”

“Well then, free one of my hands and arms and I’ll play with myself. That’s supposed to be a big turn on for a man?”

“Sorry, love. Can’t stand in the path of science. This little experiment may open up whole new worlds. We can call it the vaginal volt. Or would you prefer watts for twats?”

The bound girl maintained a sulky but apprehensive silence as Branson knelt and clipped her labia once again. It hurt abominably in the fresh place he had chosen. She wanted to ask him to remove the clips from her nipples but was scared. She tensed unhappily and waited.

“I can vary the intensity, sweetheart.” Branson informed affably. “But no cheating with a fake spasm. I can always test your secretions with my hand. Understood?”

“Yes, I understand.”

She screamed into climax instantly, her cry a paen of anger, outrage and ecstasy. Branson watched her staring eyed anguish for several spaced moments before flipping the switch. Dorothy Winthrop subsided into an endless

keening moan of desolation.

“That bad? Or that good?” He enquired cynically.

Dorothy Winthrop shook her head again and again in negation. She had lost faith in words. Reese Branson was impervious to words. When the heaving of her breasts subsided she whispered despondently, “Kill me… get it over with.”

“Hell, Dorothy, you had the finest come I’ve ever seen in a girl. Where’s your gratitude?”

“Kill me. Please. Reese…?”

Branson studied her, curious, interested, and with deep satisfaction. Dorothy Winthrop was very beautiful. Stretched and strapped upon the ‘X’ her femaleness was accentuated a hundredfold. The wires trailing from her nipples and from below her pubic hair added a touch of groyesquerie like black umbilical cords nourishing her nudity. He recalled their lovemaking back in that other time. His revenge was sweet. Prompted by pervisity, he asked: “You said you were broken. You came out with that classic cliche about doing anything to please. Still feel that amenable?”

“Yes. Oh, yes!”

“If I take you off that thing and you’re free of restraint, will you obey a drill I’ll put you through?”

“Yes.”

“I’ll admit I’m curious,” Branson said slowly. “The transformed Miss Dorothy Winthrop, eh. There’s a nice bit of spice to the idea. Or should we call it: Supervisor to slave, or should I call you slut?”

“I don’t care what you call me.”

“Do all the girls react to a bit of pain the way you do?”

“I’ve never known one who wouldn’t kiss a man’s feet to get out of here.”

Branson nodded, pleased. He was getting value for money. The torture or imprisonment of girls in the hidden lower floor of the Hibernia carried a stiff price tag, but this female creature, naked and humbled, was worth it. Once more he probed: “O.K., I’ll do things to you. When I get bored you’ll be strapped again as you are now. Will you arrange yourself without a struggle?”

“Yes.”

Branson chuckled. “Never had so many affirmatives out of a girl before. You’re a damned interesting study.” His tone hardened. “But if you put me to the trouble of a tussle you’ll be sorry.”

“Yes, I know.”

Dorothy Winthrop hated herself and the flicker of hope she

could not ignore. It was the carrot and she the donkey. Reese was unpredictable… and to be free of bonds would be ecstasy. She kept tensely silent as the buckles were loosed. The man lifted her to deal with the last one, she was in his arms. He might be her enemy but the contact was oddly comforting.

“No, sweetheart, none of the feminine tricks. I know ’em all. You girls never give up trying.” He loosed her clinging arms and stepped away. “No sweet nostalgia stuff.”

Dorothy fell to her knees. “I thought you wanted me to be nice to you. Sorry!” She bowed her head and awaited his pleasure.

“Worship my cock.”

The former supervisor of the Hibernia Women’s Correctional Institute obeyed the ancient demand by which a woman is diminished. It was not the first time she had taken Reese Branson’s penis into her mouth and laved it with her tongue. Back, a long time ago. She had done it often. But that was dillerent. She was surprised at just how different it was. The feminine wish to give had vanished, now there was only shame, the shame of the vanquished.

But it was good to have her hands, even though she was using them demeaningly. It was good to be able to move, to see the pink strap marks on her skin as no more than the embellishments of her condition. Above all it was good to cherish a burgeoning hope in this absence from pain. It

might be temporary, but even so...! In a slavelike need to please her master, Dorothy Winthrop plied every skill she knew.

“Now ask me for, you know what. Use the proper word.”

“Please fuck me, Reese.”

“Sluts use a title to a man.”

“Please fuck me, Sir.”

He was easily re-aroused. Reese Branson was a vigorous male. But in the things she must do to perform the oldest act in the world as a slave instead of an equal, Dorothy Winthrop felt a fleeting sympathy for whores. They worked harder than generally supposed. She thrust all of herself into the coupling, even providing her master with the orgasm he so highly valued. She panted her crescendo with him to the end. That, too, was far from new. If only memories were the keys to prison!

“O.K., I’ll give you marks for that, Dorothy. Maybe the whorehouse is where you belong.”

She remained kneeling in the pose required to clean, tidy and zipper up her master’s sex. She dared not rise, there would be more. But her limbs were still free—free—free!

“Clasp your hands at the back of your neck. That’s my girl!” Branson nodded approval at the loveliness of his creation. “Now, you’re going to tell me, and at great length, just how

much of a slut you are and the things you're willing to do to prone it. I know how you hate four letter worth, so use 'em."

The kneeling girl thought instantly of revolt. She would sooner be whipped than soil her lips by what her master demanded. It was a thing she had always refused him back in the days when they were lovers. But he was intrigued with the obscenity she had denied. He would extract it from her now. If she reneged it would not be the whip but some other hateful thing she could not cope with. Loathing every word, and unable to meet Branson's avid stare, Dorothy put her tongue to work to save her flesh.

"Hmmmmm, sounded a bit like a novitiate's confession," her tormentor commented dourly. "Care to try again with more zing?"

"I'm not a whore, Reese."

"You sure about that!" Reese laughed at the naked girl's flushed cheeks. "Care to quote me prices if I take you out of here?"

He was goading her, dangling the carrot. She was tempted to keep silent against his mockery, but the hope was still flourishing…! "I'll be your slut for free, Reese," she said forlornly. "I'll clean your house and lick your boots if you'll take me out of this prison."

"We've been over that before. Get with it on the speech. We

can call it your Declaration of Dependence."

Dorothy Winthrop defiled herself with filthy words and disgusting offers. She threw her self respect at Branson's feet to make a sacrificial fire on which she burned her pride.

"O.K. Remember what you've just said. Write it down sometime. It's a nice summation of the way I want you."

Suddenly, she was crying, an explosion of grief beyond control. The tears coursed down her cheeks unchecked. Her hands were still clasped behind her neck, she dared not free them. Reese Branson could look at a girl's misery, and be damned to him...! She did not care how she looked. Maybe if she was soppy and homely he would lose interest in hurting her any more.

"I'll be damned! You females!" Branson's exclamation was almost admiring. He stood and watched her storm of emotion pass, raised her to her feet and used his white cambric square to remove the evidence of tears. He slapped her bottom resoundingly. "Now get your ass back on that 'X'."

His arms had felt good. She yearned cruelly for male comfort but was still frightened. With dragging steps she returned to the frame, arranged the box, stood on it and raised her arms.

"You really get to me with the way you do that," Reese admitted. "Do it again."

Dorothy did it again. She understood. She made herself utterly passive, closing her eyes, as she was strapped tight and helpless. The man shattered hope by picking up an electrode. She clenched her teeth as the sharp jaws closed on her nipples. Then she asked cautiously: “Please not down below as well. Reese… please?”

Reese Branson clipped her down below. He flipped the switch. As the current devastated her she remembered only that he had dried her tears.

It fed the hope.

* * *

Chapter Four

WITH THIS RING ...!

The capitol left Brooke in no doubt as to the sanctity of holy wedlock. She had been treated with respect as Scanlon's mistress, as his wife the respect became homage. She was a woman who had made the grade. She was a woman who might be worth knowing. She basked glowingly under adulation and fired her loins by a constant awareness of Scanlon's pride. She was the most beautiful woman in the room, and she knew it. She might also be the richest.

It was another of the state occasions. Brooke went from name to name and smile to smile with a new assurance.

She was no longer a respectable scarlet woman, she had become an equally respectable consort to the most powerful man in the state. In impudent delight she thought of Quince and her daily walk to the barn. If only these people knew…! But perhaps they did! Enough money made anything admirable and to be winked at. She could have come to this affair naked and been welcome.

Brooke's impudence went beyond the memory of Quince. It was more personally and presently centered on her waist. Not the envied contours flattened by her gown, but on the band of diamonds nestling cruelly within her flesh. She would forever remember the moment, only two hours past, after the bellhop had discreetly closed the door.

"Like diamonds, Brooke?"

"I've never had any—except this marvellous ring. John, you mustn't waste too much money on me."

Scanlon chuckled. "You don't cost much to dress out on the 'J.Bar.S'. Thought I'd indulge a little conceit of mine. Not sure that wedding ring's enough to hold you."

"Don't forget I'm branded with your brand."

"You need to be. Dammit, Brooke, you're a lovely woman!"

"I'm a lovely girl. Dammit, John, where'd you get this woman business? It's not long ago you were treating me as a child."

“Nothing like a good rough fuck and a parson to mature a girl. Here, what d’you think of this?”

Even the case was opulent. Brooke opened it with a thrill of reverence and a gasp of wonder. Diamonds winked at her with an impudence all their own, metal gleamed.

“John, it’s gorgeous…! But what—?”

“Think a bit.”

“Well… there’s more to this than diamonds.” Brooke mused shrewdly. “Too big for a bracelet, too heavy for a necklace. It would go round my ankle several times…”

“Doesn’t leave much, eh?”

“My tummy!” She gazed again in wonder. “Is my tummy only that far round…”

“Try it.”

Brooke lifted the lovely thing from its plush bed, It was unquestionably a belt. “But there’s no clasp! It locks!” Her exclamation echoed the flare of heat in her sex.

“Key stays with me.”

Brooke flung clothes aside. Naked, she demanded: “I want you to put it on me.”

Scanlon did so deftly with a hard thrust. The snap of the lock was emphatic enough to spark feminine anxiety.

“John…? It’s not one of those dillies that won’t come off?”

“Would you mind if it was?”

“No, I’d love it. I wondered…” Her fingers were busy at the band, she was breathless. “Did you have it made too tight on purpose?”

“It’s not too tight. It should be just uncomfortable enough to keep you aware of who you belong to.”

Brooke Scanlon enveloped her husband in her arms. She loved the granite faced man with an adoration that owed nothing to diamonds. She whispered a stream of ecstatic gratitude as she rubbed her breasts against his shirt. Then, with feminine inconsistency, demanded: “Don’t you trust me?”

“That’s not the point. If it was I’d have got you a chastity belt. I’m just mean enough to want you hurting a little while you’re admired by that gaggle of political geese we’re spending the evening with.”

“I won’t dare eat a thing!”

“You’ll probably have forgotten it by dinner.”

“Are you going to keep it locked on me all the time?”

“Look damn odd in the barn at the ‘J.Bar.S’.”

Brooke giggled. “But how did you know the size?”

“Don’t you remember Quince tying a string round your middle one time when he had you hung up?”

“Sure, I remember. But when you hang a girl up by her wrists her ribs stick out and her tummy disappears… almost.”

“Guess that accounts for it being snug. Get over there to the mirror and admire yourself.”

“Oh, John…” The young wife sought for words but could not find them. Awestruck, she gazed in rapture at the prisonment of her waist, and became increasingly aware of a rising fire. Bluntly, she said: “It’s made me horny, John…”

The bed was hard to leave. They were almost late.

It was understood between them now that Scanlon would not turn his back on politics in order to play with the girl he had taken as his wife. Brooke had given herself utterly to his erotic or sadistic whims. Being a senator’s wife would inhibit them little. She claimed no credit. She was as emotionally involved in the things he had done to her as he himself. Sometimes she felt guilt over her total abandonment to a strange and wonderful slavery. When it hurt too much she thought of her pain as in a good cause. She was happier than she had ever been. When they returned home that night Scanlon’s gruff command typified their relationship.

“Put a wrist each side of the bedpost.”

Brooke obeyed instantly. It was a beautiful wonderous game, of which they would never tire. She was vividly sentient to the pain to come, thrilling ecstatically as she watched her wrists bound each side of the big bedpost, thrilling again as she was stripped, and yet again as she looked back over a bare shoulder to watch her husband unbend the slender riding crop from the largest suitcase. She knew it well.

“I was proud of you again this evening, Brooke. You did everything right.”

“I’m so glad, John. I really do try.”

“You’re not getting this because of behavior. It’s to warn you about getting uppity.”

“Did I get uppity?”

“No, and I don’t want you to. Getting the crop across your ass from time to time should help.”

“I’m sure it will.”

Six stinging blows, searing her cheeks. Mrs. John Scanlon writhed but made no sound.

“How’s that, Brooke?”

“Perfect! Thank you. Now I’m horny.”

“See if these will cure it.”

Two swift cuts. Cruel! Enveloping her in fire. Her writhings were exquisite. The bed creaked against her pain.

“Better?” Scanlon was as laconic as his crop. “I’m afraid I’m hornier than I was—”

John Scanlon took his wife to bed. They both forgot her diamond studded belt.

* * *

Brooke felt certain the young man with the close cropped hair, the smile, and the bag, was a homosexual. There was something about him, so pleasantly bland and failing to notice her breasts.

“We were out late last night,” Scanlon explained. “I forgot to tell her. She doesn’t know.”

It was odd but exciting to be thus discussed by two men. Brooke gazed expectantly at the cropped head and the black bag. She knew John had forgotten nothing this was on purpose and for real.

“My name is Melton, Mrs. Scanlon,” Melton smiled charmingly. “It’s my given name. I hope you don’t mind.”

“Not a bit,” Brooke said brightly. “I think it’s a nice name.”

“He means he wants you to take off your clothes, Brooke.”

Scanlon’s face was straight as they come.

“Why, of course, if you wish.” She looked from one to the other, an eyebrow raised. “What do you want me naked for?”

“He’s not going to fuck you, Brooke. Get ’em off.”

“I really don’t mind.” Melton’s tone was soothing. “I’ve seen a great many girls.”

He was probably telling the truth. Naked, Brooke was piqued by his lack of interest in her female attributes. She was both excited and amused. “What do I do now?”

“Lay on the bed please, Mrs. Scanlon.”

Brooke whirled on her husband. “I thought you said—?”

“On the bed, sweetheart. Melton’s harmless.”

Obediently, Brooke lay down on her back, but crossed her legs. If Melton wasn’t interested there was no need to show him everything. She tried to read her husband’s granite features, but they were enigmatic. She guessed him amused, but he betrayed nothing.

“Do you have the things, Mr. Scanlon? I did bring something.”

“Use yours.”

Melton's fingers were as pleasantly impersonal as those of a hairdresser. The soft leather straps he buckled tight on her wrists and ankles were limp and well used. There were other straps on the bedposts… in a very few minutes Mrs. John Scanlon lay tautly spreadeagled. Puzzled, she again sought John Scanlon's eye. "Are you sure, John…? I mean… I'd do whatever you told me—and there'd be no need to tie —"

She was ignored. She was just a lovely female body strapped widespread on a bed. Melton had an air of purpose.

"No anesthetics, Mr. Scanlon?"

"None. I want her to remember the pain."

"Of course," Melton was unperturbed. From his bag he drew forth a box and a tray. He placed the tray on the bed where all could see, and poured into it some of the contents of the box. "There's a nice selection here," he said proudly. "You can make a choice."

Brooke raised her head to look. It was difficult against the strictures but she got high enough to behold the rings strewn in the tray. For a moment she did not comprehend, but realization dawned with the impact of a thunderclap. She orgasmed instantly in a great blossoming of entranced nerves and a wave of pure lust. She fell back, panting, crying out in the ecstasy of sex, every crevice of her body responding to shocked delight.

“A delightful young woman, Mr. Scanlon. There will be no trauma.” Melton had evidently had to deal with all kinds. “There remains the question of silver or gold?”

“Let her choose.”

In the aftermath of climax, Brooke was contrite and ashamed. “I’m terribly sorry…” She looked from one to the other in abject apology. “I’ve never done that before.”

Suddenly, they were laughing. Three people with a single purpose. In further apology the naked girl added: “There wouldn’t be any need to tie me—except I couldn’t possibly keep still. I’d do whatever John wants. You’re going to put rings in my nipples, aren’t you? I’ve read about it. I really don’t mind.”

“Pick your color, sweetheart.”

“Does it matter? What’s the least expensive?”

“Don’t be silly. We’ve got all the money there is.”

“Wouldn’t gold show up best against a girl’s skin?”

“Make it gold, Melton. Go ahead and pierce her.” Melton was a gentleman, his voice solicitous. “The pain will be sharp and severe, Mrs. Scanlon. I brought a gag along…”

“Ask John.”

“No gag. This girl won’t scream enough to matter.”

It was a sort of punch like leather workers used, a gleaming silver thing in Melton's hand. Brooke closed her eyes and clenched her teeth. She must not disgrace John—no way! Melton's fingers became clinical on her breasts, a nipple was raised… and then the lightening burn of pierced flesh, the scream of outrage from violated skin and tissue, the disbelief that it was happening. The naked girl made no sound save for the surge of breath through flared nostrils.

"You said as large as was practible, Mr. Scanlon?"

"Right. Something you can see. Not bits of wire."

Eyes tight closed, teeth clenched, Brooke whimpered against the fresh and different hurt, worse than the original stab. She did not know it but her wrists and ankles showed white from strain around the straps. She was, fleetingly, grateful to be bound.

"She's quite remarkable, Sir. Magnificent control."

"She's damn near pulled your straps apart."

"A normal reaction, Mr. Scanlon. There, that completes her left nipple. I haven't thrust the lock tight, it can still be changed?"

"No. I like it. She'll be pleased, too. Finish it off."

Brooke got the message. She would not be able to remove the rings her nipples must bear. Again, she felt the familiar surge of lust. Now, more pain and an almost imperceptable

sound. Her nipple was as captive as she herself.

“You can kill the pain for her now on that one. She’s experienced what I wanted her to feel. She’ll remember it.”

Cold! A wet strange sensation and the retreat of agony. Brooke opened her eyes and relaxed. Scanlon was gazing down at her with pride. “You’re lovely, Brooke, twice as lovely.” He bestowed his granite grin. “Hate me?”

“I love you.”

“You’ve got a lot of guts—keeping quiet.”

“I’m so glad I’m strapped down.” She grinned back at this man who was now her husband. “I suppose it’s one down and one to go?”

“Fraid so. You’ve got a matched pair. Can you handle it?”

“Only because you want me to,” Brooke grimaced. “And I can’t walk away.”

“I love you, too.” Scanlon bent and kissed the strapped down girl, his hands smoothing down her flanks, caressing the single breast as yet untouched. “You’ll be the first senator’s wife to wear rings in her tits, rings she can’t get rid of.”

Her lust leaped again at his words and their implication. Between them flowed the empathy by which their strange union was made plausible. Looking up, she whispered

whimsically: “What would I have to do to get them off?”

“Give me a good reason. But they’d have to be cut. They’re self-locking.”

“The rings must be lubricated and rotated for the first couple of weeks.” Melton’s voice was sweetly clinical. “I will show Mrs. Scanlon the procedure. And now perhaps? If she is ready?”

The anguish of her second breast was easier to endure. Wryly, Brooke was grateful for possessing only two. When it was over she would adore the pendent golden loveliness adorning her best loved curves. Added to the brand below her belly, the rings would make her even more the possession of the owner of the ‘J.Bar.S’. Brooke screamed steadily and silently against compressed lips as Melton bestowed on her the pain Scanlon decreed. But the feminine part of Brooke Scanlon was aquiver to leap towards a mirror on release.

But there was no release. The spreadeagled girl received the mercy of the spray, the cold and the odd feeling numbness so that she now possessed two breasts whose sensitivities were strangely blunted. She wondered if Melton also extracted teeth.

It was glorious to have it done. To emerge victorious from another of Scanlon’s tests. Brooke’s heart was singing in relief, her eyes half closed, when the male fingers pinched the plump lips of what she called her pussy, the private

place for which Scanlon used a four letter word. The fingers did not belong to her husband. The eyes of Mrs. John Scanlon flew open in shock.

“She has a nice formation, Mr. Scanlon.” Melton’s observation was clinically mellifluous. “It is eminently practical. In fact, she would look very well with one.”

“Who’s this ‘she’? And one what?” Brooke demanded in alarm. Then ended, lamely: “As if I didn’t know.” She eyed her amused spouse severely. “Look, John, couldn’t we compromise on a chastity belt?”

“Wasn’t thinking of your honor. I trust you.”

“Why then—?”

“You know me! Besides it would look damned attractive nestling down there between your legs.”

“There is, of course, a choice,” Melton suggested blandly. “Some prefer a small ring in each lip, others prefer the larger ornamentation in which the pudendum is locked by a larger circlet embracing both.”

“Couldn’t I just wear a ‘G-string’?” The nudity on the bed asked wanly. She sought Scanlon’s attention in an urgent concern. “John, isn’t this going to make things… awkward?”

Melton averted his eyes. Scanlon laughed. “This one can be removed, sweetheart.”

“Those with the locking device are extremely costly, Mr. Scanlon. I must have the self sealing ones with me.”

“Must have a lock. Can’t have the poor girl constantly tempted.”

“Could I be unstrapped now please?”

The men paid her no attention. They were examining rings. “I do understand your preference for a large heavy circlet, Mr. Scanlon.” Melton was saying helpfully. “They have the dual advantage of being positively visual, and impressing on the lady a constant awareness of the male.”

“I bet they do, Melton. Please untie me.”

“This lady is wearing a delightful brand, of which I am sure she is mostly unaware. It is well healed. She would find the rings a more constant presence.”

“Will one of you sadists please unstrap me?”

Brooke was aware of feminine hypocrisy. She was enjoying every moment of this exchange. She did not care whether she was unstrapped or not. She was in the midst of a sensual feast she had no wish to relinquish. She was spread naked on a bed and was receiving the rapt attention of two males. What more could a girl ask! But Melton was not yet done.

“I’m afraid a ring in keeping with the rest would require a piercing of the cartilage of her nostrils too large to recom-

mend, Sir."

"You mentioned the other device?"

"With one of those the lady would be entirely on her honor."

"She's got lots. Try one."

"I am not a prize bull," Brooke said firmly. "You know what you can do with that ring."

"Pay no attention to her. Put it on."

A nice thing about homosexuals was their fingers were impersonal and without malice. Melton's were deftly functional as they captured Mrs. John Scanlon's shocked nostrils and inserted on the cartilage therein the blunt ends of an expanding circle of metal. It hurt and felt enormous on her upper lip. Brooke tell sure it weighed pound. "Take it off," she implored. "It hurts!"

"It functions as a spring, Sir. It can be spread to decrease tension. If you wish—?"

"Leave it. Let her know she's got it on."

"If worn permanently as it now is it may make its own penetration in the course of time."

"Suits her. I like it."

"But it is easily removed—"

“Then get it off my nose right now!” Brooke pleaded. “We’ll take that one,” Scanlon decided. “She can make a selection if she wants when we let her loose.”

“Right now!” The strapped girl requested firmly.

“So far as the piercing of her earlobes goes we do have a choice,” Melton said briskly. “The orifice would be large but probably unnoticeable. Or we could use the spring type as with her nose.”

“Brooke can choose. We won’t do it today.”

“I did mention the other possibility—?” Melton’s tone fell away to a hush. “It is immensely erotic and can sometimes serve a practical need. But large rings and the requisite orifices would be impractical for a lady who attends social functions.”

The nude girl on the bed tensed against her leather bands. Brooke was not sure how much to believe. They could he teasing. But the burn of the ring in her nose and its weight on her lip was real, very real indeed… Testily, she raised as best she could and exclaimed: “Enough’s enough! Stop scaring me. I don’t have any more places—”

“You spoke of the wire thin type?” Scanlon’s voice was grave.

“The punctures for those, when healed, are not too discernable, Sir. But in the healing period the lady would have to go into retirement. She would have studs inserted. It

would be impractical to use the rings unless you kept her on a liquid diet, using a straw, and were content to have her unable to speak."

"My lips!" Brooke surged against the straps, striving to rise. "You can't possibly ring my lips?"

"Quite practical, sweetheart. The way Melton tells it."

"Well, I don't want my lips wired together. I couldn't talk to you, John—besides, I like to eat."

"Relax, girl. That's not today either."

"I don't want it anytime. Good gosh!"

"The first reaction is always negative, Sir. Two rings are required to seal the lips for silence and effect a visual balance. A single ring in the center has proved unpopular."

"The whole idea's unpopular with me." Brooke affirmed wanly from where she now lay passively in her bonds. "I think it's revolting. You should both be ashamed—"

"We'll talk that one over," Scanlon decided. "Let her loose." To Brooke, he warned: "You leave that ring in your nose. Don't you dare take it out."

"Mrs. Scanlon is a very fortunate young woman, Sir."

"You tell her, she might not believe me right now."

The straps fell away. Brooke sat up gingerly. Her breasts

were beginning to hurt again, and her nose was going to drive her up the wall. But the rest of her was still intact, and deep within her being she was tingling with excitement and not too far from orgasm. Cautiously, she stepped to the big mirror.

“John! Oh… J-O-H-N…!” Brooke’s exclamation was awed, clothed in wonder. “I’m—I’m beautiful!”

“Sure you are.”

“I’d never have believed—!”

The naked girl’s voice was quaintly lisped I from the weight of the ring on her lip. She posed. Turning and twisting in delight, her pain forgotten, Brooke cupped her breasts and looked down at the gold circlets her nipples proclaimed with painful price. “They’re so—so big and beautiful…!” In a sudden realization, she added: “If you held any of them I wouldn’t dare move.”

“They inhibit argument.” Melton said gently as he rolled the last strap and tucked it away. “I must say, this has been a pleasure.”

When the door closed behind him, husband and wife burst into laughter. It was a joyous explosion of pent up emotion. Forgetting her new vulnerability, Brooke clasped Scanlon in ecstatic arms and said ‘ouch’ twice. Entranced with experiment, she lifted the ring in her nose as high and as far back as it would go in order to kiss. It was hilarious. She

hurt all over the place but did not care.

Released from her nose ring, they went shopping for a bra. Brooke had not the courage to face society with nipples and rings discernable through a gown. And anyway, it hurt. Her wounded breasts deserved a shield.

“I doubt we can find anything wicked that will do, John.”

“Might surprise you, girl.”

They found a bra erotically naughty enough to please. Brooke wore it with immense panache. The burn of her nipples beneath its protection fed a constant fire Brooke cherished with carnal thoughts. She wondered, glowingly, if any of the svelte women who conversed so enthusiastically of her husband’s future had pierced nipples or whose pussy was held inviolate in a ring. After Melton, anything might be given credence. Dancing, Brooke held her partners at arm’s length. All save her husband and the governor. For them she suffered.

“Sore at first, aren’t they!”

Brooke missed a step. She looked up at the governor of the state, blushing furiously. He was smiling.

“I know you’ve got rings in your nipples, Mrs. Scanlon. You got ’em today—and please keep blushing.”

“But how? Do they show?”

The governor chuckled. “John and I are old friends. We share a few interests.” He squeezed her deliberately to cause pain. “I think you’re wonderful.”

“I want John to be President,” she said it breathlessly. She hoped it explained everything.

“I’ll make sure he is.” The promise was jocular but held underlying intent. “You’ll be the first First Lady to have rings in her tits.”

“I’m afraid he’ll lead me around by them.”

“Hmmmmmm, like to do that myself.” He squeezed again. “But, with them, you could lead the whole male race yourself. Ringed tits have a potent effect on us poor bastards. They make a girl ineffably lovely.”

After that, Brooke bore her pain joyously. She wished she had the courage to put the ring back in her nose. That night in bed she was voracious, feeding insatiably on Scanlon’s strength. The ring in her nose was there by her own demand, it spoke of their union more eloquently than the gold band on her finger.

The following night, at home on the ‘J. Bar. S’, Brooke Scanlon’s lust was partly appeased. It was replaced by feminine curiosity. Naked in bed, she felt supremely sure.

“John, you put the ring in my nose. I want it. It wouldn’t feel right if I fixed it.”

Scanlon's fingers were sure. The cartilage within her nostrils accepted its pain. It was less than the day before. "You made enough fuss about getting it, girl."

"Well, I'm only a female. You have to make allowances." She fingered the pendent circle in incredulous happiness. "But I'd like my ears pierced. I'll put up with the holes. But, John dear, would the earrings stay on? I mean… couldn't I take them off?"

"I'll let you choose. Either kind."

She kissed him. "Right now I'm horny, so I want the kind that won't come off." She giggled. "But after you've screwed me a few times I'll probably feel more sensible."

"Decide tomorrow."

"You two were joking about the one for my pussy…?"

"You know better than that."

"Alright then. But, one large ring…? Going through both my lips…? I mean, the lips of my pussy…?"

"Sure. The little ones each side are for kids. Don't mean anything."

"But the big one means no one can use me, not even you?"

"Right. I'll hold the key. When I want to fuck you I'll use it. The rest of the time you'll have a closed cat."

“I bet I’ll have to walk with my legs apart.”

“Don’t mind if you do.”

“Why do I love you?”

“Because I broke you.”

“It was sort of a nice breaking.” Brooke mused back through her tortures. “I don’t understand how you knew…? I mean, that I’d become what I am, a girl with a ring in her nose?” She shook her head in serious puzzlement. “I was so… so innocent, a sweet little cowgirl who’d never been—! I’d never had a man.”

“Say it. You’d never been fucked.”

“I’d never been fucked. And now: are you really going to ring my cunt?”

“Yes.”

“The lock business, won’t it be heavy and—?”

“You won’t even see it. The key will be a sliver of steel.”

“Very well. I expect I’ll get adjusted to the idea. Good gosh! A girl who has to have her pussy unlocked before she goes to bed! I’ll orgasm all over the place and be forever giggling.”

“Be handy to chain you up by.”

“I was wondering how long it would take you to think of

that," she giggled. "Quince is going to have kittens."

"You can ask him if he wants Etta ringed, too."

"O.K., but what about the other thing, my lips? John, are you serious about that?"

"If I said yes, what would you say?"

"I'd obey you."

"But you wouldn't like it, eh?"

"No, I wouldn't. John, think! I couldn't speak. I couldn't eat. Every time you looked at me those rings would be the first thing you'd see."

"I've thought of it," Scanlon admitted slowly. "I'm still thinking. You certainly won't get rings in your lips before you get the ring in your cunt and the two in your ears."

"I'll be thinking of it too."

"You wouldn't be mute all the time, Brooke. Only when I felt like it. I told you I was a sadist. Right now I'm all hepped up with the vision of fucking you with every ring in place on that lovely body and face of yours. You were right about never making a decision when horny. Roll over."

Mrs. John Scanlon rolled over. To the aftermath of lust she remembered pain, and sensed a cue. She kissed her master in several strategic places and suggested brightly: "All that pain Melton gave me with his punch thing and the rings it's

made me think of poor Dorothy Winthrop. Remember her?"

"You won't let me forget."

"Well, it's the first time I've had a chance to save a girl's life. If the Hibernia torture her long enough in that downstairs place she'll die. I'd have died. I'd have wanted to die."

"I've made an enquiry or two. I could make a deal."

"Why don't you! Please do?"

"Brooke, do you want a girl in a cage in the barn full time?"

"Does Dorothy have to be in a cage? Couldn't you get her job back for her?"

"Maybe after the election. But that's not the problem. The only deal I can chisel out of Reese Branson is with the pledge to give this girlfriend of your's a real bad time."

"How bad a time?"

"At least as bad as I give you," Scanlon grinned. "But remember… you like it, she doesn't."

"I don't like all of it. Sometimes it's horrible."

"You like enough, and you're motivated. You understand these things. She'd hate it all."

"But our lovely dining together and—"

“Hell, girl, you don’t think she’s going to horn in on that!”

“Perhaps sometimes…? Couldn’t we give her a little happiness? The poor thing deserves—”

“O.K. I’ll send the two of you into town for the day. You’ll come home. I’m curious about her.”

“You’d love that experiment. I can tell. What happens to me if she runs away?”

“Nothing. The police would pick her up and return your precious pal to the Hibernia. I’m not sure she shouldn’t stay there.”

“John dear, you have to understand what I know—because I’ve been there! What they do to us girls in the Hibernia makes anything you’ve had Quince do to me seem kid’s stuff.”

Scanlon patted his wife lovingly. “Got a thing about her, eh? Thought of her getting her ass whipped bothers you?”

“Gosh, if whipping your ass was all they did to a girl…” Brooke frictioned her nudity against the man at her side, then cupped her breasts and flaunted her nipple rings. As a last provocation she wrinkled her nose and pulled her nose ring to show it would not easily detach. “Please, John…? Get her out…?”

“If I ever caught the two of you nibbling each other…” Scanlon’s eyes became cold steel. “I’d send the both of you

back to the Hibernia and tell 'em to give you the full treatment. D'you want that?"

"John, I won't nibble," Brooke's heart was in her words. "I promise I won't eat Dorothy Winthrop or let her eat me."

"I'll think about it," said the master of the 'J.Bar.S'. "Now, get yourself on your back and spread those legs."

* * *

Chapter Five

HORSEWOMAN

If Dorothy Winthrop looked to her left she beheld her left hand. That was all, just her hand. She could clench it to a fist or splay her fingers wide. She had done both. To her right, a similar picture was available to view. Her hand. It was unexciting, except for the fact that her hands were cut off at the wrist by wood, just as was her head. In the case of her head, it was decapitated by the yoke of timber round her neck. In all three cases the wood was snug, rasping her neck when she moved. Possibly the pillory was new and its surface unpolished by female skin.

Her condition was made even more boring by the fact that the wooden implement into which she was securely locked had been turned to face the wall. Bleak concrete was the only reward for searching eyes. But Dorothy was concerned with more than her view. She was nakedly aware that her bare body and limbs were bent in a posture to greet a visitor with the sight of her round bottom pleading for attention. She was utterly helpless and cringingly vulnerable. She could hear but could not see. For an hour she had been staring at the stone and making guesses at what would be done to her. The pillory was only a preliminary shame, it did not hurt enough.

When the expected sound came she could guess whose hand it was that slid between her thighs and cupped her sex. “Nice response, you’re properly damp.” Reese Branson pronounced equably. “How long have you been standing like this?”

“Probably an hour. Reese, please not any more today? Could we leave it at this, it’s bad enough?” Dorothy Winthrop did not have to simulate the dolor in her plea.

“You know better than that, dear girl. This is a mere preliminary. It’s a sort of holding situation, keeping you on tap as it were.”

“Reese, I need a break. I’ve been hurt too much. Amy didn’t need to lock me in this beastly thing so early. I’m already tired.”

“You won’t stay there, pet. Trust Branson.” The tone was pure male mockery. “How about me feeling you up a bit to start, you’re well positioned?’

“Reese, don’t! It’s mean. I’m so damn helpless.”

“And so delightfully naked! That’s right, your legs a bit further for my hand.”

“Oh, don’t be so mean!” Dorothy’s plaint was a wail of detestation for what life was doing to her. “It’s early morning, I don’t want to start having orgasms. They wear a girl out.”

“Can’t see me, can you? I find that amusing. Blind to the hand that comforts your cunt.”

“It isn’t comfort. Get your hand away! And I can’t see anything that matters. This is the most hateful thing to be fastened in… Please. Reese, be a bit kind?”

“I am being kind. I’m giving you an orgasm. Would you sooner be whipped?”

“Yes—!” Dorothy bit her lip. She had said the wrong thing. “Reese, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean—”

Fire sliced her exposed bottom, a vicious cut with a crop across both her cheeks. She cried out in shock and pain and writhed uselessly against the wooden monster which held her with such ease.

“Watch your tongue, girl. I strive to please.” The hand re-

sumed its fulfillment of her shame. The naked girl kept silent, save for the involuntary sounds of orgasm she could not control.

“That makes a good start, my pet. You have a full day ahead.”

“Reese, I can’t even see you. I—I—oh, damn this whole deal! I’ve said I’m sorry a hundred times—please forgive me?”

“I like you like this.” Branson sounded complacent. He slapped a wealed bottom its owner could not see. “It’s as suitable a position for a woman as I can think of. Everything that matters is right to hand. I’ve got a yen about something. Want to hear?”

“No.”

“It’s that horse thing. Already been on it, I believe?”

“Yes. It’s murder. I’ll beg and crawl…”

“No, you won’t. You’re going to sit on that contraption, and just for my benefit. I want to see what you look like, mounted.”

“A girl looks horrible. All twisted and hurting and in tears. You can’t even see the part you’re punishing, we’re sitting on it.”

“Stop using the plural, my dear. It’s only you who has a

date with a horse. And I'll expect a running commentary —"

"I can't stand a day on that horror, I just can't!" There was no doubting Dorothy's sincerity. "I asked you yesterday to kill me, I'm asking you again."

"Temper, temper! Feminine pique!" Branson was living intensely. "Did I forget to mention—? You'll be an equestrienne for only part of the day. There's a little something else."

"What?"

"All in good time, dear. You can concentrate on putting all your weight on your pussy—on a sharp edge, of course."

"It's one of the worst tortures, Reese. You've had it done to me once. You don't need to do it again. I simply don't deserve it."

"A matter of opinion, dear girl. I'll strap the anklets on you in readiness."

The pilloried nudity stood helpless and miserable, while the leather bands were buckled. She knew their purpose all too well. Over and over she muttered dolourously: "You don't need to. Reese, you don't need to."

"When I raise the yoke to release you you'll put your hands behind your back, Dorothy. Is that understood?"

“Yes, I understand. I’m not going to fight. I know it’s no good.”

“Now, before I unlock you, how about a few more cuts across your rump?”

“You’ll give them to me if you wish. I can’t stop you.”

Surprisingly, Reese Branson refrained. The key turned, the lock snapped open, the heavy yoke was raised from the bent neck. Thankfully, the punished girl stood erect. Her hands were instantly behind her back. She had no thought of disobedience, she had been cured of it just as she herself had cured other girls long ago. She stood passively as her wrists were handcuffed. Listlessly, she turned to face her master.

“Hello, Miss Winthrop,” said Amy. “I’ve been here all the time, watching. That sure is a lovely mark Mr. Branson laid across your ass.”

“I require Amy’s expertise in the matter of your mounting, sweetheart,” Branson’s tone was mockingly solicitous. “I wouldn’t want you to fall off.”

Dorothy stood. Condemned. Robbed of hands. She gazed forlornly at the malicious structure she was soon to ride. It mocked her with its simplicity. Amy’s suggestion held the same element.

“You know what to do, Miss Winthrop. Get on your horse.”

“Amy, I can’t. You know I can’t. Not unless you want to give me my hands back.”

“You’ve put enough girls on there, Miss Winthrop. And you’ve been on there yourself. You ought to be fond of your little horsey by now.”

Dorothy absorbed the jibe. It would be pleasant to lay a crop across Amy’s impudent backside. Amy had it coming! But that was a pretty dream unlikely to happen. There are few things more bitter than lost authority. Unhappily she offered: “I can stand on the box for you. I can get astride the plank. But if I sit on it I’ll fall. Besides, no girl can sit on that thing of her own volition, it hurts too much.”

“You can, Miss Winthrop. You’ve got an educated cunt. Directly you set it on the edge, Mr. Branson and I are going to latch on to your feet. In two seconds you’ll be fixed.”

The girl was enjoying herself, showing off to the omnipotent male. The naked girl looked from one to the other of her tormentors and found no sympathy. Both were gazing at her in pleased expectancy. Dorothy shrugged resignedly and stood on the box. She lifted a bare leg across the waiting edge. Gingerly, she adjusted her crotch on the inadequate surface. In a moment she would release her weight…

It was neat and efficient. Her feet were whisked away to either side, there was an instant tensioning, tighter and tighter to split her sex. Dorothy Winthrop could no longer fall, she could do nothing. Striving for normalcy and sweet

reason, she gasped moaningly. “I can’t possibly stand this. I’ll faint, I’ll… I’ll die. You don’t understand how impossibly awful this is.”

“I understand, Miss Winthrop,” Amy said brightly. “You put me on it once. Remember?”

“Revenge is sweet,” Branson enunciated cheerfully. “That makes two of us, Amy. Our lady on the horse had a gift for making enemies. By the way, isn’t there something else—?”

“Yes, Sir. We have to raise her arms so she leans forward on her pussy. This way she can lean back and it doesn’t hurt half as bad. See, she’s doing it now.”

“Please don’t make it any worse. You don’t have to do that other.” Dorothy looked piteously at her engrossed companions. “Please, I beg you, don’t. It’s awful.”

“If you’ll do the honors, Amy? Fix her for maximum discomfort.” Branson radiated charm. “If your own cunt’s been on that sharp edge you’ll know just the right spot.”

“Sure thing, Mr. Branson. You watch how it works.”

Their nude victim could not move. Dorothy sat in agony while her handcuffed wrists were hooked and her arms began to raise up behind her back. Forgetting pride, she begged: “Please, oh please… not too tight! Not way up?”

Amy giggled. “It really burns a girl up, Sir, the way she has to bend forward as her arms go high, and the handcuffs

hurt her wrists. I sure didn't like it. I screamed like crazy."

"An extraordinary configuration, Dorothy love. I'm enjoying this." Branson was obviously speaking truth. "I wouldn't have believed you could have been so exquisitely contorted."

Their victim moaned. She was trying not to scream. Her tractioned arms were forcing her weight where she least wanted it. Amy knew her work all too well. Brokenly, Dorothy muttered: "I don't think you can hurt me any worse…"

Amy snubbed the rope. "There she is, Mr. Branson, right square on her pussy. I bet she'd love to whip my ass."

"Thank you, Amy. I'll mention your help to Miss Halloran. You may as well run along now. Miss Winthrop is in an excellent position for conversation."

They were alone, a free man and a tortured girl. Walking slowly round and round the wooden horse, Branson examined the stressed nakedness of the woman who had been his mistress. He voiced his first thought. "Dammit, Dorothy, looking at you now it's hard to believe I ever fucked you."

Dorothy Winthrop screamed as the plank edge burrowed deep, breaking her defenses with outrageous pain. She screamed again and again, shrill feminine sounds of despair and bitter hurt. She knew the piercing sounds would

offend Branson's ears. They were her only weapon and she used them to the full.

"Would you like to be gagged, dear girl? You're making a shocking racket."

"No—oh no! I'm sorry… don't gag me. I'll try."

Even in that he could defeat her. A gag would reduce her to a palpitating nothing. Dorothy cringed at the thought of strapped lips. She could not raise her head, but looked sideways at the watching man and muttered: "Reese, oh Reese… now I know what this is like. I wouldn't do it to anyone, not to Amy, not to any girl. Not to my worst enemy."

"Not even to me?"

"Oh… Reese…"

"I wish you could see yourself, pet. This whole deal's damn remarkable. I could swear your feet are a straight line from one anklet to the other with your pubic hair as a divider. Can't see your cunt, you're sitting on it."

"Let my arms down, Reese? Give me that much of a break?"

"Did you let your little girl's arms down, sweetheart, when you were supervisor?"

"So alright, I was a bitch! I'm still asking for mercy."

"You'd probably have to sit there a couple of months to ex-

piate all your crimes against maiden flesh, dear heart."

"Reese, I've never hurt this bad, never enough to deserve this."

Reese Branson made another slow circle of the girl whose breasts were heaving spasmodically under stress. He patted a hard taut bare thigh. "We were talking about that Brooke girl," he said casually.

"Don't bother, Reese. That bit of hope you planted in me soon died. On this thing all I can believe in is pain."

"She married the chap who sent her to the Hibernia. Damned odd sort of union."

"I hope she's very happy."

"I spoke to this guy, Scanlon. He promised you a real bad time if you cared to visit. He mentioned a few things I'm sure you wouldn't like."

"I'd let him brand me if it would get me out of here. I'd welcome anything as long as it isn't inside this damn prison." She bestowed another painful sideways glance. "But I know I'm here for life, I won't let you plant hope."

"He has a deal somewhat like this. The girl sits astride a corral rail. Lots of fresh air."

"Have your fun, Reese. But please...? Let my arms down a couple of inches?"

“No. I’ve just realized I’m an armpit man. Oh, and Scanlon spoke of staking you out, nude, on an anthill. Seems like they have anthills on ranches. Think of all that activity under your hips while you can’t move.”

“Wouldn’t I ever get to talk to Brooke?”

“Ah-ha! And you said you weren’t interested?”

“You’re only teasing. Reese, let me off this thing and make love to me? I’ll make it very, very good for you.”

“Well, well! Interesting. I wonder if Torquemada’s victims ever offered him their cunts.”

“Of course they did. Reese… please use mind?”

“I am using it. Don’t tell me you ain’t noticing?’

Fresh spasms of pain shot up from her crotch. Dorothy screamed. She could not help the scream or those that followed. They were a cry of agony, of frustration, of outrage that this thing could be done to her, that she should he sitting thus at all.

Thoughtfully and brutally, Branson strapped the gag within Dorothy Winthrop’s mouth. He left and closed the door.

The horsed girl was glad to see him go. He was a bastard. If he intended to leave, he need not have gagged her, but he had done so anyway, knowing she hated the brutality across her tongue and lips. Now, even if someone came, she

would be mute. Not that it mattered. Nothing mattered any more, she wasn't going anyplace. She thought of the girl who had been Brooke Atherton, and wept in longing. Her tears wetted the strap of her gag and fell to where she could see them strike the floor. To be on a ranch with a girl she was fond of! To be once again in the open air and see the sun! It seemed incredible...! Today she had witnessed his pleasure in her shame. He would not relinquish it. She looked down at the distorted shape of her own pubic hair, and at the plank edge on which she suffered. It was an uninspiring view.

* * *

Lifted from the horse, Dorothy Winthrop realized anew the convenience of handcuffs, she was still helpless. They stood her erect to await her next punishment, the mysterious penance previously hinted but not disclosed. After four hours of the bitter penetration of her crotch she was content to remain motionless in the blessed relief of the aftermath of torture. There would be a receding hurt but it would be a hurt she could cope with, like watching an enemy walk away beyond a hill. It was painful to walk. If she had possessed her hands she would have massaged her wounded loins, but she had no hands. She stood, passively nude, without hope.

The structure was as anonymous as the horse. A high tiny stool with a high narrow back. It was rigidly constructed. Presumably someone wanted her to sit in uncomfortable immobility. Dorothy stood and looked at it with little interest. If it was possible to become bored with torture, she was bored or blasé! She searched for the right word, but that did not matter either. Miss Hailoran and Amy fussed with the final placement.

“Take her to the toilet, Amy, before we tie her.”

“If you’d let me have my hands there’s no need—”

“Don’t argue, dear. Amy doesn’t mind.”

Amy did not mind. Amy was curious to get a good look at Miss Winthrop’s crotch and Miss Winthrop’s punished sex. “I couldn’t see mine when you did it to me, Miss Winthrop,” she explained. “So this is my best chance, and with you right off the plank.”

The former supervisor of the Hibernia Women’s Correctional Institute obligingly raised a foot and placed it on the toilet seat to reveal her punished place in blatant exposure. “There you are, Amy,” Dorothy said without shame. “Have a good look and tell me. It feels as though I’ve been destroyed down there.”

Amy giggled, peering intently at a female privacy she would not have dared invade in times past. “Gosh, Miss Winthrop, it’s sort of disappointing.”

“You mean I still have a pussy and I’m not one big gash?”

“I know how you feel, Miss Winthrop. But it’s just a bit red and there’s a small bruised bit. Jeepers, you’ve got the nicest cunt!”

“Thank you. I don’t suppose it will ever be used again—except in here. Why didn’t Mr. Branson come to see my new punishment?”

“Did you want him to fuck you, Miss Winthrop? I’m so sorry. But he’s left the prison. He’s been gone a long time. I guess he and Miss Halloran figured out what you’re getting this afternoon.”

“What am I getting?”

Amy giggled again. “I mustn’t tell you. Miss Halloran wants it to be a surprise. Anyways, Miss Winthrop, your pussy’s in great shape. Want me to eat it?”

“Goodness no! We’d be caught for sure. Miss Halloran would guess why we were so long in here. I don’t want her punishing me as well as that bastard of a man.”

“I don’t see why he doesn’t take you to his place, miss, and keep you handy to fuck and whip whenever he has spare time. Be a hell ova lot cheaper.”

“He lives in an apartment. Anyway, he knows the effect of this place down here on me. Iron bars and concrete! He’s getting his revenge. I’ve built up an absolute phobia over

being imprisoned down in this basement. Doesn't it affect you'?"

"Sort of. Being locked in those little cells sure does, and kept handcuffed…! You ain't hardly ever outta handcuffs, are you?"

"Doesn't matter much. If I had free hands, what would I do with them?"

"You could play with yourself. I used to."

"Well, yes… I do that when I'm handcuffed in front. I can't do it the way I am right now."

"You sure done come a long ways downhill, Miss Halloran, ain't you?" Amy was sympathetic. "The way you used to be…! Gosh!"

The stool was slightly tilted back. That made it more comfortable because the small seat accommodated only half a bottom. Dorothy's handcuffed hands stayed where they were, except that they were arranged behind the back of the stool. Her waist was buckled unkindly by a leather belt, another circle of leather imprisoned her neck to weld it back against the top of the chair which did not extend beyond that point. Once more Dorothy was helpless. She supposed she was not intended to look down. The strap beneath her chin denied motion to her head. There was always some fresh helplessness for a girl on the lower floor.

“You’re quite comfortable, Dorothy,” Miss Halloran observed gently, “but I’m afraid we do have to separate your legs. It’s sort of the same…”

To Dorothy Winthrop it seemed exactly the same. Her muscles and sinews cried out in anguish at a repeat performante. But her feet were soon as far apart as they would go. Dorothy could not look down but she was sure her public triangle marked the center of the line of her legs and thighs. She moaned in a weariness at punishment, and asked forlornly: “What are you going to do to me? It’s worse than this, isn’t it?”

“Yes, dear.”

The brush, the later, soap and razor told all. Dorothy struggled fiercely but did not move. The same fierceness prompted her plea:

“No… no! No… please don’t shave off my pubic hair. It’s a beastly thing to do to any girl. I’ll hate myself and I’ll hate you.”

“Calm down, dear. You have a very pretty cunt and a nice mound. You may even like the effect. Some girls shave all the time.”

“Well, I’m not one of them! I’ll hate it… being all bare and naked down there. Miss Halloran, please…? Don’t shave me.”

“Goodness, dear, what a fuss you do make! It’s a good thing

you can't move. Go ahead, Amy. Do a nice careful job. Not a single hair must be left. Shave her well back under and into the crease."

"Having her legs stretched this way makes her easy, Miss Halloran." Amy brushed lather in a cascade of white. "I think she's going to look real lovely."

"No—no—no...! You mustn't—I won't—!" The words of disbelief shattered and died against a wall of disregard. Amy was busy lathering a thick pubic bush and Miss Halloran smiled benignly at her charges as she made further adjustments to the leather band round Dorothy's neck.

The naked girl herself was battling against trembling lips and a voice she could not longer trust. Her utter helplessness and the wide tight exposure of her sex told her clearly that if they wanted to shave her pubes they could certainly do so. The titillating frictioning of brush and lather told her it was happening, happening now! She choked back further protests. She was adult and must keep perspective. Her hair would grow again. She could not believe it would ever again achieve the thick luxuriance she was losing now, but it would grow. Ahead of her was months of shame and the carnal jeers of Reese Branson. She wondered, dismally, if his revenge upon her could ever exhaust his ingenuity to hurt. This morning, agony! This afternoon a cringe making female shame.

"It's not as though you have to show your sex to anyone

except Mr. Branson, dear—to men, I mean. We're a nice little feminine group down here. We won't get excited about your bald cunt."

Miss Halloran's reassurance helped nothing. Dorothy was gasping as the vagus nerve center within her belly performed responsive gyrations against the first full sweep of Amy's razor as it sheared a full swathe of lather and hair from navel to crease. The flattening of pubic curves tautened by tractioned thighs made the razor's harvest of feminine treasure easy to achieve. Amy scraped and lathered, intent and absorbed, her young fingers flattening or pulling pubic lips to suit the convenience of her blade.

Amy giggled. "Can I do some of the other girls, Miss Halloran? This is fun. Miss Winthrop's coming up beautifully."

"I expect you have other motives also," Miss Halloran said tartly. "I know what you get up to down here with the girls."

"You mean, I wouldn't get hairs in my mouth—?" The trusty broke off in confusion. "Oops…! Sorry! Oh, jeepers!"

"I didn't hear that, Amy. I try and keep an open mind about these matters. I sometimes feel our charges down here need a few bright moments to keep them going."

"You're wonderful, Miss Halloran. May I lick Miss Winthrop's when I rinse it off?"

"Certainly not!"

“Well, what I mean… while she’s stretched like this…? It would be real groovey…?”

“I’m sure it would!” Miss Halloran’s voice was tart. “Forget it and get on with your work. I’m afraid poor dear Dorothy is not to be given pleasure. Mr. Branson was adamant.”

It was soon done. The shaving of Miss Dorothy Winthrop’s pubes were scarcely an earth shattering event in the Hibernia Women’s Correctional Institute. It was traumatic only for her. Dorothy knew her shame complete when she felt the warm wetness of being shaved off by Amy’s meticulous attention. She longed to look down at herself but was foiled by the collar tight beneath her chin. Even in so simple a thing as a glance at her own sex she was punished and denied. The stool had been well designed. No doubt they would leave her stretched and strapped thus to fret and fume. Probably Miss Halloran would have other girls brought in to look and to giggle to give her added shame and show them what they too might suffer.

“What next, Miss Halloran?” Amy’s query was brightly eager.

Dorothy tensed, then relaxed. It would be too much to hope the shave was all. It was too painless. They would now give her the pain her afternoon demanded. This odd stool would be a part of it.

“Her eyebrows, Amy. Try and keep the soap out of the poor dear’s eyes.”

The impact was too great for words. Straps creaked under the surge of muscles. Dorothy's stricken gaze fought the collar to meet Miss Halloran's placid regard. All her pleading was in her eyes. "He… he wouldn't…?"

"I'm afraid so, dear."

"It's inhuman."

"Not really. Your eyebrows will grow again, just as will those lovely pubic curls you had. Don't fret."

Use of the past tense was frightening. It spoke of impotence, of inflictions in motion. If they wanted to clip off her nipples her breasts were beautifully postured for the act. The stool held her tight. At the back her hands twisted frantically against the twin circlets on her wrists. If she shed tears they would be of frustration. Resignedly, she said: "There's nothing I can do or say, is there?"

"No, dear, you've been sentenced."

"I'll be ever so careful, Miss Winthrop."

She closed her eyes. When she opened them it would be to deep shame. The brush fluffed up later on a femininity she was about to lose. Dorothy Winthrop clenched her eyelids tight under the deft scraping of the blade. She could not visualize what she would become: some sort of albino mutation, a female monstrosity, revolting…!

"There, that was easy."

The warm wet cloth, the towel… demeaningly smooth in its frictioning above her eyes. There was nothing to impede its passage on her skin. The shaved woman looked up at Amy's enraptured regard.

"I sorta' like it, Miss Winthrop. It's different."

"Try and remember it's not the end of the world, dear."

"It's the end of my world." Dorothy's exclamation held a wealth of bitterness. "The things he has you do to me…! I just don't want to go on living."

"You're upset, dear," Miss Halloran gently patted a bare shoulder. "I can see how clever Mr. Branson's been in choosing the razor for you. It wouldn't upset some girls half as much."

"Shall I get the other stuff, Miss Halloran?"

"Yes, dear. Dorothy is ready."

Dorothy guessed. In a flash of intuition she knew her fate. She turned hurt and incredulous eyes on the head warden. She could not voice the awfulness of what came next.

"Yes, dear, I'm terribly sorry. It would be a shock for any woman."

"But… bald?"

"Mr. Branson's instructions are to remove any particle of hair we can find on you. He wants you to be completely

hairless."

"But—but—?" Dorothy fought for rationality in a friendless world. "You won't… surely? You couldn't…?"

"We must, Dorothy. You know that."

"Plead with him? Reason with him? Oh, please…?"

"I have already done so without success. Mr. Branson knows what he wants. You are to be devoid of hair." Miss Halloran's hand was kind on bare skin. "Please, you must remember it will grown again. You must keep that in your mind as something to look forward to."

"He'll keep me shaved. I just know he will! For always."

"He has not given those instructions for you, at least, not yet."

The clippers and the long electric cord. More hot water. An excited girl, Amy was delighted. "Don't worry, Miss Winthrop. We're still going to be fond of you."

"Don't let me see it. My hair, I mean. After you've cut it off. I couldn't bear to see it… limp and without me—not alive —?"

"Of course, dear. We can do that for you."

She was helpless. Sitting without pain whilst robbed of her female heritage. Crowning glory! What a mockery the term sounded now as the motor whittled and the blades

advanced across her scalp. Dorothy Winthrop sought motion to protest, but motion was denied. The leather round her neck delivered her to the shears. She sat silent as in a hairdresser's salon.

"We have to relieve you of the strap round your neck, Dorothy, to enable Amy to clip your nape."

"Alright, I won't struggle. I'll keep still."

They put the strap back on her neck for shaving. "Just to be safe, Dorothy. It holds you so well."

Brush and lather. Female fingers and the scraping blade. Extra applications to erase rebellious growth. It took much longer and much peering scrutiny until sensitive fingertips could trace of bristle. Then the loosening of the collar.

Dorothy obediently bent forward to give Amy the nape of her neck for the last clean sweep by which she was made more nude than nude. If they plucked her eyelashes she would be the most naked female in the world.

Miss Halloran divined her thought. "No, not your eyelashes, dear, there's danger of infection. You can keep those. They make a very lovely contrast."

They freed her feet but bandaged her eyes. The handcuffs were unlocked and taken from her wrists. Hands aided her to rise. It was not unlike her descent from the horse. She hurt but was grateful. It was strange to have her hands. She was sure she would not be allowed to use them.

“Amy brought a big mirror down for you, Dorothy.” Miss Halloran’s voice held a hint of something the shaven girl could not divine. “When we remove your blindfold you will be looking at yourself. I want to warn you to be ready for something very different from what you expect.”

Dorothy Winthrop blinked in the light as the band was whisked from her eyes. Heart thudding, she sought the tell-tale glass that was not there. It took perceptible moments before she focused on the picture she had ignored, the illustration from science fiction, the reflection of herself. She gazed at it, stricken to silence. She slowly turned to profile and back. The seconds passed as she stared hungrily. Her voice, when it came, was awed.

“I’m beautiful!” She was incredulous.

“A result Mr. Branson did not anticipate.” Miss Halloran’s tone was tart. “But there are girls whose shape and contours lend themselves to what was just been done to you, Dorothy. For myself, I’m tremendously happy about it.”

The denuded girl was still staring, her words as from a distance. “It isn’t me. It’s another girl from another planet. Girls can’t possibily be this beautiful—not in our world.”

“It’s you alright, Miss Winthrop.” Amy was breathless. “And you’re so gorgeously yummy… gosh, if I thought I’d come out like the way you’ve done… I’d get shaved right now.” She made a hasty amendment. “That is, if Miss Halloran would let me.”

“You’d look terrible, Amy. Forget it.” Miss Halloran was merciless. “I was uncertain that Dorothy would turn out this well. I’m so very happy for her.”

In the sudden urgency of brief freedom, Dorothy’s hands were making instinctive explorations of the woman she had become. It was the same as meeting a stranger. Pubes, eyebrows, her head. In wonder and disbelief she touched, palmed, frictioned herself in the razor’s wake. She felt tremendously alive, reborn. Her exclamation was totally feminine.

“Will Reese like me now?”

“He’ll fuck you on the spot—oops, sorry!”

“Amy, you may run along. Take the things with you. The stool stays here. And thank you, you did well.”

Two women. One without hair. They stood in an understanding silence. The shaven girl’s hands were still cautiously confirming what she could scarce believe. Eyes on her reflection, Dorothy said: “I’m so erotic! You’ve read those stories about other planets and clones…? I’m a lovely clone.”

“You’re a damn lovely woman. I’m not sure the lower floor hasn’t been good for you. There’s something spiritual—or maybe you’re right about the clone. That razor’s made you too exquisite to be real. Damn shame to lock you away in that cell.”

Dorothy was still posing, fingers searching for what was no longer there. “But there’s nowhere else I belong now.” She reflected sadly. “I couldn’t possibly be seen like this.”

“Some of those avant-garde photographers would pay a fortune for you, dear, and you’d be a knockout on the screen.”

“Well… maybe. But I’m a prisoner down here. “D’you think Branson will be mad about the way this has turned out; that I’m not hideous? Will he have something more hateful done to me?”

“He might even be pleased, dear. He’s a man, y’know.”

“I’m frightened he’ll get gored with me and think of… mutilations…?”

“The Hibernia won’t go that far to oblige him. If he wants to cut one of your breasts off he’ll have to take you somewhere else.”

“Will I be shaved every week or so, or will he allow my hair to grow? If I’m down here for life there’s lots of time.”

“I don’t know, dear, and don’t let’s get morbid.”

“I suppose it’s time to lock me up,” Dorothy Winthrop sighed. “It’s been a day I’ll remember. Thank you for letting me have my hands this little while. It feels so good. Here—” She held out her wrists for the handcuffs. “In front of behind my back?”

“Neither, dear.”

“You mean I don’t get handcuffed?”

“No handcuffs. No cell.”

Dorothy stared. She had been given a message. “Are you telling me something?” She asked slowly, not daring to hope. “You’re finished at the Hibernia, dear. You’re going to be sent to the J.Bar.S ranch.”

“Brooke Atherton—?”

“Her name’s Scanlon now, dear. I’m afraid her husband isn’t a bit kind to girls—”

“But I’ll see daylight, the sun… breathe fresh air!”

“Yes, you’ll have those things, and probably be whipped as well.” Miss Halloran shook a cynical head. “Try and not be too optimistic, Dorothy. Prisons come in all kinds, and I suspect Mr. Branson struck a cruel bargain about you.”

“I don’t mind. It has to be better than these little cells and knowing it’s forever—and Brooke will be there.”

“I don’t know.” The chief warden shook her head, she was obviously thinking hard. Her voice was troubled. “Dorothy, we’ve known each other a long time. I was shocked by what Branson was able to do to you, by the things we’ve been forced to inflict on you. Dammit, we were old friends. I could see it happening to me: Stripped of authority, made

naked, whipped and shamed…" Her voice trailed into a pregnant pause. "Suppose I arrange an escape? You could disappear?"

Dorothy Winthrop stood, stunned. She raised her free hands and looked at them in wonder. She gazed intently at her reflection in the mirror. "I can't. Not like this!" Her voice died, bemused.

"A wig and an eyebrow pencil. I'll go and get you clothes and money and escort you to the gate?"

Dorothy Winthrop clasped Miss Halloran in grateful arms and sobbed on the warden's shoulder. "I don't have the courage. I'm scared." She tried to laugh, "I'm a clone. I don't belong anywhere."

"My orders are to deliver you to the 'J.Bar.S' as a tightly tied package. Not dressed. Dorothy, is that what you want?"

"I don't know," the denuded girl sniffed unhappily. "They probably don't want a hairless clone—they'd be shocked and I'd be shamed."

"Stop calling yourself a clone. You've become an exotically lovely woman."

"The word fits." More tearful sniffs. "I'm a creation of Reese Branson's. I belong down here for him to torture—"

"I can arrange for you to stay. I can easily keep you hidden in a cell?"

“No! Oh, no! Oh, Miss Halloran, I’m being so silly—it’s this being hairless…! I ought to be overjoyed—and you’re so kind. I’m just plain frightened… That son-of-a-bitch! I bet he’s laughing.”

“I agree. He’s a bastard. He’s letting you go, but he’s spoiled your freedom. He knows you too well.” Miss Halloran’s hand gently patted a naked back. “How’d it be if I handcuff you and lock you up for the night? Take away decision? Tomorrow you get delivered whether you like it or not. I warn you though, dear, once you’re handcuffed you’ve had the course. I won’t see you again. Amy will package you.”

“I’ll go crazy in that cell… thinking. All alone.”

“Give me your hands, dear. I’m going to handcuff you and put an end to this heartsearching, it’s not good for you. You’ll feel better once you’re chained.” Miss Halloran smiled. “Your hands? Give me your hands.”

* * *

Chapter Six

THE WILLOW SWITCH

For Quince, it was a day to remember. Quince was a simple soul from simple origins. A golden ring pendent from a lady's nose was a thing not even to be dreamed of. Rings were for the noses of bulls, not for the nostrils of beautiful girls. He gazed at Brooke's in awe.

"It ain't true, Mrs. Scanlon. You gotta e kiddin'."

Brooke had insisted on the nose ring for Quince's special benefit. Scanlon had been dourly amused. "It's true, Quince. Mr. Scanlon wants to control me easily. Like it?"

“Gosh, do I ever!”

It was hard to guess the visions engendered in the ranch hand’s mind. His eyes appeared permanently focused on Melton’s work of art. He was breathing heavily. “You can lead me around by it,” Brooke assured demurely. “It makes me very well behaved.”

“If I hadn’t seen it I wouldn’t never have believed—”

“Mr. Scanlon thinks every girl should have one. Do you want me to take my things off, Quince? This is just another day.”

“Guess you better, Mrs. Scanlon. I bin’ plumb forgettin’.” He shook his honest head in delighted wonder. “The boss sure is somethin’, ain’t he? Goes and marries you—” He guffawed happily. “Now you got a ring on your finger and a ring in your nose! Holy cow!”

Brooke was mischieviously conscious of a familiar heat. Quince’s rapture engendered a pleasant excitement beneath the ‘J.Bar.S’ of her brand. And the best was still to come! She kicked off shoes and stepped out of her flimsy frock. She was naked for whatever punishment might await. But, first…! “I hope you like these too, Quince.” Brooke protruded her breasts with a deep breath. “They’re still terribly tender—?”

“I don’t believe them neither,” Quince said firmly.

“They’ve only been fixed in me a couple of days. I love

them."

"Was you extra bad behaved, or somethin'—?" Quince had switched focus from nose to impudent breasts. "Gee-whiz, they sure is right outta' this world."

"I wasn't bad. They're like my brand. They show I belong to someone. Besides, they're much more exciting than jewelry. What's on the books for me today?"

"Jeepers, Miss Atherton, you want somethin' else done to you 'sides wearin' them rings?"

"My name's Scanlon now. Remember? Mr. Scanlon wants something done to me. I told you, Quince, being the boss' wife doesn't change a thing for me. I'm still a naughty little girl who has to be taught lessons."

"You're kiddin'. Boss sure is lucky gettin' you." Quince's gaze was still riveted on ringed nipples. "Them rings hurtin'?"

"Oh sure. They're tender. Please go easy on me there?"

"Sure will, Miss. Might be a day for hangin' you up. But how'd it be I tie you to the post? You know, a real rough tie? But no ropes near them rings?"

"O.K. by me. But you'll have to let me loose just after noon. Mr. Scanlon has some men coming on business. I'm going to ride over to Atherton Acres. You can have my horse ready." Brooke bestowed a comradely grin. "I think the

gentlemen might take a dim view of a naked wife hanging around all tied up."

Once more Brooke felt an absurd nostalgia, a sense of rightness in walking naked beside this rustinc youngish man who carried rope with which she would be bound. Scanlon's growing involvements posed a threat to the continuance of her daily visits to Quince and the barn. Brooke could understand and begin to share her husband's reluctance to set aside the 'J.Bar.S' and their joyous sharing of a strange delight. What they had here was unique. Without Atherton Acres and the J.Bar.S it could not exist. It made these moments precious. Moments that, to another girl, might call for screams.

"Your back up agin' the post, Mrs. Scanlon. We won't try out no fancy notions."

"Do I get the cunt cutter, Quince?"

"You're kiddin' me, miss. I ain't never called it that. But it is sorta' part of the deal."

Brooke nestled her nudity against the rough wood, remembering the first time she had been bound to it. Nostalgia was delicious. The forward march of her enslavement made everything a "remember when". She half closed her eyes and allowed the hard male hands to work their will on her.

No handcuffs. Her hands tied with rope at the back. Her

elbows, too. They could not be made to meet but were roped back as far as they would go. Shoulders cinched beneath armpits and across the back of her neck, tummy banded and belted to concavity against the stake. Her body was bare of bonds from navel to neck, her breasts taut but unbound, their nipple rings impudent in the light of day.

“Sorry ’bout this here, miss. I knows you ain’t fussy—”

Brooke found the crotch tie frustrating. So intimate a bond should surely generate sexual excitation. But it never did, it simply hurt and doubly welded her bottom to the post. She supposed it could be called the tying up of her pussy. It was a small quaint cruelty. Now, her knees, her ankles. She was tight fixed. Prisoner to the post until someone chose to release her. “You sure is lovely, miss, tied thataway.”

“Tell you what, Quince. Call me Miss Brooke. You’re having trouble with my names. I’m not your idea of a missis.” She giggled. “I’m quite sure I don’t look like one.”

“Miss Brooke…?” Quince savoured the title approvingly. “Sol good. Say, miss, would you mind if I went and got Etta? She’d love to see the way you is now: rings and everything?”

It was warming to Brooke’s loins to have to stand naked and unable to move while someone was fetched to witness and enjoy her condition. This game she and John Scanlon played, which was not really a game at all, was rich in sensation. Cringes, winces and blushes were an integral

part of her thralldom. Even in the loneliest vigils of her bondage an errant thought or chance hurt could flare the precious heat. Mrs. John Scanlon had given up feeling guilty.

“Gosh, I’d love some like that too.” Etta’s small finger tentatively raised a ring to make the owner of the nipple gasp. “Would you ask the boss for me, miss? Gollies, them’s lovely!”

“They’re still sore from being pierced.” Her brother admonished omnipotently. “You ain’t supposed to touch ’em yet.”

Etta pouted. “You don’t mind me, do you, Miss Atherton?”

“No. I don’t mind, Etta, but go easy.”

The servant girl tried Brooke’s nose ring next. She was ecstatic. “You get these rings ‘cos you’s good or ‘cos you’s bad, miss? Wow!”

“They please my husband. That’s all.”

Etta’s face fell. “Sorta’ lets me out. The boss wouldn’t see no rings in my tits, not lessen’ he lets me serve table with bare boobs.” She gazed longingly. “Gee, I’d sure like ’em.”

“I’ll ask John for you.”

“Do they make you horny, miss? They’ve given me hot pants just lookin’.”

“I’ve been horny ever since I got them. It’s beautiful and awful at the same time.”

“Gee, I’d love to have ’em in my tits, then be tied the way you is right now. Gollies, miss, you’re so lucky.”

“You got big ideas.” Etta’s brother accused crossly. “If you wanna be tied up—”

“Wouldn’t be no good if you done it,” Ella sniffed disdainfully.

“I do it whenever the boss sends you to the barn to get your ass whipped,” Quince reminded reasonably.

“Well, I ain’t supposed to enjoy that,” Etta sniffed again. “And I don’t enjoy it. So there!”

“I’ll see what I can manage about that too,” Brooke promised, in a mood to promise anything, and she had always felt sorry for Etta. Etta lived a busy but dull life. “I expect I could get you sent to that prison you know about, where John sent me. But you wouldn’t like it.”

“Guys would tie me up?”

“I’m afraid not, just girls and women. It’s a female place.”

“Needs her ass whipped and don’t know it,” Quince opined in brotherly affection as they watched his sister walk dejectedly back to her kitchen and her chores. “Gals is funny. You really like bein’ tied the way you is, Miss

Brooke?"

"I'm afraid I do." Brooke struggled to show him how well he had tied her. "But I think it's because of Mr. Scanlon. If it wasn't John who wanted me tied I might not like it at all. I might hate it."

"You're right, Miss Brooke. Gals sure is hard to figger." Quince shook his head in male bafflement. "Guess I better go and do some chores."

She could not watch him go, the barn was behind her. Brooke's view of the ranch house where John Scanlon would be absorbed with his computers and the telex. It was comforting to belong to a rich man. From what Scanlon told her she glimpsed their combined wealth as massive.

Because of a rueful guilt at her own transition and involvement into John Scanlon's world Brooke had bothered little with analysis as to why men desired to inflict pain and confinement on the female, especially if she was young and, preferably, pretty. She had discovered within herself that some girls liked it, some even possessing an urgent need. She thought of the Hibernia and the motives and reactions uncovered in its basement floor. Each cell could tell its stories of feminine rage and feminine submission. The other emotions of female despair, helplessness and hopelessness were only a bridge between the extremes of a woman's response, and always out beyond the bars would be a man.

The girl bound to the post, her nipples ringed, her nostrils pinched by a circlet of gold, mused quietly on the anomaly of which she was a part. Or was it an anomaly? Might it not be the prerogative of the very rich? Perhaps most men, and many women, desired what she and Scanlon took for granted! It had been easy for Clay Randolph to place her in prison, he had possessed money. It had been easy for John Scanlon to return her there. Money had accomplished that too. Somewhere there was a male she did not know whose wealth enabled him to sentence Dorothy Winthrop to a barred cell and punishment…! But these men were not all alike. Brooke saw them as a surgeon sees a growth: some malignant, some benign. Whatever her husband did to her, he would always have a small smile on his lips and in his eyes. When John Scanlon sentenced her to anything he beheld a vision of beauty. Beauty was a much used word in their vocabulary. Even Quince used it. Brooke was content. Beyond this point she would not wander. She was bound and beautiful. It was enough.

Released from the post at midday, Mrs. John Scanlon made a quick dash to the house to dress and be relieved of the ring in her nose. Quince, holding her horse in readiness, was bereft.

“You mean, it weren’t for real, Miss Brooke?”

“’Fraid not that way, Quince. But it bites tight enough so you could lead me round by it. I’d behave.” She saw his involuntary glance at the twin bulges beneath her shirt, and

laughed. “Oh, don’t mourn for my nipples. They’re real enough.” Mischieviously, she bared a breast. “See! And you mustn’t worry. I can’t possibly get them off. They’re a fixture.”

“Gee, miss, they’re so lovely. I’d had been real upset—”

Mischief still prompted. Archly, the ringed girl enquired: “How’d you like me with a big ring right through my pussy lips?”

“Noooooooo… you really mean that, Miss Brooke?”

“Sure. Mr. Scanlon’s having it specially made for me. I won’t be able to get that one off either. But he’ll be able to.”

“The things you two get up to!” Quince was cheerfully aghast. “And you’re always more and more beautiful. Me and Etta sure do admire you, Miss Brooke.”

The horse’s gait made the girl in the saddle aware of her nipples. Brooke had prudently worn a bra. But just the same… there was a frictioning in which the hurt was most offset by the pleasure. For a long time she had been increasingly aware of the sentience and sensitivity of her flesh since becoming Scanlon’s slave. Every particle of her being responded to Scanlon’s love and Scanlon’s cruelty. She was prepared to drop the word cruelty and to see the pain she bore at his behest as a manifestation of his whimsical affection. She had become surprisingly inured to the things Quince did to her. Mostly they engendered the

glorious lust she expended on her husband every night.

The frictioning of her bra brought the wry reflection as to how well she would ride when her nether lips were impaled by the ring now being made for them. Most certainly she would not until the incisions healed. But after that...! She cherished a naughty suspicion there would be sensation...!

The jeep was not remarkable. A driller, a neighbor, a passer by. The Atherton ranch house was empty, there was nothing to steal. It was not even locked. Brooke felt an owner's chagrin at the trespass. But she was curious. The intruder might prove interesting.

The man was large, expensive, fortyish. Possessed of a bluff heartiness instantly suspect. "I bet you're Mrs. John Scanlon." He surmised as he offered an ample hand. "I'm Reese Branson."

Brooke's dubious regard prompted a further introduction. "We have a mutual friend, Mrs. Scanlon. D'you know Dorothy Winthrop?"

She was glad she had not pumped his hand effusively. "Yes, I know Dorothy very well." Her response was cautious. "You're the man who—?"

"I'm the villain of the piece. Right!"

"What are you doing in my house?"

“Wanted to talk to you. Guess I used the wrong name, the one Dorothy uses. I got directed here. The old Atherton place, eh?”

“Yes. But—?”

“Just arrived. Just looking it over. If you’d given me time I’d have driven on to the ‘J.Bar.S’. I want to talk to you and your husband.”

“I don’t see why.”

“There’s talk of oil. I might invest.”

“I don’t think we need money.”

They eyed each other in silence before Branson hinted. “Understand someone put you in the Hibernia, eh? That’s where you met our mutual friend?”

“Is it any of your business?”

“In a way. I hear tell you want Dorothy out.”

His presence in her house, his self assurance and probing speech were irritants. Remembering the naked girl stretched on the rack, Brooke was prepared to hate this man who was assessing her in frank approval. Her reply was curt. “Of course I want her out. That place and what they do to girls there ought not to exist. You have to be some sort of a monster to send her there.”

“Spirit, eh. I like it. Someone sent you there, sweetheart.”

“None of your business!”

“Sez you.” Branson grinned amiably. “Offhand, I’d say another month in there right now would do you a lot of good.”

“Mention it to my husband,” Brooke sniffed haughtily. “I’m sure he’ll value your advice.”

“Money and freedom.” Branson shook his head sadly. “Two things no girl should be allowed. If she’s got ’em, take ’em away.”

“I find you offensive,” Brooke wanted him gone. “Do you intend to set Dorothy free?”

“Can you give me a reason why I should?”

“Common humanity. To keep her in that cell for life and punish her daily is inhuman.”

“Try again,” Branson leered. “My humanity isn’t all that common.”

“Can my husband or I do or say anything to persuade you?”

“You might, sweetheart.”

They stared at each other. Brooke knew herself frighteningly alone. “I am not your sweetheart. Is there some sort of bribe—?”

“Strip naked.”

“Leave this house. Now!”

Brooke was panting. Branson was between her and the door. They were alone. She temporized. “You’re trying to shock me, showing me how macho you are. What are you here for?”

“To see you naked. You have to be special or Scanlon wouldn’t have bought.”

“You should have no problem in seeing naked girls, Mr. Branson. A hundred dollars or so—”

“Strip.”

“Do you intend to rape me?”

“Not a bad idea. Scanlon wouldn’t miss it.”

She sensed something beneath the surface. She was being tested. Unsure of him, she fought for poise. “Is it you who’s offering the bribe, Mr. Branson?”

“Hmmmmm, might consider—” His eyes glinted. “O.K., make me an offer for Dorothy Winthrop.”

“My husband spoke to you about her. Couldn’t you come to terms?”

“He can’t offer what you can.”

“I can’t give you anything you can’t get anywhere. I’m just another girl.”

“You’re Scanlon’s wife, and you’re Dorothy’s friend. That makes you prime. I hear tell you’ve been branded—I’d like to look.”

Brooke Scanlon was not the untouched maiden who had been dragged at the end of a rope from this house long, long ago. She was not devastated by Branson’s cruelties as she would have been then. There had to be limits to what this oaf dared to do to John Scanlon’s wife.

“Can I buy Dorothy’s freedom by showing you my body?”

“Hell no!” Branson’s leer was triumphant. “But it’s a down payment.”

“And what else?”

“A good rough fuck and a thrashing.”

“That’s impossible. My husband would see the whipmarks.”

“I’ll be damned! He can see what hurts, but the fun’s invisible. Trust a female to figure that.”

“I didn’t figure it.” She gave him a level stare. “If you could whip me without leaving a mark I’d say yes. But I couldn’t trust you to keep your word, so what’s the use?” She gestured wearily. “I’m going home now. My husband’s there if you want to talk to him.”

“Enough of the horseshit. You’re in a spot, girl, and you know it. I could tear your clothes off and rape you with one

hand. Take your pick. Be sensible or be knocked around?"

Brooke measured distances, sought a weapon. But suddenly she remembered, and knew defeat. The rings in her nipples made a battle impossible. He could control her by them—if they were not torn loose in the fracas. In bitter humiliation she removed her clothes.

Branson watched, entranced, breathing heavily. This was a dividend beyond the curiosity prompting his journey. He took it gladly. When the nude Mrs. John Scanlon stood, facing him defiantly, his exclamation was heartfelt.

"I knew it! Dammit, girl, you're too damn beautiful to be running around loose." Branson took a deep breath of pure delight, his rapt attention flitting from face to breasts, to pubic hair. "Rings in your tits…! That bastard Scanlon was bound to think you something. And the brand…!" His eyes feasted. "Gold rings in your tits and the 'J.Bar.S' on your belly…! You're a million."

"I'm not for sale."

"Huh, I could take you. Grab one of those rings and I'd have you begging."

"They're the reason I chose not to fight—in case you're interested. It's not long since I was pierced, they're still hurting."

Branson sat down as though exhausted. "You stand there, girl, let me look. I know when I'm lucky."

The naked girl could not ignore her heat within. It acknowledged the male tribute. She posed her curves, her mind chaotic. Giving her new captor time to enjoy her flesh, she ventured: “Well? You’ve seen all of me. What about Dorothy?”

“A thrashing, and she’s yours.”

It was bizarre bargaining. “I belong to John Scanlon. I don’t want to be raped, Mr. Branson.”

“Treasure his tail, eh? I could take it.”

“It would be better for us both if you didn’t. It’s the unforgivable—?”

The man nodded soberly. “I’ll admit you’re giving me something, standing there and posing for me. I’m not entirely crass, y’know. No fuck could give a man half of what I’m looking at.”

“If you refrain from raping me I won’t say a word about this? You can trust my promise.”

“That part’s a deal. But I still want to thrash you.”

“How can you without John knowing? He’d kill you.”

“Maybe, maybe not. I’m not exactly small potatoes myself, y’know. How’d it be if we make a deal he won’t know about —for Dorothy’s freedom? I just had me an idea.”

“If it gives Dorothy freedom, and it’s something possible

—?”

“Oh, it’s possible alright. I want to give you pain, you want no marks where they’ll show. How’d it be I whip the soles of your feet?”

Brooke stood in stunned silence, aghast. She stared at the grinning man, and looked longingly at the open door. One nervous finger reached up to touch the tenderness of a ringed nipple. Her shocked reply came haltingly: “I’ve never heard of such a thing.”

“You have now, sweetheart. Easy done.”

“But the pain…! The after effects…? Could I still walk? It seems crazy.”

“I’ll settle for it. Twenty strokes. Ten on each foot?”

“I don’t think I could stand still for it. I suspect it would be a beastly awful sort of pain.”

“I’ll tie you.”

“Gee thanks! You think of everything. But there’s no rope.”

“Some in my jeep.”

“I don’t imagine there’s a whip in it. There’s none here.”

“There’s willow scrub behind the barn. Cut some switches slim enough and they’ll break no bones.”

Branson meant it, he meant every word. He saw nothing

wrong. Rallied and bemused, Brooke protested: “But how could I trust…”

“You can. Look at me, girl, and believe it. A deal’s a deal.” She looked and was convinced. He was that sort, keeping his own codes, getting what he wanted anyway. Frightened, Brooke said weakly: “I don’t know about my feet. I just don’t know! Have you ever whipped a girl’s feet?”

“Tell you what,” Branson declared expansively. “You and me, we’ve got a deal. It’s a practical deal. You horse it up and I’ll make good and sure your girlfriend in the Hibernia gets twenty on each of her pretty feet tomorrow. And, just as a gift from you, she’ll get ten across each tit as well. How’s that grab you?”

“We’ll go and cut the switches.”

Brooke let him tie her hands behind her back. It was like the little cell, there was no way out. She was trapped. All she could do was endure, and hope Branson would let her go before the afternoon grew late. Hopefully, it should not take too long to get her feet whipped—if that was all! Woefully, she accompanied her captor to the willows and watched him cut a swathe of switches with which to give her pain.

“Won’t bother with a fussy tie, girl. Just enough to make you stay put.”

Branson roped her tied hands and raised them behind her

back to a rafter. High, too high, to compel her to bend far down, her shoulders wracked. From the rafter the rope was tugged to be tied to an ankle he raised high, bent at the knee, to expose a small vulnerable sole which could wriggle and weave within a scope of inches but escape nothing.

“That do you, girl?”

“I—I expect so. I’m helpless but it’s awful.”

“One little footsie, then the other. You get a break between.”

Brooke was tied in a twisted contortion. She stood on one foot, arms high, her head approaching the floor. A noosed ankle lifted and held her foot about to be switched. When the first cut of the willow impacted the innocent sole from toe to heel she knew she had made a mistake. When she caught her breath and stopped writhing she said, simply: “I’m sorry, I can’t take it. It’s too, too—you’ll have to think of something else.”

Branson affected not to hear. He measured pleasurably and cut her again. Brooke screamed. “Working out real well,” he said cheerfully. “That’s two under your belt—three’s coming—”

“I can’t stand it, I can’t, I can’t—!!” The tied girl’s cry was shrill in dismay. Switched hard again, she screamed and screamed anew as she fought precariously on one foot. Her

plea of “Stop! Oh, stop… S-T-O-P…!” went unheeded.

“Nice action, Mrs. Scanlon. Pretty! Should do this more often.”

“Stop! Oh, I beg you stop! You can’t know how awful—”

Brooke screamed frantically. Her pauses for breath or the shock of one more impact on her sole were brief. She lost count of the slashes, each one bedding into her instep from heel to toes. It was a new kind of pain, beyond bearing. Somehow she had to make Branson understand the impossibility of such pain. But how! Her screams became continuous. Perhaps if she offended his ears. Brooke swayed dangerously on her single foot, sustained in her posture of punishment by tractioned arms and wounded wrists.

“Eight… nine… ten!” Branson slowly counted the last three strokes for a whipped foot. “You’re quite lovely like this,” he said with slow deliberation. “I realize you can’t believe this, but it’s true. I expect you think I’ve cheated on the pain, but I have not. You’ve borne it. Your foot could probably take ten more.”

“It couldn’t! It couldn’t!” Brooke was distaught. “Please, not any more? Don’t whip my other foot. Surely one’s enough?”

“The fuss you make, I could carry on all night. You’re pure joy when you’re in pain—”

“It’s a terrible pain—all wrong!”

“And your screams…! They’re superb. Richly elemental.”

“Whip some other part of me… please?”

“Happy to oblige to oblige—but the marks…?”

The strangely bound girl moaned in defeat. “Let me off then? Give me a break—not my other foot…?”

“Come, come, girl. I’m surprised. You! Actually begging?”

Brooke squealed in alarm. Her punished foot was suddenly free, seeking the floor by its own volition. Amused, Branson watched her cautious tentative discovery of pain in a part of herself never before sentenced to punishment.

“I can’t stand on it, I can’t. I just knew this would happen. I won’t be able to walk… John will find out—”

“Nonsense, you’re doing splendidly. You’ll probably enjoy the next ten.” Branson laughed. “I suspect you’ve forgotten our dear Dorothy Winthrop. You’re buying her release. Remember?”

Pain had driven the captive of the Hibernia from her mind. Brooke knew a bitter chagrin at the manner in which this man had jockeyed her into a spot from which she could not retreat without shame. Desperately she wished to save her other foot from agony. But Branson was implacable. He had her! Brooke longed for the relief of tears. But he would enjoy them too. Branson was a student of female anguish, he would see any facet of it as welcome.

Quite suddenly, the naked girl was aware of standing on both feet. One of them hurt, hurt bad! But it took her weight. To emphasize her possession of both legs, Branson's hand thrust between her thighs and cupped her sex. His voice was mocking. "You're standing on it, sweetheart, and you've got a wet cat. What are you beefing about!"

He had granted her wracked shoulders no surcease. Brooke's hands were still high. She was beautifully helpless. When her undamaged foot was dragged from the floor, bent back up at the knee and noosed with the rope tractioning her arms she made no demur other than a moan of awful knowledge of pain to come. She took a deep breath of resignation. If there was a discovery for her in this misery it was simply that the whipped soles of a girl's feet generated no heat within her loins. She was on her own.

Brooke Scanlon bore the ten strokes upon the bare sole of her second foot without fortitude. She screamed in peal after peal of bitter anguish. She writhed. She tugged and heaved at rope. But she no longer pleaded. She was freeing Dorothy Winthrop! She kept this female purpose in her mind and hoped it helped as the switches were frayed and broken, one after another, upon the exquisite flesh on which she must soon walk.

"I didn't rape you, eh."

"No." A pause, then a grudging: "Thank you."

“And you’re not lame?”

“So it seems. But I wish you had my feet.”

“And I’ve set you free, and you’re getting dressed.”

“Yes. Should I say I’m grateful?”

“What I’m getting at, Mrs. Scanlon, is that I’m not all bastard?”

“Yes. You could have made it worse. You kept your word.”

Branson helped her mount. Her foot in the stirrup hurt cruelly. He saw her wince, and laughed: “You’ll remember me for a few days.”

“Yes.”

“Scanlon won’t know a thing if you don’t tell him. I’ll make sure you hear from Dorothy.”

“Thank you.” She watched him drive away.

Her ride back to the ‘J.Bar.S’ was going to hurt.

* * *

Chapter Seven

DISCIPLINE DILEMMA

“Had a good day, Brooke. How was yours?”

With her whipped feet in slippers and safely under the dinner table it was easy to say her day was good. Brooke lied happily and wondered if she should hint about Dorothy Winthrop.

“Quince still doing his job with you?”

Brooke laughed at the question. “You’re thinking poor Quince is going to be scared of the boss’s wife?”

“Natural.”

“I had it out with him the first day. I told him nothing was changed. He could even be extra mean—”

“That’s the wrong word.”

“Well, I s’pose. We don’t deal in meanness. How about ‘severe’, that is what you want for me, John?”

“Yes,” Scanlon grinned at the visible impact of his single word. “Do you want it too, Brooke?”

“I’m afraid so. Am I utterly deviant?”

“We both are. We’re lucky.”

They shared laughter, glowing at each other across the table. They were happy. Brooke chuckled. “Etta wants rings in her nipples, John. Quince showed her mine while I was tied. She asked me to ask you…”

“Think she rates?”

“We’ve both seen her naked, she’s cute.”

Scanlon grunted. “Be amusing to have Melton give her a total anesthetic. When she wakes up her nipples are bare but she’s got a big ring in her cunt.”

“Oh, John…!” Brooke simulated reproof, but giggled, “you think of the unkindest things—”

“Told you I’m a sadist. I like to create situations. That would

be one. If Etta ever got married I'd take it off." He eyed his wife quizically. "Where's your tit rings? You're wearing clothes. I'm being cheated."

"I quite forgot." Brooke was contrite. "Would you like me —?"

"Yes, I would." Scanlon considered, eyeing the swell of her breasts reflectively. "But don't be naked: pantyhose or panties to accentuate bare breasts."

Striving not to wince on whipped feet, Brooke obeyed. Scanlons gift for the erotic. Looking in the mirror, she wondered why she had bothered with clothes. Her nipples and their rings deserved attention.

"This too, please?" Coyly, she held out the ring for her nose.

"Kneel, slave girl."

Brooke was thankful for the pantyhose, they would hide the tell-tale colors on the soles of her feet. Ruefully she was realizing how close to a miracle it would be if her husband did not discover what he might consider her guilt. She longed to tell him of Branson's cruelty, but was frightened. She saw herself as trapped by Branson's guile.

"Thank you, master."

The kneeling girl fingered the circlet pendent on her lip. It thrilled her even more than those in her nipples. It was eminently and spelt slavery. By it she was owned. "I called

you ‘master’,” she said, wonderingly. “It slipped out. It was the ring speaking.”

“Not you?”

“Oh yes, me! But I belong to the ring and the ring belongs to you.”

“Then call me master when the ring dictates.” He bent and kissed her. “It’s a delightful whimsy.”

Brooke returned to her chair, hurt feet forgotten. She was content, she was loved. The ring in her nose was a pledge. It bit at her painfully when first snapped in place, but the pain passed, the love remained. Her husband’s intent regard, pleased and satisfied with his possession, was an almost tangible force to heat her belly below his hand.

Etta served them, blushingly conscious. “You sure is lovely, Miz’ Scanlon. Them rings—!”

“Etta wants some rings too, John.”

Scanlon affected surprise. His sardonic humor was not always kind. “Rings? Where the hell you want rings, girl?”

“Oh, Sir, I sure would like ’em. Same as Miz’ Scanlon.”

“Hurts to get ’em.”

“I wouldn’t mind that, Sir. They’re so lovely.”

“Who’d ever see ’em?”

Etta blushed. “I’d look in the mirror, Sir, every chance I got. Maybe I’d let Quince see. I could show them to Miz Scanlon.”

“Huh. How’d it be you serve at table bare to the waist?”

“Oh, Sir…!” The maid was overwhelmed by visions. “I wouldn’t mind, not if you and the missis says it’s alright. Oh gollies!”

“I’ll think on it,” Scanlon grunted non-commitally. “How’d you like a ring through your cunt?”

“Oh, Sir!” Etta was breathlessly shocked at fresh vistas. “You really mean my pussy?”

Scanlon affected to be obtuse. “You keeping a cat around here someplace?” he demanded belligerantly. “What the hell would I ring a cat for?”

The ‘J.Bar.S’ maid squirmed. “It’s sorta the polite word, Sir.”

“What for?”

“For what you just said, Mr. Scanlon. For what I got down there—”

“You mean the thing you pee through?”

“Oh, Mr. Scanlon—!”

“He’s teasing you, Etta.”

“I want to hear you say it, girl.”

“I-I-I don’t think I’d like a ring through me—my—my cunt, Sir. Gosh, I couldn’t show that to no one, ‘cept me.”

“Brooke and I would take a look. You could stop wearing panties, we’d just raise your skirt.”

“Gee-whiz, Sir, you sure says things—” The maid’s mind was obviously engrossed. “Course iffen’ you said I gotta…?” She swallowed heavily. “I mean if you and Miz’ Scanlon thinks I’d look pretty…? I wouldn’t complain none…”

They let her go: blushing, confused, entranced.

That night, in their bedroom, Brooke met disaster.

Their love play was always rough. John Scanlon was a powerful man, it was his pleasure to pick up his naked and palpitating wife and toss her around into whatever posture his carnal whim desired. Brooke adored it. His male strength made her doubly feminine. The rings she wore by his decree were an added eroticism. After one of her nude flips to place her face down, Scanlon grabbed an ankle.

“What the hell, girl…?” He possessed her other foot to raise it too Bending them hack from her knees he examined Reese Branson’s vicious work. “Quince didn’t do this—?”

Brooke wept. Her sobs were of relief and of terror. She had hated her secret, and it was a secret no more. Bitterly and angrily she made confession, telling the grim and silent man every detail of her travail in the old house. Her sobs refused to stop. Brooke buried her face in a pillow and

swamped it with the tears of apprehension.

“Why didn’t you tell me? That I don’t understand?”

“But I promised—!” Her protest was a wail of fear. “He made me promise as his price for not raping me—he didn’t rape me! You do believe that, don’t you?”

“Of course I believe you. Brooke, you’re an idiot—”

“I didn’t want to be raped, John. I didn’t want Branson inside me. I didn’t want him using what’s yours.”

“Yes, I see that. I’m damn proud of you, girl.”

“I didn’t mind the pain of the rest of what he did to me. It was the best I could think to do. I was scared.”

“But you could have told me. Branson got your promise under duress. You didn’t owe him a thing.”

“Yes, I ‘spose…” Brooke sniffed damply into the cotton. “But there was Dorothy Winthrop… Branson said if I kept my word he’d keep his and let her go. Oh, John…!”

“I’m beginning to dislike this damn girl friend of yours.” Scanlon’s grip on Brooke’s ankles tightened as he examined anew the small wounded soles of his wife’s feet. “She’s an intrusion—”

“But, John, she’s being tortured.”

“What d’you call this I’m looking at? These feet?”

Brooke was desperate, not daring to look up, finding comfort in the pillow which muffled her sobs and absorbed her tears. “But don’t you see…? It was just once for me, I got my feet beaten. But for Dorothy it’s every day of her life… Think of it, she gets punished every day and locked in a beastly little cell every night, handcuffed, naked—”

“Yes, yes, I’ve heard it before.”

“Well, it’s true. I’m not ashamed of feeling sorry for her and wanting to help. Don’t you want to help her?”

“Sure, sure, but only because of you.”

“Are you going to punish me?”

“You bet I am. You’ve got it coming. Little idiot—” Scanlon tossed her tell-tale feet angrily aside. “Do you agree you should be punished?”

“I-I ‘spose so.”

“That didn’t sound convincing. Tell me why I’m going to punish you?”

“I’m not sure I know.”

Her husband sighed heavily, looking down at her slim nudity in exasperation. “You made a deal outside my knowledge and you didn’t tell me. Then you go and make a fool promise you don’t have to keep, and you don’t tell me about that either. You get points for your rape motive, but

for the rest you need a lesson. D'you understand now?"

Ruefully, the delinquent girl examined her sin. It was taking shape and form. By Scanlon's code she had erred, her guilt became definitive. Slowly she accepted the judgment of their code.

"It's because we're us." She was using words cautiously. "I think another wife would come out of this as a little heroine. But she'd have a dope for a husband. No you. She'd miss what really counts… I missed it first off. I'm guilty because I'm more than just being your wife—John, we're both so lucky." Brooke turned to cock a camp eye. "Yes, I have to be punished. I understand."

"That's my girl! Best to get it straight." He bent and kissed her approvingly.

"How will you have me punished?"

"I'll think on it. You'll think on it, too." Frowning, he demanded, "This Winthrop female? I told you Branson's terms. You sure either of us want to be bothered?"

"You mean, about being mean to her here? But, John, isn't that cancelled out by what… what I did?"

"That happened today, didn't it?"

"Yes. Early afternoon."

John Scanlon looked down at his tearful wife with amused

affection. Ruefully he shook his head at her in vexation. “If I was a gentleman I wouldn’t tell you this, but I’m no gentleman. I arranged her release two days ago. She’s been a free girl at least twenty-four hours. I’ve been expecting delivery.”

It took moments to sink in. Brooke’s mind raced, and confronted outrage. She looked up askance. “You mean…? That bastard Branson—?”

“Sure. He ran a bluff on you. Got himself a freebie.”

Once more the delinquent Brooke buried her face, her fists beating the pillow in frustration. Silently heaping on Reese Branson’s head every obscenity she knew. Her husband allowed her passion to exhaust itself before he turned her around and gathered her in his arms.

At breakfast the next morning, Scanlon stated his case bluntly. “I don’t want two women, Brooke. I wanted you and I’ve got you. That’s it. Period.”

Brooke was feeling chastened. She was going to be punished. She was in a mood to wish someone else had saved Dorothy Winthrop from Branson’s wrath. “You wouldn’t be sleeping with her,” she ventured wanly. “I never even thought—”

“Bet you didn’t. Suppose they delivered her today, she’ll come in a package tightly trussed, what do we do with her?”

“Couldn’t we give her some money and let her go?”

“That way Branson would have her picked up and returned to the Hibernia. He covered that base with me definitely.”

“Do we have to torture her, or be mean, or anything? How would that awful creature know what we did or didn’t do to her?”

“I’ve thought of that.” He regarded Brooke’s nipple rings approvingly. “I didn’t give him inspection rights. But he trusts me to give her a bad time.” He smiled enquiringly. “I could renege?”

“Oh, John!” Brooke glimpsed dilemma. “Branson’s banking on the way you and I are. He thinks you torture me.”

“Well, don’t I?”

“No you don’t. You have Quince punish me—and you know how I’ve adapted…” Brooke paused in thought, laughing. “I need a new word. You’re going to have me really and truly punished for something I’ve actually done, so where does that leave me and Quince? I hate the word torture.”

“Didn’t you tell me that woman at the Hibernia gets around the same problem by calling it discipline?”

“Yes. That would do.” Brooke was satisfied. “I get discipline every day to keep me a good girl. I like that.” She smiled brightly. “Why not disciplining Dorothy as a sort of compromise?”

“Send you both to Quince every day? Hell no.” He frowned. “The girl’s a stranger to me. I won’t have her treated on a par with my wife.”

“You might like Dorothy. She’s older than me but she’s lovely.”

“I don’t need two wives, or a concubine. A cage for her in the back end of the barn is the easiest disposition. You could talk to her through the mesh—”

“But, I promised I wouldn’t nibble, not ever again.”

“In that case outside the mesh should be fine.” He chuckled at his wife’s evident vexation. “I don’t want the two of you together too much. I don’t want her in this house.”

“But, John…! In the back of the barn? The poor darling’s going to find it just like her cell!”

“I could chain her feet and let her walk around? But she’d be a damn nuisance. No, she’ll be O.K. There’s Quince to talk to, and I’ll have him get her out in the sunlight. She can damn well sit on a corral rail, same as you did.”

“But if she’s coming today, there isn’t any cage! There isn’t anything… unless you chain or tie her up all the time.” Brooke mused determinedly. “John, you said something about chaining her feet so she can’t run or get on a horse, or anything…? Why not do that and give her to Etta to help out in the kitchen?”

“I’ll be damned!” Scanlon looked at his demure wife admiringly. “From supervisor to scullery maid! That’s perfect. That’s torture enough. Etta can keep a chain on her to keep her peeling potatoes.”

They heard the phone in Scanlon’s study. He hurried from their finished meal. Brooke followed more leisurely, wondering about her imminent walk to Quince and what would follow. She listened absently to a one-sided phone conversation. It was not until Scanlon turned irritated features that she glimpsed her own involvement.

“That Halloran woman. At the Hibernia. She wants you.”

“In prison! What on earth—!”

“Some fool story about this damn girl. It’s the girl who wants you. I told her, no. But the woman’s insistent. Sounds upset.”

Brooke could feel her stomach curling. That awful cell. Chains, the punishment room. “Any female who goes into that place if she doesn’t have to is crazy,” she said firmly. “Miss Halloran must think I’m an idiot.”

“Good. Let’s leave it at that. If she phones again—”

“What about Dorothy?”

“She stays there. She’s their problem.”

It was as simple as that. Do nothing! Dorothy Winthrop

could fade into memory. Someone would do something with her, and they would never know. It would be a rejection, an abandonment of a friend. Brooke was about to make protesting sounds when she saw her husband's face. John Scanlon had disposed of a disturbance in their lives. He was satisfied. He would want to hear no more of it. If she must choose between Dorothy Winthrop and John, she would choose John. John owned her. She was his and must obey his dictum. Brooke thought of the little cell, the handcuffs, the clang of an iron door! She shuddered. She could not go back to the Hibernia Women's Correctional Institute, she just could not. No way!

"I guess I may as well go to Quince now, John?"

"Hmmmmmm, yes. Hold it. I'm coming with you."

It was the first time he had walked this small portentious journey with her. Brooke hugged his arm, it felt good. This was her husband. Her first duty was to him. Striving for light heartedness, she gaily said: "You should walk with me always, and tell Quince what to do to me."

Quince was impressed. He sensed an occasion. His grin encompassed all eventualities. "Mornin', boss. Mornin', Mrs. Scanlon. You two off someplace?"

"Mrs. Scanlon isn't going anywhere, Quince. I want you to hang her up naked by her wrists."

"Whatever you say, boss. Miss Brooke's real accomodatin'."

“I’m sure she is, Quince. But here’s something to remember. She hangs all day. You can let her loose at five.”

“Yessir. We done this before, boss. She looks real pretty.”

“She always looks pretty. But here’s the thing,” Scanlon’s voice oozed authority. “During the day, maybe several times, she’ll ask you to let her down. She’ll have reasons: She’s forgotten something; she wants to speak to me; she doesn’t feel good. You pay no attention. Understand? She hangs for the day regardless.”

Quince looked at Brooke, embarrassed. “That O.K. with you, miss?”

“It’s O.K. by her. She hasn’t anything to say about it.”

“Don’t worry, Quince. I don’t mind.”

“She’s a wonderful lady, boss. I’ll fix her like you says.” They watched Scanlon return to the ranch house, then shared a dubious grin. “I’m a bad girl, Quince. My husband’s making sure I can’t change my mind about something and be a nuisance. You’d better do what he tells you. For goodness sake don’t let me fox you into anything. Today I’m not to be trusted.”

The ranch hand who was also her jailer shuffled his feet and looked bashful. “I’m awful sorry ’bout this, miss—”

“Don’t be. You’ve done me this way before. I remember I asked you to once. John’s idea is wonderful, just what I

need." Brooke stripped. She protruded her ringed breasts for Quince's approval. "Sorry we forgot the ring in my nose. Do you want to go and get it? Mr. Scanlon wouldn't mind."

"Gosh no, miss. Them two rings in your tits is good enough fer me."

"They're healing nicely. You'll soon be able to control me by them. Do you want to tie my hands now?"

Quince was suddenly efficient, on solid ground. Using the tested bandages with care he bound the slender wrists while their owner watched herself made helpless. Quaintly, she thought of it as readied for her day's discipline. She was grateful for the bandages. As opposed to rope they made the impossible possible. She said no word as the hook slid between and her arms began their rise. It was always a shock when her toes left the ground, but it was a shock she would survive. Between stressed arms, and above wracked shoulders, she provided her anxious jailer with a wan smile. "I'm alright, Quince. I won't enjoy it, but I'm O.K."

"Gee, Miss Brooke, you're really something." Checking his work to ensure her helplessness, Quince made good his escape. He sensed matters that were none of his concern.

The suspended nude had only rueful reflections to keep her company. Some disciplines were not hard to bear, but this one was. She would bear it and survive, but her day

would be long and filled with regrets. She looked up at her captive wrists. They had borne her weight so often and so long… and they were so helpless. It was though they were a separate entity and she had let them down.

Guilt pounced. Brooke had an instant vision of Dorothy's extended rib cage on the rack. Of Dorothy upon the horse, of Dorothy locked in the small cell, grasping the bars with chained hands. The memories of the Hibernia were vivid and demanding; and here she was, doing nothing, not even crying out in supplication for a tortured girl. John Scanlon had forseen her reactions with a mortifying clarity. He had blocked the subterfuges by which she would have sought release to beg him for mercy on a prisoned girl he had never seen. Somewhere around noon Quince appeared with water and to check. She always drank the water gratefully.

"Quince, I know what you've been told. But is there any way I can be released?"

"You heard the boss, miss. Ain't no way."

"There has to be a way, Quince. I've just got to get loose. Think something up, an excuse to set me free? I'll back you."

"Gee-whiz, Miss Brooke, you shouldn't oughta—"

"I know I shouldn't. But I feel so guilty—" She looked down from her suspension at his distressed features, and knew

guilt of a different kind. She was contrite. “O.K., don’t pay any attention to me. I’m behaving very badly. You’re terribly sweet, but you’d best leave me alone. I’m a menace.”

Quince gratefully left her alone.

Brooke had always felt the punishment she now endured one of the loneliest experiences a girl could know. Divorced from mother earth, her toes groping uselessly well above the ground, she had lost a reliable dimension, she was sundered from the normal physical sensations of being bound. She was scarcely bound at all, her body and legs were free. Only her wrists were captive, and by them she was forced to a limp and passive nudity, her breasts were tautened, her stomach concave. It was useless to struggle, there was nothing to struggle against. She could kick and cavort, but to no purpose other than a physical protest. She looked down at her rings, then up her strained arms to the bandages so neatly wound to keep her as she was. Dully, she wondered if her exposed armpits showed a shadowing of hair.

Scanlon came in early afternoon. He stood quietly drinking in the loveliness of the girl he had enslaved and married. He never tired of her curves and symmetry. The rings in Brooke’s nipples were an added delight. For a carnal gourmet she was an exquisite delicacy. For a little while neither spoke. The suspended girl held her tongue. Scanlon would tell her why he was here. She quenched an urge to

plead.

“You’re the loveliest thing in the world, Brooke,” he bestowed his granite grin. “But I tell you that too often.”

“Thank you, John. I’m glad you like me.”

“Wonder why I’m here?”

“Yes.”

“Want your feet on the ground?”

“I want them back on the ground ten seconds after they leave it.” She managed a pale smile. “Then I so on wanting it all day.” Brooke twisted distressfully. “You were right about telling Quince not to pay any attention to me.”

“Figured that.” There was a difference in Scanlon’s speech which told the disciplined girl he was troubled. “Dammit, Brooke, you’ve got me going too—that nuisance of a woman!”

“Poor Dorothy.”

“Poor Dorothy my ass! She’s become a burden.” He snorted in disgust. “I think of you hanging here like this, and I think of her hanging upside down or sideways and I feel a bastard. You still bothered…?”

“Yes?”

“So we’re bothered. I suppose you’d like to do something

about her?"

"Yes."

"O.K. I'll let you down."

"No!" The vehemence of her denial surprised Brooke herself. She twisted unhappily from her rope, her legs slowly pedaling in frustration. She looked down at her husband, in wan dismay. "I won't get out of this by false pretenses, John. If you let me loose, what can I do?" Her voice choked. "I won't go back to prison. I'm frightened to go near the Hibernia. The place scares me."

"Had another call from the Halloran woman. Says your girlfriend needs you bad. Some emotional upset."

"It's a trap to get me back in one of those little cells."

"Hold it, girl. They can't be that crazy. Dammit, I'm going to drive you to the place."

"They won't let you in, only me." Brooke's eyes widened in shock. "You're thinking now I ought to go?"

"Sweetheart, either you go or we write the girl off."

The suspended feet continued their gyrations of distress. "Suppose I go in and don't come out? They can make me disappear in that lower floor. It's a state prison, you can't very well batter in the door—?"

Scanlon loosed the rope and allowed his wife's feet to find

the floor. He took the hook from between her joined hands, his fingers tugged at Quince's knots. "Call it time off for good behavior," he said gruffly as he set her free.

It always felt so good! The disciplined girl stood in blissful relief for long moments before she threw her aching arms around her husband's neck and said: "Thank you, thank you, thank you… oh John!" as she thrust her nakedness against the masculine strength of the man by whom she was owned.

"Feel better?"

"Of course." Her arms tightened. "But you should have left me up there until five. I deserve it. Now I'm loose I don't know what to do."

"We're going to get Dorothy Winthrop out of our hair. I'll drive you to the damn place. If I can get in with you, I will. If not, I'll wait in the car."

"But if Branson's playing some rotten trick…?"

"I'll deal with him and the Hibernia, too. Trust me?" Brooke trusted him.

* * *

Chapter Eight

PAYMENT BY PAIN

“I blame myself,” Miss Halloran said morosely, looking at Brooke across an immaculate desk. “I should have had the foolish creature trussed and shipped to your ranch immediately she’d been shaved. But Dorothy was so distraught, so shamed, so fearful of facing even you—” The warden shrugged. “I felt sorry for her and let her stay.”

“She chose to stay in this place!” Brooke was aghast.

“You’ve just seen her. I may think the effect exquisite, but she is totally devoid of all hair and totally demoralized as a

consequence."

"It's an unearthly beauty," Brooke was groping incredulously. "I wouldn't have believed...! I'm not sure how being shaved like that would affect me. I think I'd want to curl up and hide too."

"When I realized I had a hysterical female on my hands I handcuffed her and locked her back in her cell for the night. I thought it would give her time to adjust, and at the same time accentuate the lure of the freedom she was rejecting."

Brooke shivered. "The cell and handcuffs would do that for me."

"The next morning was no better. She was weepy and wanted to cling. I should have left her to Amy, but I was sorry for her. Branson's sentence had broken her from the woman we first knew. So I tried to sell her on your 'J.Bar.S' and a new life. But all she would do was sob and shed tears," Miss Halloran pursed her lips. "I'm afraid I lost patience. I lashed her to the bars and gave her a good whipping. Nothing brutal, but I thought it might bring her to her senses. It didn't."

"Why didn't you have her packaged and sent to us right there?"

"You may well ask, dear. I could kick myself. That evening Mr. Branson discovered she was still here. He reversed his

order for her release. She is now his prisoner again."

"But, my husband—!"

"Your husband may be a powerful man, dear. But Reese Branson has a considerable authority with the prison establishment. He is also wealthy."

"But they had an agreement!"

"Mr. Branson has rescinded it."

"You could have told us this on the phone." Brooke looked around the austere office in puzzlement. "All I can do here now is give the poor darling an hour of affection and go away. It's cruel… leaving her naked and handcuffed in that cell."

"Yes. But there's something else, dear."

Brooke tensed. Premonition gripped her like a shroud. The tone of Miss Halloran's voice spoke volumes. She looked at the warden askance. "Branson…? Me…?"

"I'm afraid so, dear. He's a most difficult man. His new price for Dorothy's freedom is you."

"Me!"

"He wants you to voluntarily return to be a prisoner here on the lower floor. He demands your person for twenty-four hours of torture he will personally devise and administer."

“He has to be crazy. I’m married now. My husband’s waiting outside the gates in the car. If we told him this he’d go and half kill Branson.”

“I told Mr. Branson this, dear. But he has a devious mind. He’d thought it all out carefully.” Miss Halloran paused meaningly. “I got the impression he had encountered some sort of incident with you?”

Thinking of her whipped feet, Brooke ruefully admitted. “Yes. The man is a total son-of-a-bitch.”

“You must have made an impression. He suggests you tell your husband you are staying with Dorothy here, in a cell with an open door, to get her properly oriented. Mr. Scanlon need never know the actual facts of your sacrifice for Dorothy.”

“I won’t do it. It’s asking too much.”

“At the end of your time here I will personally bind this silly woman and send her home with you.”

“But I’m not going to do it! It’s betraying John’s trust. I’ve done that once already, and I’m gong to be punished for it.”

“I understand, dear. Dorothy will have to return to her daily punishments tomorrow. Mr. Branson has decided to keep her shaven for life. The razor will be used on her as often as is needful to keep her bare.”

“It’s too cruel—!”

“There are other girls in the cells who suffer every bit as much. You should know that.”

“Yes. But they’re in for a day, a week, or a month. Branson with his life sentence for a girl…! It’s morbid.”

“For Dorothy Winthrop it’s ging to be terribly real.” Brooke sighed. “Very well then. Will you escort me to the gate?”

It was a quaint feeling, to be passed through the gate as though she had done time, to walk freely to the parking lot and the waiting car, and in the car a waiting husband. She snuggled up against her mate in a sudden terrible need, and huskily whispered: “Don’t start the motor yet.”

“What now, sweetheart?”

She told him the exact truth. Tearfully, at the end, she said: “I won’t deceive you again. I think the deception is part of what Branson wants. He thinks it puts him one up on you.” She essayed an unsuccessful laugh. “Besides, I’ve got a real punishment hanging over my head already, we can’t have them piling up.”

Scanlon sat, granite featured, considering. “This woman, shaved bald everywhere, eh?”

“She didn’t want you, or anyone, to see her. She still doesn’t. But Miss Halloran will use force. I think she’ll be O.K. once she’s out, and broken the ice with a man. She’s actually very lovely shaved. It’s strange and weird but beautiful.”

“Branson says his deal with me for her release is off?”

“Yes. He’s got this new idea—about me.”

“Why in hell aren’t you in hysterics, Brooke? You’re taking this rationally. I’d have thought that lousy prison would be a turnoff for you?”

“Yes, I know. I’m a silly female.” Brooke kissed his cheek and gripped hard. “But it didn’t hit me as bad as I thought. It’s being dressed does it. Being naked on that lower floor is damn awful, but with my clothes on it wasn’t so bad. And Miss Halloran, she’s a dear. I know she’s cruel the way she’s told to be, but along with it she’s kind. Anyway, she’s helped me get through… being in there, without me getting the heebie-jeebies.”

“Do I read it this Dorothy female is free and in the clear if you do what Branson wants? None of this business about us having to keep her in pain on the ‘J.Bar.S’?”

“That seems to be it.”

“We wouldn’t even have to be bothered with her at all? Maybe a visit, and then give her some money and get her a job?”

“John, dear, are you thinking—?”

“Only if you’re thinking it’s as if I didn’t know.”

In silence they surveyed the fresh possibility, until Brooke

asked doubtfully: “It seems a bargain. There’s something wrong.”

“Depends on what Branson aims to do to you. D’you know what it is?”

“Only that it does not include what you’d call fucking me.”

“Huh, leaves a wide range. Thing is, d’you want to do it?”

“Yes. It’s such a simple way out.” Brooke shook her hair disconsolantly. “Twenty-four hours for me against life for her. It’s such a good deal I can’t believe it. But I won’t do it against your will, and what wife can ask her husband to say yes to giving her to another man to be punished!”

“You could.”

“Because the two of us are the way we are? Yes, I suppose.”

“We have to get it out of your system, Brooke. I want a period placed on Dorothy Winthrop. I’ve had enough of her.” A sardonic glint came to Scanlon’s eye. “I’ll be a good sport, give you a deal, sweetheart. You’ve got a punishment coming. O.K., the twenty-four hours is it.”

“John, would you really!”

“I just said so,” Scanlon grunted. “I’m relying on your judgment of the Halloran woman and of Branson himself and what he’ll have her do to you.”

Brooke’s heart leaped. John had failed to pick up the fact of

her punishment being at Branson's own hand. That explained his willingness…! She would not tell him now. It was best…! Mendaciously, she said: "It's a girl named Amy, she's a trusty, who'll probably give me the discipline."

"Good word for it."

They had said it all. They kissed. As Brooke walked across the asphalt to the prison she heard the whirrr of their car but did not look back. She passed through the gate into her prison. She felt an almost proprietary interest.

Miss Halloran was glad and grateful. But she was still a warden. "Full treatment, Brooke. No favors."

"Yes, of course."

"But I will put you in with Dorothy."

Brooke shed her clothes in the passage as she had done once before. When she was naked the cell looked twice as dark and the bars twice as heavy.

"Hands, dear?"

Brooke watched the handcuffing of her wrists. It was a step back into something she had forsworn. When the cell door was dragged open she grinned ruefully at Miss Halloran, shrugged in resignation, and stepped blithely into the gloom of true imprisonment. The door clanged shut, the key snapped. Miss Halloran made a motion with her hand and was gone.

The naked girls clung together in a great need. Both were handcuffed, so there was much arranged of their arms. Dorothy Winthrop was crying. “It’s my fault, Brooke. You’re here because of me.”

“I’m going to get you out.”

“By being tortured yourself. Amy told me.”

“It’s not for long. Then I take you home.”

“I can’t possibly go. Not like this, to have your John Scanlon see me.”

“Dorothy, brace up. What’s the matter with you?”

The shaven woman disengaged herself and stepped away. She put her hands behind her neck and blatantly posed. “Look at me! Brooke, take a good look. I’m bald, no eyebrows, no pubic hair. I’m bare, a monster.”

“Stop being silly. You’re lovely. You should stay shaven all the time. When my husband sees you he’ll want to take you to bed.”

“He’ll send me out to the barn.”

Brooke giggled. “Well, there was some talk of that. Branson wanted you caged and punished. But now you’ll be free. No cage, no whip.”

“I’ll never be free. Not while I don’t have hair. Reese is going to keep me hairless—”

“Stoppit, you idiot. I’m buying you out of this place. The least you can do is be optimistic. Try and cheer up a bit. My immediate prospects aren’t all that rosy.”

Dorothy was contrite. “I’ve been in here so long… they’ve broken me. Darling, I’m sorry. Brooke, my dear, may I make love with you?”

“No. John hates it. I promised him.”

“Oh please, he’ll never know. I want someone to love me so damn bad.”

Brooke lay on the cot and spread her legs. There were times when a girl must do things… This was one of them. With the famished Dorothy it was a volcanic eruption, explosive. When it was over Dorothy explained, “Amy won’t do it with me. She fastens me some way and plays with me until I’m ready to burst, then goes away and leaves me hanging. Darling, I’ve only just noticed your rings. Did your John Scanlon?”

“I’ll ask him to ring you too. They’d go well with the shaven look. Darling, I’m almost tempted to have myself shaved. You’re gorgeous!”

“Do you think so?” Dorothy Winthrop was beginning to return to life. “Others have told me—”

“I’ve always wanted to shave my cunt but never dared. Yours is sweet.” Brooke chuckled. “And no hairs in my mouth. Look, if you tell John about us making love I’ll

murder you—that is, if I can still manage it after he's punished me. It cost me a hundred lashes last time."

"You mean, after I'm tied up on your ranch we mustn't?"

"Gosh no! But, you idiot, you won't be tied up, you'll be free. You won't have to stay on the ranch."

"But you're still tied up and punished?"

"John and I are sort of different." Brooke laughed proudly. "We're a whole lot different. He gave me permission to come down here and get myself disciplined on your account."

"But, on the ranch, you get tied, chained, punished?"

"It's a thing between he and me."

"I think I'd like that. I feel so safe when I'm tied. Sometimes I ask Miss Halloran or Amy for the handcuffs if they forget."

"You've got jailhouse blues, darling." Brooke patted a wan cheek. "You'll feel better on the 'J.Bar.S'. Anytime I see you suffering from melancholy I'll ask Quince to whip you. John has a precept that you can cure a girl of almost anything by whipping her bottom."

"He's right," Dorothy managed her first grin. "It was a precept too, back when I was supervisor." She sighed. "Gosh, none of this seems possible… I've been whipped so much

since then."

Being locked in the same cell with Dorothy was a blessing. Brooke knew for sure she would have found the evening and the night unbearable alone. Handcuffed and naked… and the bars! And then, on the morrow, her torture, the twenty-four hours of her life she had pledged for another girl's liberty. But, between talking and making love the world outside their cell was set aside. The small gloomy space behind the bars became a hot tumescence in which Brooke Scanlon explored, in wonder, every shaven crevice of a female without hair. She found in every shaven surface an erotic stimulation, so that her questing tongue returned again and again to the smooth bisected mound of her companion's cunt. For the handcuffed girls the night was far too short.

Amy was enamoured of the rings. She arrived early, as befitted a long hard day for one of her charges. "Gosh, it's good to see you again, Mrs. Scanlon. Jeepers, you get them rings in your tits for bein' bad or good?"

"My husband thinks every girl should have them. Amy, when do I start having my bad time?"

"Gollies, I wish I had a husband." Amy sighed without delour. "I ain't slept with a man for so long, and I still got a ways to go. What would I have to do for you folks to get rings like that in my tits?"

"There's one for my nose, and I'm going to get one through

the lips of my pussy."

"Noooooooh…!" Amy exuded envy. "You really got it all."

"Want to trade places with me today?"

"Well… maybe not today," Amy grinned, and offered helpfully. "I bet that Mr. Branson is going to give you a real bad time. What you think of Miss Winthrop's bare cunt? That was his idea too." She chuckled gleefully. "It was me who got to shave her. I come twice while I was doin' it, and I'll be shaving her every week to keep her nice and bare. Ain't she lovely!"

"Why don't you get shaved too, Amy?"

"Miss Halloran wouldn't go for it. Besides, I'd probably look as awful as Mr. Branson figured Miss Winthrop would." She giggled again. "He ain't never seen her shaved. I'm wondering if he'll want to give her the once over today. Betcha' he'll fuck her if he does. If I was a man Miss Winthrop would drive me plumb crazy the way she is."

"She's not to be disciplined today, is she?"

"Wouldn't bet on it, not with Mr. Branson."

"It's supposed to be just me who's being tortured—Amy, it isn't that beastly horse thing, is it?"

"I ain't got no idea he'll do to you, miss. Honest. I ain't. But you sure got a lot o' guts comin' back in here to get it."

“But it’s only a very short visit, just enough for him to hurt me for a day—”

“Yeah, I heard that before. Gal gets in here there ain’t no tellin’ when she gets out. I bin’ here two years, and poor Miss Winthrop she’s goin’ to be down here forever. Bet she wouldn’t know how to act if she weren’t handcuffed.”

“I’m here to get Miss Winthrop out, Amy. There’s a deal.”

“Yeah, I bet. I’ll believe that one too when I see it. Say, miss, I gotta feed you and bathe you and do your hair and make you smell lovely afore he comes. I got leave to take you to a bathroom.”

The normalcy of ‘upstairs’ and the bathroom was a tonic. With Amy’s interested chatter it drove Reese Branson into the shadows. The mirror told the girl about to be tortured she was beautiful. Beauty was a girl’s undoing. But it could also be her strength. The cold sprays of perfume on her nudity drew potency from her own heat. Brooke was embarrassingly sure she could be smelt at a distance of twenty feet. But this was in keeping with Branson’s concept of a lovely scented maiden keeping her rendezvous with agony. Amy, prudently, did not remove the handcuffs.

“Best you don’t have your hands, miss.”

“I like being handcuffed, Amy. It saves me making decisions.”

But when they entered the room of disciplines Brooke was

guided to a ring in the wall at the level of her chin. Her left cuff was freed and re-attached thereto.

“You’re ’sposed to stand there, Mrs. Scanlon, and wait for Mr. Branson to show. I gotta’ leave you alone. I guess the deal is to have you stand and stand and curl up inside wondering what he’s goin’ to do to you. Can’t get loose, can you?”

“Gosh no! Wouldn’t do me any good if I could. Thanks, Amy.”

The standing was a potent malignancy, cleverly frustrating. Brooke could finger her tiny bond with her free hand, she could play with the chrome circlet holding her wrist. But that was all. She could not walk away, she could not sit down. She must stand meekly, with one hand held at the level of her shoulder, to await the pleasure of a man she despised. She had never felt more naked.

“Mrs. Scanlon, I believe?” Reese Branson was in high spirits. “How’s your feet?”

“You can examine them for yourself.”

“Ah, so I can. Turn and bend one back up for me.”

Brooke obeyed. This was the beginning. Her foot was grasped and a hard finger prodded the discolorations of its sole. She winced.

“Still tender, eh! I did a nice job. Boy, the way you

screamed!”

“I expect I’ll oblige again today.”

“We’ll make sure of it, eh?” Branson patted her cheek. “Wow, you smell horny. Where’s that damn girl?”

“She thought you wished me to stand alone, If you want Amy, there’s a push button over there on the wall.”

“You go and push it.”

“You know I can’t.”

“Why, of course! You poor girl—” Ranson’s bluff heartiness was at its best. “I must say, you’re being most polite.”

Brooke rattled her handcuff. “When a girl’s fixed like this she has to be.”

“Hate me?”

“Does it matter? I just don’t understand you.”

“We’ll get to know each other better today.” He walked to the wall and pressed the button. “Damned if I’m doing the dirty work. Young Amy’s a good girl.” His eye roved over the equipment designed for female pain. “Now, let me see.”

“You rang, Sir?” Amy was throbbing with self importance.

“Right. You’re used to this stuff.” Branson’s gaze swept round the walls. “Holy cow, what a collection! I want to sit Mrs. Scanlon on something small and have her legs spread

way out—oh, and it would be best if she can't move."

As torturer's assistant, Amy was tops. Brooke eyed the small solid frame with distaste. A tiny seat, a rigid back, a crosspiece for her arms. It was positioned with a view to rings in the floor and the spreading of feminine legs.

"Made to order, Amy. You'll get a bonus. Tie her to it tight."

The click of a handcuff, a falling arm, the few potent paces to where she could position her nakedness for their convenience.

Brooke went through the motions automatically. She could feel Branson's rapt regard as a burn on her skin. Trying to settle her seat on the tiny ledge, she was grateful for the bands of rope by which girlish fingers instantly cinched her waist to the timber upright at her back. She was now a secure fixture eighteen inches above the floor. Apathetically, she extended her arms to either side.

"Miss Atherton's so sweet, Mr. Branson. Someone's sure got her well trained." Amy was busy with rope and female flesh.

"That sweetness gets to a guy," Branson observed agreeably. "I'd fuck her right now if she wasn't half tied." He chuckled. "How about I fuck you?"

"Oh, Sir…!" Amy blushed delightedly. "You wouldn't, would you?"

“Why not. You’re a girl.”

“But I’m in prison, Sir. I’m a prisoner.”

Branson guffawed. “So what! They don’t detach your cunt, do they? Lift your tunic.”

Instant compliance. The youthful trusty was flushed and thrilled, radiating feminine conquest. The lifted tunic revealed a curled black triangle and plump slit. Branson examined and fingered it with wise fingers. “Damn nice. Pity to waste it in here. Can we use one of the cells later?”

“’Course we can. Oh, Sir…!”

As her arms and wrists were bound, Brooke could feel the emanations of Amy’s joy. She could sympathize with it. A youngest away from life, robbed of years and love, isolated behind concrete and iron. Amy deserved a break. The trusty’s voice was tremblingly eager.

“We won’t tell Miss Halloran, Mr. Branson, please? ’bout you fucking me. She’d put me in solitary forever.”

“Ought to fuck her, too. But I doubt I could get it up. Don’t worry. Amy, your secret’s safe.”

Brooke tested. From her waist up she was immovably welded to the wood. The rings in her nipples seemed trembly evident in her vulnerability. In a wry resignation she met Amy’s fluttering attention.

“I can’t move, Amy. Look, just my fingers. Why does this frame slant back a bit?”

“Ain’t sure, miss. Probably so’s your cunt sticks out more. It ain’t really sittin’ on nothin’. Wow, wait ’till I fix your feet.”

Rejecting shame, Brooke Scanlon looked levelly at the man who would torture her. Branson returned her visual challenge with aplomb. He would never be easily disconcerted. His attention flitted back and forth from his captive’s face to the stretching and binding of her legs which Amy had looped and drawn tautly to well placed rings. It was almost a ballerina split.

“I hope you’re enjoying the view.” Brooke found it hard to keep the bitterness from her caustic query.

“I am. I’m enjoying the situation more. Mrs. John Scanlon’s cunt wide open for grabs. Millionairess bares all. See my point?”

“I’m sure it’s very satisfying for you. I’m sorry I didn’t slap your face when I had the chance.”

They understood each other. Branson nodded curtly. “The humiliation kick: the ‘how are the mighty fallen’ line… It’s damn potent. I hope you’re feeling it?”

“You’ll make sure I do.”

“Pity your husband can’t share this picture, Mrs. Scanlon. The way your pubes are positioned would gladden any

spouse's heart. Can't move, eh?"

"No, I can't move. You're winning all along the line, Mr. Branson." Bitterly, the tied girl embraced total defeat: "I'm shamed, I'm humiliated, I'm naked before a man. My sex is obscenely exposed, I hurt, and I'm waiting for you to make me hurt more. Does that about cover your success story?"

The triumphant male was triumphant indeed. Reese Branson had the situation well in hand, a situation he would enjoy to the full. He turned his affable smile on Amy. "You still got Miss Winthrop tucked away down here someplace?"

"She's handcuffed in a cell, Sir."

"Bring her out. Tether her around the wall here somewhere so she gets a good view. Naked, of course."

"She's naked, Sir. But she won't come."

"What d'you mean, she won't come?"

"She's so ashamed of being bald, Sir. All she wants to dots hide and cry."

"Damme, I forgot!" Branson was delighted. "I'd best have a look at the silly bitch. Beat her with a club, or whatever you have to do, but get her in here."

Amy departed, looking less than happy. Reese Branson grinned down at the tied nakedness which was his for a

day. “I’d have you shaved too, Mrs. Scanlon, cunt, eyebrows and hair, the whole bit. But I don’t want to push Scanlon too hard. I know the two of you have something going.” He inserted a sneer, “Something that makes some sort of logic out of you being the way I’ve got you now. But I’m a business man. Got to let the other fellow make a buck too. How d’you feel?”

“Frightened.”

“That’s nice. I aim to give you quite a day. What the—!”

Amy was resourceful. Confronted by a woman she could not carry, a woman who curled into a bundle of shame and refused to move, she had snared Dorothy Winthrop’s right nipple with a metal clip, from which a thin cord ran as a leash. Since Dorothy Winthrop’s hands were cuffed behind her back, a tug on the cord ensured instant obedience. No girl can fight her nipples, where they go she goes too.

“I’ll be damned! This I got to see. Hold her there, Amy, then turn her slowly…”

The shaven woman raised beseeching eyes to her tormentor. “Reese, please! Please don’t put me on view. Send me back to the cell?”

“Dammit’, you’re beautiful—!”

Branson echoed the judgment of others. Surprised, shocked, awed by the unexpected. “I never figured you’d come out the way… the way you are!”

“You wanted me hideous.” The shaved nudity responded to Amy’s pull on her nipple and slowly turned for male inspection. “You’ve made me a clone out of science fiction, I am hideous.”

“You’re not, y’know. Dammit, girl, look at that bald cunt! And the exquisite shape of your head… wow!”

“Send me back to the cell, Reese. You’ve seen me, got your kicks. And can you get this thing off my nipple, it’s murder?”

“Tether her, Amy. I’ll fuck her later.” Branson chuckled. “Never fucked a bald girl with a bald cunt.” He winked broadly. “But don’t you worry, you’ll get yours first.”

“Thank you, Sir.”

The two captives exchanged shocked glances of dismay as the shaven loveliness was collared. When the foot long span of links from collar to wall had been locked, Amy snapped open the nipple clamp to elicit a gasp of agony from a girl now helpless. Dorothy would stand and look, displaying her bizarre hairlessness for male approval. There was nothing else she could do.

“Amy, do they let you out to the front gate?”

“No, Sir. Only to the side entrance to the building.”

“That’s O.K.” Branson rubbed his hands in businesslike fashion. “I left something at the main gate. Miss Halloran

will have them bring it to your door. I've cleared the matter with her. Go get it."

It was starting. Soon she would know! Brooke found it hard to compose her features under her enemy's scrutiny. She could tell he was enraptured by the rings in her nipples. She did not speak, there was nothing to say.

"Reese, do whatever you're going to do to me, not to Brooke. Brooke doesn't owe you pain—"

"Shut up, Dorothy!"

"But it's so unfair. And you're going to be cruel, I can tell."

"She's here because she wants to be. Isn't that right. Mrs. Scanlon?"

"I'm here because you want me to be. You didn't leave me any decent choice." The tied girl shook her head distressfully. "But it's too late to quibble. I'm here and I'm tied so I can't move. Everyone's happy."

"But, Reese, couldn't you be—"

Dorothy's plea died in a shock she shared with Brooke. They stared, wide eyed in disbelief.

Amy was flushed, moist, and trying hard not to laugh. She was holding tight to a leash, on the other end of which was a sizable dog, a spotted great dane obviously pleased to see its master. "His name's Elmer," Branson informed

pleasantly as he fondled the panting head. “You two girls will find him affectionate.”

Brooke felt her stomach curl in anticipation. She believed she guessed what came next, but could not be sure—it was too utterly gross even for Reese Branson… Or was it…? She discovered she was panting as hard as the amiable canine.

“You can slip his leash, Amy. Probably don’t need to bother you any more.”

Amy was frankly blushing. “Can I stay and watch please, Sir?”

“Hmmmmmm, why not!” Branson was in an expansive mood. “Likely I’ll find something for you to do.”

“It’s such a clever idea, Sir. I’m sure they won’t like it.”

“Figure that myself,” Branson chuckled grimly. “Damn lucky girls, if they only realized it. Let him loose.”

Elmer wasted little time on canine habits. His nose drew him to the center of Brooke’s gaping legs. His nose was damp and cold.

“No!” Brooke’s exclamation was a small explosion of mortification. “No. You mustn’t let him. Take him away!”

“Man’s best friend, Mrs. Scanlon.”

“I’m a girl. Take him out of here.”

“Woman’s too, I reckon.” Branson’s tone was bland, savouring his victory. “See, he likes you.”

Elmer liked her. There could be no doubt of it. His wet cold nozzle sniffed her pubic bush and the slit lips below, an appreciative tongue explored… The bound girl fought frantically but could not move. Her sex was held motionless and open for canine attention. The dog’s interest was quickening in response to the flavor of her sex. The tight bound girl looked up in wide eyed appeal.

“You can’t let him do this to me—you can’t?”

“Yes, I can. Be calm, Mrs. Scanlon. Enjoy.”

“How can I be calm while a dog licks my—”

“Your cunt, Mrs. Scanlon?”

“Do you have to keep calling me by my married name? You make it sound like an insult.”

“Elmer will become more enterprising, Mrs. Scanlon. Be patient.”

“Whip me, or something… anything! I never figured—”

“You would prefer sitting on the horse?”

“Yes!” Brooke shook her hair wildly in frustration. “Oh damn, no! No. I wouldn’t prefer the horse. I don’t know what…” She moaned in desolation. “But take this dog away from me, take him away!”

Branson placed a chair in comfortable proximity to the shameful tableau of his creation. As an accompaniment to his dog's avid lapping his voice was suave. "Understand that husband of yours likes to set up situations. That's what I'm doing with you and Elmer. Should prove interesting."

"Please, Mr. Branson, think of something else? I beg you?"

"You turned down the horse. Now, what we're going to do is engage in social converse while my dog licks your cunt. Now, there's a situation to reach out and grab."

"I suppose you know what—I mean the result of this animal's… I mean, what's going to happen."

"Elmer will give you an orgasm."

"Don't be beastly. But, yes."

"Damn lucky girl, I'd say."

Brooke took a deep breath. It was one of the few things she was able to do. Reason told her clearly there was no hope. The dog would work its will on her flesh and she would disgrace herself again and again while this man watched and revelled in her shame. Elmer's tongue had already set a match to her waiting fire. She looked down in hatred.

"I've no intention of engaging in small talk while this is being done to me—I could scream—?"

The motion of Branson's arm was casual. His finger and

thumb took possession of the ring in her left nipple. “You were saying, Mrs. Scanlon…?”

“I’m sorry.” Brooke choked on her own rage and haste to protect her defenseless breast. “I’ll do whatever you want.”

“That’s my girl. Scanlon knew what he was doing when he ringed your tits. You daren’t say no.”

“That wasn’t his reason—”

“Maybe, but it’s the effect. How are you going to advise Dorothy when you take her home?”

“I don’t know.”

“Wouldn’t have let her go if I’d know how her shave would turn out. It’s done something for her. She’s worth a fuck.”

Brooke was fighting a silent battle against Elmer. The dog would win but she wanted to delay his victory, the shameful moment when she would climax and writhe against the ropes. Abstractedly, she said, “I expect Dorothy will visit us while her hair grows back.”

“Damn long visit. Scanlon will want to fuck her, y’know. There’s no way any man wouldn’t want a go at what the shave did for her.”

Brooke knew herself lost. It was becoming hard to pay attention. Elmer had discovered entry. His nozzle held her labia apart while his tongue sought fresher flavors within.

She was already jerking spasmodically, heaving uselessly at her bindings. Eyes glazing, she appealed weakly: “Please don’t watch—not while it happens.”

It happened. Branson watched her shame with clinical interest. Amy was breathless. Dorothy Winthrop’s stare was one of disbelief. When her flesh had ceased to thrust against the ropes and her breath returned, Brooke’s plea was urgent. “Take him away! Now! Please—I can’t stand him—I can’t! I can’t!”

“You’ll come round again, Mrs. Scanlon. A little punishment with pleasure.”

The canine tongue was a rasp on wet membrane, finding the defenseless clitoris haphazardly in questing thrusts. The bound girl was driven to convulsions of rebellion against sensitivity taken beyond estasy into a realm of strange and unbearable sensation. Once again the captive female flesh bulged around each confining strand.

“Hear Scanlon’s interested in the Senate, eh?”

She heard the comment dimly in distress. Its casualness was its cruelty. She was in no conditon to discuss anything. Brooke felt one large gaping sex between tractioned legs. The lapping snout possessed her totally, it never paused. Weakly, she gasped.

“Yes, he is. Oh… yes.”

“Good man for it.”

“Thank you. Yes, he will oh, please stop him!”

“Stop your husband?”

“No, the dog. He’s right inside me. Ohhhhhh, give me a rest.”

“Want me to take him over to Dorothy?”

“Yes! Oh, yes!” The distraught girl suddenly realized her own words and rejected them. “I mean, no. No. No. No! She couldn’t stand this either.”

“You can both stand it. Let’s see how Elmer makes out on a meal without hair.”

The panting girl could not deny relief. The tongue and nozzle were suddenly gone. Brooke relapsed thankfully in her bonds. It was useless to feel guilt over Dorothy and the dog. Branson would do as he pleased with them all regardless of their pleas. Bemused and distressed, she turned to the nudity chained to the wall.

“Open your legs, Dorothy. Be a good hostess.”

“I won’t. Reese, don’t do this to us.”

Branson selected a short whip from the rack. “I’ll whip Mrs. Scanlon’s breasts until you uncross your legs and decide to be kind to Elmer.”

“No don’t! I’ll do it. I’m sorry.”

Brooke watched the lovely legs spread themselves for Elmer's convenience. Miss Winthrop's hairless cunt slid down to meet the waiting snout. Elmer came into possession of his second feast. Dorothy's eyes widened, her breasts heaved, her arms tugged uselessly at handcuffed wrists. Then, in hopelessness, she relapsed, head bowed in all its shaven beauty, to await her own shameful climax.

The air was cold on Brooke's overheated pubes wet from the canine nose. She longed to cover her stretched crotch and pubic curls. But Elmer would return…! Branson would be merciless in his disgusting imposition of shame. She understood why she had first been made immaculate, perfumed to reek of femininity. Such sweetness made the dog's intrusion within the labia of her sex doubly and trebly potent in degradation. She was thankful John Scanlon could not see her like this. It would be better never to tell him.

Dorothy's journey into orgasm was inevitable and without drama. It followed its course to climax and then, when the aftermath became unbearable, the punished girl thrust Elmer away with an angry bare foot, repulsing his efforts to return.

"Well, that's that." Branson sounded as though a preliminary was done with. "It's you I'm concerned with today, Mrs. Scanlon."

"Yes, of course."

“I could hurt you a lot with this gear they’ve collected for girls right down to it, there’s nothing original, and a lot of it leaves marks.” He beamed paternally. “Mustn’t send you home all bruised and broken, eh; and I do have a penchant for the aesthetic and the unexpected. Maybe a rat cavorting on your belly or a rattlesnake coiling on the floor?”

Despite reason, Brooke shivered. But her attention was partly recaptured by the dog which, rejected by Dorothy’s free foot, had returned to her own more hospitable orifice and was busily licking within. She knew her day had scarcely started.

“Torture’s a damn irritating thing,” Branson continued urbanely. “Mostly it defeats itself. A man gets tired of screams. What I want from it is a bit of class.”

“A dog’s snout in a girl’s cunt?” Brooke used the four letter word to bitter effect. “What you’ve done to us degrades everyone in this room—and, incidentally, your dog’s back inside me again.”

“So I notice. I expect you taste nice. When it comes to cunts, Elmer’s a gourmet eater.”

There was no use responding. Brooke acknowledged herself a prisoner working out her sentence. Things would be done to her. She was tied immovably, all the cords hurting. Unhappily she recognized her body’s re-awakening to the fervid probing of a dog’s tongue within her pudendum. Soon she would start panting—and then…!

Branson watched Brooke's second orgasm without comment. Her writhings and moans were deeply satisfying. Unexpectedly, when her climax was past, he removed the dog from its feast. "Like I said, a bit of class," he drawled complacently. "I've been thinking about this day of yours, Mrs. Scanlon, and I'm going to leave things pretty much up to you. Amy and I leave. You two girls stay as you are. To keep you from getting bored Elmer stays too. Cell time's five P.M. as always."

"That dog will kill us. We can't stand him eating at us for hours and hours."

"You'll figure something. You and Dorothy can compete for his attentions, keep him hopping. Maybe he'll get tired too."

"You know he won't. He'll do us some sort of injury—a girl simply can't stand it, on and on and on."

Branson loosed his grip on Elmer's collar and propelled Amy to the door. "Amy and me's going to do a bit of screwing in a cell. Then she's going to drop in on you every so often to check on Elmer—"

"Don't leave us alone with that dog."

"Now, Mrs. Scanlon, don't you fret," Branson beamed goodwill. "Anytime you get tired of Elmer you just ask Amy here to tie you nice and tight on that horse thing. It's an old friend of yours and you'll feel right at home. Understand the edge is a bit narrower now, but it's a nice alternative to

a girl who don't like dogs." About to close the door on two apprehensive females, he poked his head back in and boomed: "That dog, he's mighty enterprising. You'll be surprised." The door closed gently.

"The son-of-a-bitch!" Dorothy Winthrop exclaimed bitterly. "I hope that doesn't mean what I think. Darling, he's at you again. He'll always go to you because of the way you're fixed. Can you shoo him off so he'll come over here to me?"

The two captive girls played a sorry game. They could cajole with their voices, that was all. Elmer went back and forth from shaven loins to pubic hair. The girls endured him as best they could. Both were helpless, an easy prey to his insatiable appetite. By midday their nerves and flesh were exhaused from endless orgasms. The visits from a satiated and fulfilled Amy did not help.

"He's wonderful!" The trusty's voice was hushed in awe, her cheeks flushed with excitement. "Mr. Branson fucked me for a whole hour. He's a real gentleman."

"Not to us. Amy, can you get this dog out of here?"

"I daren't. You know that."

"He eating us alive. He'll kill us. He just won't stop."

Amy giggled. "Did you try peeing on him?"

"Yes, he likes it."

“Gosh, I wish I could help you—”

“You can. Lock Fido in a cell.”

It was hopeless. Amy was a prisoner herself, and frightened of their demands. Discipline for a delinquent trusty would be severe. She had been absent an hour when the impossible happened. Elmer’s nozzle abandoned Brooke’s crotch and was suddenly on a level with her face.

“Kick him, he’s mounting you!” Miss Winthrop’s voice was frantic, forgetting facts. “Oh, darling, he mustn’t! It’s impossible!”

“It’s not impossible, he’s doing it.” Brooke was equally frantic. “I can’t move! I can’t do anything… and I can feel him down there.”

“He’s bigger than I thought. Oh, Brooke.”

The bound girl screamed into a canine face. Elmer looked hurt but preoccupied. His haunches were thrusting… Brooke screamed again, a bitter cry of feminine betrayal. There was no mistaking what she could feel.

“He’s right into you, Brooke. He’s actually doing it—!”

“He’s fucking me! Oh, Dorothy…! He’s right inside—” The impaled girl knew this as something that must not happen. That which was Scanlon’s must be kept sacred for Scanlon. It was not to be defiled by dogs. She bucked and heaved and twisted to no avail. Canine eyes reproved her rejection

of canine affection but the searching thrusts did not diminish, they had entered the wet heat of desire. Brooke moaned in desolation.

It was at that moment Amy opened the door. She stood in stupified amazement for moments before kicking Elmer from his carnal enterprise. What she might have said was drowned out by Brooke's heartbroken demand. "Put me on the horse, Amy. Put me on the horse—quick… please! I can't stand this no way!"

It was not done quickly. Three girls debated facts while one of them held Elmer's leash. But the facts won. "I'll have to put you back in the cell, Miss Winthrop," Amy said reluctantly. "Guess I can put the dog in another. Gosh, Mrs. Scanlon, I sure am sorry…"

"Don't be, Amy. I can't let that dog—"

"But you hate that horse so bad."

"That's why he chose it. It figures."

"And there's hours yet—?"

"That figures, too. Do what you have to, Amy, we're not going to be mad at you."

"Gollies…!" Amy shrugged helplessly, then took away a disappointed dog. Next, she unlocked Miss Dorothy Winthrop and led her, still handcuffed, to solitary confinement. There came the clang of metal doors. Brooke, tightly

bound, her stomach twisting in apprehension, reached out for logic. “He knew it all the time. He was bound to find some excuse to do this to me.”

“Guess so.” Amy viewed her captive dejectedly. “I asked you this once before: You goin’ to behave…? I gotta’ let you lose to change you over.”

“I’ll behave. Make it as slow as you can, Amy.”

Amy made it slow. Untied from the frame, the disciplined nudity massaged her rope weals gratefully. These brief moments of total freedom came rarely on the lower floor of the Hibernia Women’s Correctional Institute, they were to be treasured. By a self defensive mechanism of the female mind Brooke Scanlon erased from consciousness what was about to be done to her next.

Diffidently, Amy proffered a wet towel. “Thought you might like this, miss, seeing as how you’ll be sittin’ right on it—and that there dog—”

“Amy, that’s sweet.” Brooke wetly frictioned that portion of herself soiled by a canine snout. She rubbed with vigor as though dispersing a memory as well as a smear. “Ugh, that was beastly! Thank goodness you showed up when you did.”

Amy giggled. “Saved you from a little of puppies, miss.” Another giggle. “I wouldn’t have minded his tongue, but that other thing… wow!” Again her tone became diffident.

“I’m sorry ’bout what we gotta do now.”

“So am I, Amy. But I chose it. I promise I’ll behave.”

“We gotta’ do it. Someone’s liable to come—”

“Of course we’ve got to do it.” Brooke’s closed mind was still resolute. “Here, I’ll help you drag the damn thing from the wall.”

It was crazy, it was insane, a nightmare. But it was a trap in which Brooke Scanlon knew herself firmly caught. Tomorrow she would go home. But, for today…! Dorothy was locked in her cell, probably in tears… She herself still had suffering to do. With a false cheerfulness she said: “There we are, that’s about where it belongs, isn’t it. What comes next?”

“Guess I tie your hands.”

Brooke turned and positioned her wrists. There was always a belly heat in these moments of surrender as her hands were made secure, then her elbows. She wished her elbows could have been left free, but did not quibble. Resigned, she looked down as the bands were strapped on her ankles. It was all cruelly familiar.

There was something oddly anti-climactic in this preparation for torture. Each move was known and understood, each result predictable. The two girls performed each act with purposeful precision but an infinite distaste. Within minutes the sacrificial crotch had been carefully positioned

to wince beneath its owner's weight, the ropes drew bowstring tight. While Amy made the final tensionings to ensure maximum pain, the horsed nakedness was wondering bitterly how long she could contain her screams. When Amy had kissed her and gone the screams peeled out and filled the place of punishment as a girl's tribute to Reese Branson's revenge.

The man himself came briefly. In a wavering consciousness steeped in agony the tortured girl became aware of his presence, his eyes devouring her stressed loveliness and her pain. He was curtly sardonic.

"I think you're crazy."

For answer, she moaned. There was nothing to say.

"You gals got the damndest ideas. You had it easy with that dog."

Brooke moaned again. This time in vehement negation.

"So, O.K., you've traded a dog's cock for the edge of a plank." Branson laughed pleasurably. "Can't say you look all that happy. Oh, and by the way, I've had Elmer put in with Dorothy. She's got one foot raised and cuffed to the bars. She'll have an athletic afternoon."

"I thought what I'm doing paid for her release?"

"Tomorrow. With you. I'll get word to Scanlon about how you protect his cunt; yours, that is. You're a faithful little

bitch. He'll probably whip your ass as a reward."

Brooke had ceased to care about words. Her heavy breathing rasped the silence until Branson abruptly went away. With the door closed for minutes, her screams returned. Now they were weaker.

"He's driven away in his car," Amy's whisper was urgent. "Look, I get to work in the pharmacy—"

Brooke focused hazily. The hypodermic in Amy's hand seemed oddly out of place. There was still hours and hours… The trusty's voice wheedled: "This will put you right out, Mrs. Scanlon. If someone comes they'll think you've lost consciousness—your head will bow down, you can't fall… You won't feel nothin'."

Brooke was still searching for an answer when the needle pierced her arm.

* * *

Chapter Nine

LOCKED LIPS

Mrs. Brooke Scanlon returned to the world to behold her husband's granite features fazing down at her with brooding tenderness. She felt sure everything had gone wrong—there had been an interruption, someone had made a mistake. Slowly, she realized she was laying on their own bed in their own room at the 'J.Bar.S'. Weakly, she muttered: "I didn't finish—I didn't—"

Scanlon bent and kissed his wife. "You finished. You finished with flags flying."

The naked girl comprehended nothing except the presence of the man she adored and the pain. The pain was persistent within her crotch, an aftermath of agony on the horse. Brooke did not mind the pain, it would pass. The horse was what mattered. When a girl was tied on its sharp edge the horse was forever.

“Oh, John…!” she was still groping. “I—I don’t remember. It hurt so bad… and Branson and Dorothy… and Amy…?”

Amused by his wife’s vagueness, Scanlon held brandy to her lips. “Shouldn’t give you this on an empty stomach. But dinner’s not that far off, and we’ve got company.”

Brooke gulped fire. It was good. She gulped again. The haze receding, she grasped Scanlon’s arm and sat up to clasp the glass and empty it. Bemused, she queried: “I’m not handcuffed… or anything?”

“Just naked, sweetheart.”

“And I’m safe? And it’s over—?”

“Branson’s called it quits. He’s satisfied—gave you quite a plug, by the way. Your Dorothy’s safe—and I don’t want to hear any more about her right now. Oh, and you’ve been under for twenty-four hours.”

“But… why?”

Scanlon grunted. “Surprised you haven’t figured it.”

Brooke gave him back the glass. Instinctively, her bare arm fell, its hand seeking to massage the wound below her brand. Suddenly she was transfixed by shock.

“Figured you’ve earned a reward, girl.”

The ring seemed huge. Brooke ignored pain to draw up her feet and spread her knees wide. The gold circle lost a part of its symmetry deep within the plump labia of her pudendum. Her pubic lips were joined.

“You’d be hurting more if you hadn’t had a needle down there.”

She pulled him to her to kiss and kiss… and to say ‘thank you’ over and over before femininity demanded: “The ring in my nose? Oh, John… please!”

Her husband clipped her nostrils and flipped the pendent circle with an amused finger. “You’re a glutton for punishment, Brooke.”

“But I’m not hurting from the horse, I’m hurting from you. So I don’t mind. Oh, John, I’m so happy!” Her fingers roved lovingly from ringed lips up over ringed nipples to her ringed nose. “Can I walk?”

Scanlon lent an arm to his wife’s cautious but excited motions to stand. “Could kill the pain completely, make you numb down there?”

“Oh no, I think this is best. If I hurt I’ll be more careful.”

“That’s what Melton said. Good boy, that. Can you manage the bath and your hair, or d’you want Etta?”

“No, she’ll be busy. See, I can walk, slowly. It’s a lovely pain because it’s yours. I’ll manage. John, you said dinner and company? Do I dress?”

“No. Naked.”

“Are you sure?”

“I’m sure. And let me tell you: you’re beautiful.”

Elation, jubilation, love… and an overall relief. The mind of the ringed girl was chaotic with emotions, all good. Among them lurked curiosisty as she soaped and rinsed and toyed tenderly with the metal she would always wear—or as nearly always as was practical. Amused, she supposed the big ring just installed might be removed of a night…! In the morning it could be replaced. More sleek, more radiant, more expensively scented than for her rendezvous with Branson’s dog, Mrs. John Scanlon walked, gingerly, downstairs.

It was a John Scanlon situation. Behind the flinty features lurked a pixie. For a little while he would play impressario and be amused thereby. The glowing nakedness of his wife would be his foil. The lounge and cocktails were his stage.

“Melton, you’ve met my wife?”

Melton was no great shock. They exchanged amused

glances. “Melton knows me intimately, don’t you, Melton.” Brooke was demurely coy.

“The pain is bearable, I hope, Mrs. Scanlon?”

“Oh yes! You’re so clever, Melton. I’m so proud.”

“Some pain is advisable, also motion. Cautious mobility is beneficial.”

“Thank you. I intend to be cautiously mobile.”

Melton may have been no shock, but the woman was. She came in response to Scanlon’s suggestion of “cocktails” and the ringing of the bell.

“I possess some experience with the theatre and with cosmetics,” Melton explained modestly.

He most certainly did! Brooke found herself looking at a quality of beauty she did not at first recognize as Dorothy Winthrop. The former supervisor of the Hibernia Women’s Correctional Institute had travelled a long, long way.

“The silver sheathing of that marvellous head…!” Melton breathed true homosexual artistry. “I find it enchanting. How fortunate she is shaved. The effect is compelling.”

Scanlon sat back complacently. The curtain had been effectively raised. Brooke sat, stunned, striving to meet elusive female eyes. Melton was in his stride.

“Green goes so well with silver for her eyebrows. I have

avoided the Oriental slant. I see her as a Martian princess. For her ears and neck, something heavily pendent and barbaric. We return to the silver motif for the modest silver band constricting her waist." He looked around in pink enthusiasm. "I do hope you approve?"

They approved. Their rapt silence told him so. Their eyes were focused lower below the silver belt.

"Her wound is completely anesthetized," Melton advised proudly. "I thought this wise in view of the duties she must perform. Her ring also is silver."

The silver circle gleamed arrogantly at the junction of Dorothy Winthrop's thighs. It was so absolutely right there that, for a moment, Brooke was envious of the bare and shaven cunt. Melton's exposition flowed on as though lecturing a class. "The orifice by which the ring is made possible for you ladies," he bowed to John Scanlon's wife, "is achieved by an instrument of white hot intensity. There is no crude piercing. The burned passage is sealed, there is no blood." He coughed discreetly. "Whatever pain is suffered is by mutual consent."

Melton faded himself into polite obscurity. Presumably he could claim no credit for the silver shackles joining Dorothy's hands, broad sleek bands on slender wrists and a foot of gleaming links. As though motivated by silence, Miss Dorothy Wintrhop walked quickly to the bar. When she served the drinks she mixed she knelt, with one bent knee,

as she proffered the tiny tray. Her head was meekly bowed, her eyes avoided capture. Brooke took her glass with gratitude. She felt she deserved it. Over her glass she caught a glance from the man who owned her, and knew he was a happy man.

“I’ll be go to hell—!”

Reese Branson’s boom was of genuine shock. “Dammit, Scanlon, you do yourself proud.” He looked at his former captive and said, flatly, “I don’t believe it.” Aware of intrusion, he explained, “Something let me in. Damned if I’m sure what it was—! Anyway, I came right up.” He gazed at his hostess’s ringed pudendum and ejaculated a fervid “Holy cow!”

“Sit down, Reese.” Scanlon was in firm command. “Girl, I expect you know what he drinks.”

Dorothy knew. Kneeling, with the single glass and tiny tray, before the man who had tortured her she bowed her head and refused to meet his astonished scrutiny. Her mission accomplished, she knelt, sitting back on her heels, her chained hands meekly splayed on bare thighs to face the man who had engineered the erotic tableau.

“I’ve been hornswoggled,” Branson declared amiably. “I wouldn’t part with that damn female now for a million.”

“Cheated yourself, Reese.”

“Yeah, I sure did. But a ring in her cunt—I don’t believe it.”

“Stand in front of him, Brooke. Let him look.”

Startled, Brooke obeyed, and was suddenly thrilled by the power of femininity. She separated her legs enough for a good view and demurely suggested: “Don’t forget the one in my nose, Mr. Branson.”

“I ain’t ever going to forget any of this.”

Brooke returned to her chair. Her owner’s voice was without emphasis: “The ring you’ve just examined, Reese, can be removed, the one on Miss Winthrop can’t.”

The vagrant heat clutched Brooke’s loins. The nude back of the chained girl revealed nothing. But, a cunt ringed for life… The concept was chaotic. Only Branson was brash enough for comment.

“You mean Dorothy can’t be fucked!” His guffaw was hearty. “Damn me, I never thought of anything half that good. Why, hell, you could let the damn little bitch run wild and she’d still be up the creek!”

“She isn’t running wild.”

“You’re right—those chains! Dammit, you’ve turned the girl into a beauty. How much d’you want for her?”

“Not for sale, Reese. Certainly not after that dog incident and my wife. That dog wasn’t on the cards.”

“Got results, didn’t it? Proved her cunt belongs to daddy,”

Branson chuckled. “Hell man, if I’d have been shoving myself at her instead of that dog she might have thought twice. I’ve got a cock a girl’s real pleased to see.”

Scanlon dropped the subject. Instead, he said suavely: “If you’re in the market for a girl…”

Brooke gasped. Susan was almost as unrecognizable as Dorothy Winthrop. Melton had created a miracle. The girl had been pretty and appealing, but now she was luscious. She was also ringed, the metallic circle proclaiming itself coyly from her pubic triangle. She held up hands shackled in silver and exclaimed ardently.

“Aren’t I really somethin’! Oh, Mr. Scanlon, you’re so good to me! I’m so grateful.”

The pixie masochist had slipped from Brooke’s mind. Buried, by her own wish, in a Hibernia cell and daily disciplined, she had remained a protege of their own, her incarceration subsidized by Scanlon’s generosity. She appeared to have thrived where other girls found only defeat. Susan beamed at the assembly and focused on an intrigued Reese Branson.

“Are you going to buy me, Sir? I’m for sale.”

“I’ll be double damned!” Branson turned to his host. “You’re putting me on?”

“Gal’s for sale, Reese. Buy her.”

“I’m awfully expensive, Sir. But look at my back.” Susan circled slowly on one foot to display ivory skin slashed by purple and scarlet. “Isn’t it lovely!”

“Come over here,” Branson was breathing heavily. “That ring in your cunt…? Does it hurt?”

“It would, Sir, but the nice gentleman over there did something…” she giggled. “It’s all numb, and I can’t get it out of me, not ever. Isn’t that a hoot.”

“You mean, I can’t fuck you—?”

“All pleasures have their price, Reese,” Scanlon was heavily sententious. “She can’t cheat on you.”

“I’m awfully good at other ways, Sir. I do hope you’ll buy me, my family needs the money. Poppa ain’t worked in years.”

“Them chains on you for life, or do they come off?”

“There’s a key, Sir. Mr. Scanlon’s so kind, there’s a set for my ankles too. I couldn’t possibly run away.”

Branson looked around in wry chagrin. “I’ve been set up,” he admitted without rancour, “but I like it. O.K., Scanlon, I’ll buy.” He turned to the arch sylph awaiting her fate. “You’ll come home with me, and I’ll whip your little ass first time you get sassy.”

Susan slipped her nudity down beside his chair in the same

pose as Dorothy Winthrop held in silent immobility. “Wherever you are, that’s where my home is, Sir. Thank you for buying me. I’ll be ever so nice for you.”

It was too good to be true. But it was true! Brooke looked at her husband, sensing a continuing involvement. But Scanlon refused to meet her eyes. He was still the impressario. He clapped his hands and uttered a single word. “Drinks.”

Dorothy Winthrop rose in a single sinuous motion. The Hibernia had been cruel to her but the cruelties had made her supple and svelt as though refining her for Scanlon’s concepts and Melton’s skills. She knelt fluidly as she served each guest, then resumed her humility before The Master.

“They never gave us these at the Hibernia,” Susan downed her cocktail with relish. “Can I have another?”

Again the silver beauty from another world performed her task. Her features remained gravely impassive, defying Brooke’s scrutiny. The brash youngster took her glass and voiced her wonder: “Gosh, Miss Winthrop, when I think of you in that uniform—jeepers…”

“Two’s enough for little Trixie here,” Branson boomed. “Dammit, she’s pixillated enough when she’s sober.” Puzzled, he demanded: “That true she enjoys the discipline in that cunt coop?”

“Pure masochist. Been there weeks. Go careful with the

kindness, Reese."

"I don't like to be whipped all the time," Susan pouted prettily. "Just sometimes, or when I'm bad."

"Tell us more, kid," Branson suggested dryly.

"Well, Sir, now I've got this lovely ring in my cunt I don't suppose I should sit on the horse."

"O.K. No horse."

"But I look awfully nice when I hang by my thumbs, and if you have a rack it stretches me in the cutest ways."

"I just bet it does!" Branson was glimpsing an erotic paradise of feminine delight. "Go get the chains for your feet."

Susan's return was heralded by the music of metal links. She entered, giggling. "I keep tripping, Sir." She made a cautious circle of the rug for their approval. Short, snubbed steps and a watchful eye. "But there's just no way I can escape, Sir. I can't possibly run. Jeepers! I do hope you like them?"

"I like 'em. Leave 'em on."

Susan was in the process of re-arranging her chained nudity when a timid and tremulous announcement came from the door. The voice was feminine and sounded like an audible blush.

"Dinner is all ready, Mr. Scanlon, Sir."

Brooke viewed more of Melton's magic, and repressed an urge to laugh in delight. The bashful maid was clad in shoes, nylons and garters. She wore an overly tight small sweater so that the swell of breast and thrust of nipple was graphically evident beneath the scanty covering which only just contrived to cover her navel. Between it and the garters was a pubic gap on which the company focused in in enchanted attention.

"This one also is permanent," Melton informed proudly. "She cannot part with it."

"Ain't exactly what I was figgerin'," Etta gulped and swallowed. "I was thinkin' 'bout my tits, same as Miss Brooke."

"We will now go in to dinner," John Scanlon said heartily. "I'm hungry. Rustle your ass, Etta, here we come."

* * *

Brooke Scanlon thankfully remembered Kipling's immortal lines:

The tumult and she shouting dies

The Captains and the Kings depart…

It felt so damn good to be at last alone with the man who owned her. Naked, she sat upon their bed and fingered the

ring between her thighs. “It’s made me horny,” she confessed. “I can’t stop knowing it’s there.”

“Good!”

“But what do we do—?”

“I’d take it off and fuck you, sweetheart, but it’s best left a week or so.”

“I bet Melton said that,” Brooke pouted. “It’s all very well for him—”

“Still hurt?”

“Yes. But you want it to hurt me, and I don’t mind.”

“You like it to hurt. Come on, be honest?”

“O.K., I like it, and it will stop sometime. While I wait I’m celibate.” Brooke laughed at a vision. “And so are you.”

“No I’m not!”

The wife’s jealousy flared at the other females on the ‘J.Bar.S’. But they were ringed…? Flushed, and guessing the answer, she asked: “How come?”

“Got a mouth, haven’t you! And a tongue, and lips.”

“That’s for whores.”

“Whores get paid. You won’t. Get handcuffs.”

Brooke flounced on her errand, but gasped. Her steps slowed and became more circumspect. The fire in her belly matched the fire in her wound. She held out her hands meekly and watched the chrome cuff each of her wrists. The male fingers made each steel circlet a notch tighter than need be. No doubt it was a hint. Pretending pique, she teased: “These are telling me to be a good girl, aren’t they?”

“Right.”

“You know I’ll do anything you want.”

“Right.”

“And I’ll do it because I love you. Now tell me about Dorothy?”

“She’s paying her dues.”

“Have you threatened or paid or whipped her of something…? John… Good gosh! To see her like that…!”

“Her own wish. She wants to do something for us. You’ve no idea how grateful that girl is.” Scanlon chuckled and patted his wife’s bottom. “She’s crazy about the sun and the space. I let her run around the yard a couple of times before Melton went to work.”

“After the Hibernia I can understand. Where is she now?”

“Safe. Never you mind.”

“Oh alright, I won’t nag.” Brooke rattled her handcuffs. “I’m

glad you put these on to remind me I'm only a girl. Does Dorothy like what Melton turned her into? She seems so…"

"Spaced out? He gave her a drug."

"But, when it wears off—?"

"See for yourself tomorrow. Now, come to bed."

Mrs. Brooke Scanlon played the whore. After thirty minutes, she wryly surmised she had missed her vocation.

Quince was excited. He met Brooke half way across the yard. "I was away all day yesterday, Miss Brooke. The boss he didn't tell me nothin'." His earnest face was pink with shock. "Damned if there ain't a cage in the barn, and locked in it there's the damndest gal you ever did see."

The cage was a heavy steel frame and heavy wire mesh. Dorothy peered at them from within her eight by eight square prison. The fingers of her shackled hands found lodgment in the wire. Her eyes were wide in hopeful surprise.

"See what I mean, Miss Brooke. Ain't she somethin'!"

"She sure is, Quince. But I saw her yesterday, and now I have to talk. Can you put me in with her?"

"I don't have no key—"

"Neither do I. But never mind. We'll manage. You can run along."

“But, Miss Brooke, you got a ring… down there… same as Etta… same as this gal…?”

“We’re all so lucky, Quince.”

The ranch hand departed, obviously disappointed to abandon such female eroticism. Brooke guessed he would be questioning his sister. No doubt Etta would be coy and allow a peek.

“He’s been looking at me steadily since he found me.” Dorothy laughed naturally. “He’s been having the hardest time thinking up things to say. Oh, darling, it’s wonderful. I don’t mind being looked at any more.”

“You’re gorgeous. I’m going to ask to be shaved.”

“Don’t!” Dorothy paused. “Your John Scanlon’s marvellous.”

“He isn’t going to keep you in this cage, is he? Dorothy, what’s the deal? Nobody tells me.”

“I begin to understand that lower floor.” The former supervisor was pensive. “I used to wonder, but it falls into place. I mean, about girls being owned.” She looked around at wire and steel and at the shackles on her wrists. “I’m owned for sure, and so are you.”

“I want to be. You don’t.”

“Don’t I?” The former Miss Winthrop shook her exquisitely decorated head in puzzlement. “I don’t know what I want.

Your husband said I could have my old job back at the Hibernia." She shivered. "But I'm frightened, scared to death."

"You've had a lousy time." Brooke fingered the wire herself. It was rigid. "Darling, I wish I could get in there with you. You need my arms."

"Then he said he can get me a job in the city, he'd give me money and fix everything for me—just because of you, I guess. But I was still frightened, I'm frightened of the whole outside. Brooke, does your pussy hurt—this ring?"

"I expect we'll both hurt for a week. We're girls, remember."

"Well, I don't care. But I think Mr. Scanlon lost patience. He said if I liked prison so much he'd make sure I had one, and he'd make sure I hurt too." The caged girl pulled and pushed at the wire in frustration. "Darling, I'm so ashamed. I went and told him O.K. I said I'd sooner be a prisoner out here on this ranch with you than tossed into the world alone. Am I crazy?"

"You were tortured too long. It broke you. No, you're not crazy…" Brooke gazed bleakly at a hazard of her own design.

"But, John and us? Two women and one man? Darling, it won't work."

"He says it will. He punishes you terribly sometimes if you

disobey—well, doesn't he?"

"Yes."

"I'd be punished the same. We'd obey and behave." The captive grinned ruefully through the mesh. "He said that's why your ring can come off but mine can't. He says that's your protection."

"Dorothy…? You really want this…?"

"I want it desperately. I can't tell you how terribly."

"But… this cage! I can't even get in with you—and when John and I are gone anytime…?"

"He's thought of that, too. Quince will keep me prisoner, and that girl, Etta. And when you're here…! Brooke dear, did he tell you it's you who will have the key to this cage and who'll punish me. It won't be Quince. Quince will give you your punishment, you give me mine."

"He didn't tell me a thing. Told me to talk to you," Brooke tossed her hair irritably. "I bet he's laughing. It was never his idea to have you here, it was mine."

"Brooke dear, I won't spoil things for you. I promise." The caged nudity exuded musk and penitence and affection in waves. "And, don't you see, you've got control. He's making me your slave or your prisoner or whatever. If I try to seduce your husband, please whip me—"

Brooke found herself laughing. It was all crazy, but a wonderful and exciting craziness. John was still the impressario, shaping two female lives. Dorothy was getting exactly what she asked for. Ruefully, the wife supposed she was getting what she had wanted too. She had nagged him enough about Dorothy Winthrop, maybe this was his lesson to her…! Her pussy ring burned fiercely—or was it the ring! She was not quite sure. Dubiously, she went in search of wisdom.

Scanlon turned from the telex, irritable at interruption. His wife said, simply, "I have to talk to you."

In the silence of another room, Brooke confessed. "John, I'm jealous. I'm sorry, but I'm jealous."

"Told you that first off."

"I didn't realize, didn't know my own self. Besides, this is all different. Oh, John…!"

"Not that much different. I gave her other options. She didn't want 'em. D'you want me to toss her out on her neck?"

"No! Oh, no. I couldn't bear—I'd feel a bitch."

Scanlon took her in his arms and made her happy. The naked girl realized how urgent her need of him would always be. Fears dissolved. She felt only contrition.

Between kisses, he whispered, "Go to Quince. Have him tie

you and give you fifty strokes. You need 'em."

She kissed him back. It seemed so natural and so right, she felt no shock, only his strength, holding her tight. "Oh yes, yes, yes—oh, John, I knew you'd have the answer."

"You'll feel better. He'll give 'em to you where your girl-friend can watch. I want you free for dinner."

"Must she see me whipped?"

"Don't like that, eh?"

"No."

"Well, you're getting it."

Brooke did not argue. She was at peace with herself and with this man who had refrained from a single 'I told you so'. She kissed him savagely and went away to be whipped.

Quince's reaction was spontaneous. "Gee-whiz, Miss Brooke, you sure you want fifty strokes? Fifty's a lot."

"I don't really want them but I'm going to get them. They serve me right. I've been silly."

"But you've just had that big ring put in your—and you're wearing the one in your nose…?"

"I forgot my nose. It's easy to remember the one in my pussy, was that the word you were looking for? Anyway, I've got to have them too—they're sort of beautiful. They

make me horny."

"The things you do say!" Quince regarded her ringed nudity with admiration. "I sure am glad the boss married you."

"Thanks, Quince. Oh, I nearly forgot. I have to be whipped where that girl in the cage can see me get it."

"Bet you ain't fussy 'bout that?"

"I hate the idea. Every time I scream I'll be so ashamed."

"Best do it in the barn like always, maam."

"I guess." She contrived a wide-eyed wheedle. "My husband didn't say how hard or what whip to use on me."

Quince got the message. His wink spoke volumes. "Bound to hurt quite a bit though, Miss Brooke. How'd you like to be tied?"

"You pick that. I'm not supposed to get what I want. Gosh, I wish I could get in that cage with Dorothy for a minute. Just hold things, Quince, I'll be right back."

It hurt to walk. All the way to the ranch house and back. Two keys were threaded by a loop of string, and the string hung round her neck. Entering Dorothy's cage, she said urgently, "I want to hold you and you hold me… tight!"

"You're in trouble?" Bare arms clung while shackles clinked. "It's me, isn't it? I bet it's me?"

“Well, sort of,” Brooke laughed. “You’ll see.”

Feeling better, she locked Dorothy’s cage with Dorothy inside. “O.K., Quince. How d’you want me?”

“I sorta like to hang you by your wrists. You do kick so pretty. Only need your toes just offen the straw.”

“Do it then. Here’s my hands.”

“Naw. It’s too rough—along with everything. How ’bout you put a hand each side this pole.”

Brooke was secretly glad. To hang by her wrists was a punishment all its own. She extended her arms at shoulder level, and watched Quince tie one of her wrists on each side of the upright.

“Won’t tie your feet, Miss Brooke. You can still kick. I sorta like the way you kick when I laces into you.”

“Thanks, Quince. You’re sweet to me.”

“What’s sweet about it! He’s going to whip you!” The voice from the cage was agonized.

“That’s right, Dorothy. There’s not a thing we can do about it. You’re supposed to watch—you could turn your back.”

“You know I can’t. Oh damn! This is all my fault.”

“Better start whipping me, Quince, before Dorothy and I have kittens.” Brooke braced herself and closed her eyes.

All whippings are terrible. Even with a kind whip and a kind hand Brooke's whipping taxed her courage to its limit. The smack of each excoriating blow was a punishment in itself against which the body and the spirit rebelled in anguish. Quince delivered the fifty strokes in groups of ten upon the writhing nakedness of a girl to whom he owed a loyalty second only to that which he owed her husband. Quince was whipping an errant wife. It was very simple.

To the girl being whipped, her function was equally simple. She had been sentenced to agony. She must endure it. She must emerge on the other side of anguish and still love and be loved. The stripes on her flesh would be a momento of a communion stranger than any man and woman had ever known. But she fought her bonds, punishing her wrists, giving Quince all the female kicking his heart could desire. Brooke Scanlon heaved and twisted, kicked and screamed in an orgy of the outrage of her flesh. In the middle of each infliction of ten she knew she could not possible bear the rest. But the blows fell, cutting cruelly at her courage, and when the ten were done she stood panting and sweating and vowing to keep silent in the ten to come. She never did. But her intent was very real.

Quince was careful and compassionate. But his duty was to the master and not the maid. He whipped Brooke Scanlon from her neck to knees. There were no vicious lashes between her legs. Her pubic ring was inviolate as were her breasts. She would go to her owner's bed that night with her treasures unscarred. Scanlon would have to turn her

over to view the punishment he had decreed.

Brooke lost count. Lash merged on lash and group on group. In her agony she spared glances at the cage and the nude girl within. Dorothy Winthrop stood tensed behind the mesh, her fingers white in their clutch, her eyes anguished in guilt. She had been whipped as cruelly herself but this was not the same. Because she must watch, she too was punished. Unconsciously, she joined the whipped girl in her screams. But the cage held her. In it she was an exotic bird of paradise.

The final ten strokes left Brooke Scanlon dazed, bemused, and with a great thankfulness, her jealousy excised. Quince quietly left her alone to savour pain and whatever other emotions generated by his whip. In the manner in which her wrists were bound she could not approach the post or lean against it. She must stand as though holding it at arm's length. She was a glistening nude statue, panting, breasts heaving, her back, bottom and thighs striped in scarlet, utterly weary.

It was a precious time. To stand and know her fifty strokes were done. To look along her white arms to her tied wrists, knowing she could not free them but uncaring. The whipped girl fought to remain within the safe integument of pain sustained and a sentence served. She was aware of the watching eyes within the cage, but she was not yet ready for speech, and there was nothing to say. A girl did not make small-talk out of having her nakedness scored by

a leather thong.

In thirty minutes Quince untied her wrists. Impulsively, Brooke cupped his amiable face in her numb hands and kissed him soundly, her whisper breathlessly sincere. “Thank you, Quince. Oh, thanks a million, I’m going to live.”

He shuffled and got pink. “Sure ain’t nothin’ to thank me for, Miss Brooke.”

“Yes it is. I know you could have made it a lot worse. I feel half alive instead of half dead. I expect that sounds silly.”

“You don’t ever sound silly, Miss Brooke. You O.K. now? Don’t need no help—?”

“I’m O.K. I’ll take it easy. It’s still early. You sure I was supposed to be untied this quick?”

“Boss said so, and he says don’t bother him ’till dinner. I best go now if you can look after that gal in the cage…?” Quince ambled out into the sunlight.

Brooke considered her pain. A whipped back soon became only a tenderness to be treated with care, its burn now was a diminishing fire. She examined what she could of herself and winced at sight of raised welts. Her hand sought the heavy ring below her brand. It hurt steadily but the ring was its own reward for the pain of its placement within her flesh. She turned to the cage, her hand reaching for the keys.

The two nudities clung in a silent need of each other. The cage door was ajar, Dorothy's shackles lay gleaming on the floor, her arms were ardent on the whipped back, adding love to pain. Nestling against hot flesh, Brooke realized how much femaleness meant to a girl. Dorothy felt good. They sank to the floor and fingered each other's rings.

"They make us different, Brooke. We can't ever be the same __"

"I've been different for a long time: Ever since John dragged me to the 'J.Bar.S' at the end of a rope." Brooke grinned and shrugged. "Sorry about being whipped, and screaming, and... Oh, shit!"

"Why were you whipped, darling?"

"Because I was jealous of you."

They gazed at each other in wry amusement, knowing the jealousy was past. Brooke scrutinized Melton's vivid creation, envious and puzzled. "You're far too lovely to be kept in a cage in a barn." She said slowly. "Darling, aren't all those exotic odds and ends of Melton's uncomfortable?"

"I can't get them off. I've tried. I must look like a high priced whore."

"Very high priced. You really are out of this world. You're a peacock in a barnyard, Dorothy. What's John got in store for you?"

“If you don’t know, I’m sure I don’t.” The shaven girl made a move of deprecation. “I’m de trop here, and I know it. I’d best take one of the offers he made.”

“My idea was you’d visit until your hair grew back.”

“That’s forever.”

“Neither of us may have a choice.” Brooke paused to feel the tenderness of wounds. “John’s intrigued with you the way you are—and you’ve practically asked to be enslaved.”

“Even in this cage I’m more free than I ever was down on the lower floor. Standing in here before you were whipped, I was happy. I’m as offbeat as you. Brooke, would you have a key to this silver belt round my middle? It’s tight.”

“No, you’ll have to wear it.” The punished girl offered a wry grimace. “I’ve a notion John intends to keep you around as a gaudy show piece, and that metal round your tummy’s a part of it. He’ll have Melton groom you and keep you shaved… It’s just a guess.”

“Huh, I should let him get me back my job at the Hibernia,” Dorothy laughed. “Poor Amy, she’d be scared to death.”

“You may find you’re a prisoner. John’s intrigued. He didn’t want you… but after Melton got finished…! Dammit, Dorothy, any man would want you around. You’re five hundred percent sexy.”

“That’s a laugh—a damn big ring in my pussy!”

“That will be part of John’s fun. He likes situations. I can imagine him putting a little skirt on you before handing you over to an associate he wants to please. Imagine the guy— stripping you!”

“And finding I’m ringed! It’s a barroom story.”

“He’ll keep you chained, just a little, and in that cage.”

“No, Brooke, it’ll be you. You’re my jailer. Remember?”

“I’d forgotten—getting myself whipped, I guess. Hell, the door’s open and you’re not chained! C’mon, let’s go have Etta make us coffee?”

“I ought to be chained. Brooke, I’m sure I should—?”

“Oh alright. They’re beautifully ornamental.” Brooke retrieved the shackles from the floor and locked them on willing wrists. “You wanted sunlight… it’s right through that door.”

They paused at the grim whipping post, Dorothy Winthrop intoxicated by prairie space and prairie sun. “This is a place I tie you when you’re bad,” Brooke teased. “That is, if Quince hasn’t tied me to it first. Convenient for whipping a girl. Lovely view.”

Etta was a pink bundle of embarrassment. “That Melton feller, he done it all wrong,” she explained earnestly. “I gets the shot in my arm and when I wakes up my tits ain’t been touched but I’ve got this great big ring through my cunt.

Gee-whiz!"

"We've each got one too, Etta. Aren't they gorgeous!"

"But now we can't do nothin'."

"Saves us getting ourselves whipped. Remember last time?"

"Showed mine to Quince. Guess I shouldn't have, but he said O.K. Quince sure liked it. Says he's goin' to chain me up by it sometime and see if I can't get loose. He's crazy. Say, Miss Brooke, you think I can get rings in my tits same as you?"

"I'll ask Mr. Scanlon. But what you've got is a lot more exciting. May we peek?"

Blushes and perspiration! Coyness and an archly raised hem! No stripper could have contrived such maiden concupisence. Etta's ring shone brightly beneath her pubic bush. Her thighs were as pink as her cheeks. "And I can't never get it off," she proclaimed proudly. "Ain't that somethin'!"

The coffee was good. It brought communion, it also brought Quince with a paper bag. He gulped his brew in embarrassed haste before taking his sister to the passage. From there the naked girls heard only Etta's delighted giggles. Quince did not re-appear.

"There's a job he gimmie." The maid preened with importance. "It's a real hoot. You promise to play?"

“For another cup of coffee.”

“You can have that after.” A truly explosive giggle. “You gottar hands behind your back and close your eyes. No peeking. Promise?”

An exchange of amused glances. Two shrugs. Obedience! Brooke felt eager young hands thrust her against Dorothy, hip to hip, arms at their backs, brushing. She refused to cheat, keeping her eyes tight closed. Etta was a good kid.

The pain was sudden and unexpected but not severe. It came from her incised labia, bearing the ring. She gasped and twisted as the maid’s voice came, triumphant.

“You can open your eyes now.”

“Etta, how could you!”

Two exclamations of dismay. Two stares of disblief. From one ringed pudendum to the other looped a chain… “Boss’s orders, miss. Not my idea. But ain’t it cute!”

“Etta, it’s only a couple of feet long! Take it off!”

“Ain’t got no key, miss. Boss got the key. Quince was supposed to join you up but, seem’ he ain’t a girl, he got me. Them padlocks heavy on your cunt?”

Chagrined grins turned to laughter. Each linked girl tenderly fingered the padlock snapped on her ring, and from it the chain. It was an added weight for their wound but

one it could sustain.

“We’re Siamese twins!”

“Wither thou goes—!”

Etta’s giggle seemed permanent. “And he gimmie’ this note —”

It was Scanlon’s writing, Scanlon’s brevity:—

‘You wanted her.

You got her!’

Simple and direct! Brooke could hear his chuckle. She shrugged, and passed the missive to the woman to whom she was joined by the strangest umbilical cord imagination could conjure. “We don’t know,” she opined ruefully. “He’ll keep us guessing.”

“Here, I pushed your chairs together, miss.” More giggles. “And I’m pouring the coffee.”

With infinite caution, they took their seats.

To accustom themselves to enforced proximity the chained girls walked, arm linked in arm, to tease Quince.

“So you were scared to padlock a pudendum, Quince!”

“Don’t know that there word, miss. Sounds rude.”

“Alright then, you didn’t want to chain our cunts.”

Pink suffused honest cheeks. “Well, miss, I ain’t never touched yer down there, didn’t figger I oughta’.”

“Go ahead and touch Dorothy’s, she isn’t the boss’s wife.”

“Oh, miss…!” Quince choked on a chuckle. “You’ll—you’ll have to go to the bathroom together—”

“We’ve already thought of that. You shouldn’t laugh, you ought to feel sorry for us.”

“Shore do, maam—” The hired hand tried vainly to cope with explosive mirth. “And you’ll both have to go in the cage.”

“Yes, I ’spose… Hadn’t thought of that.”

“One o’ you gets hung up, t’other hasta git hung too!”

“We’ve got an interesting future. Quince, you wouldn’t happen to have the key…”

“Hell no, maam! Wouldn’t dare use it nohow.”

“Please don’t stop laughing. We’re going to have a bath.”

Hip to hip, holding hands, their linkage brushing their loins, the two girls walked towards the impossible which, when they got there, proved surprisingly possible.

“We sit facing each other, my legs over yours.”

“Best step in while it’s dry so we don’t slip.”

Happily, they soaped and laved. Most of Melton's magic proved water soluble. Dorothy Winthrop re-emerged as an earth woman, robbed of hair. Her only adornment, a silver belt and a ring embedded in her sex. "I don't care," she avowed. "I'm getting used to being a freak. Let me look at your back, darling—Oh, wow—!"

"There's no blood, is there? Quince went easy—?"

"You're more striped than any tiger."

"Well, I got fifty… I knew I'd be marked. Wash 'em for me. I want them to look nice for John."

"You love him, don't you? Gosh, I envy you, Brooke!"

"I envy myself." Brooke laughed. "Better than the Hibernia, eh?"

Dorothy laughed too. "Even with a chained cunt I'm terribly grateful. Don't feel bad about anything you have to do to me. It'll be easier to take than Amy."

"D'you want me to do a job on you? Try and match Melton's?"

"Don't let's. That isn't me. I'm a prison supervisor, not an odalisque. Your John's already seen me bare."

"Seeing you shaven's sparked some notion in him. I'm puzzled about it." Brooke made a wry grimace. "I don't want a slavegirl, I can't relate to you that way, and if John

wanted one he could have kept Susan. I could have whipped her saucy little bottom with an easy conscience." Brooke gestured deprecatingly. "Dinner's not far off. Let's go down. Maybe he'll tell us something—and for Pete's sake don't step on the soap."

John Scanlon told them nothing. His tone, to his wife, was pre-emptory. "I told you she doesn't eat with us." He tossed a key. "Go put her in her cage. Hurry back. I want you dressed for dinner."

In the barn, they used the key and kissed. Dorothy Winthrop walked meekly into her meshed prison. They looked ruefully at each other and shrugged in bafflement. Mrs. John Scanlon sped upon her task. At the barn door she looked back at the white nudity splayed against the wire. She threw a kiss.

Formally and splendidly attired, Brooke Scanlon went down to dinner. In the dining room she met a man. A charming man, smiling.

It was the state governor.

* * *

Chapter Ten

THE RING ON THE RANGE

A wife, no matter how beautiful, is apt to be de trop when caught in the crossfire of male business. Pleasantly excited by the imminence of John Scanlon's ascent to a new and different kind of power, the dutiful wife listened in a desultory attention to the ebb and flow of plans. Dinner was well advanced before she picked up a change of tone. The governor's was first.

"There's no denying Humbolt's a force."

"I can make it without him."

“Probably. But if he’s with us he’s not against us. There is a difference there, John. I don’t even want Humbolt neutral.”

“He’s priced himself out of anyone’s market.”

“Dollar wise, yes.” The governor chewed thoughtfully. “But we did discuss that… other matter!”

“Thought we were keeping it for a last resort?”

“I would say this now is. We are very close, John, and if Humbolt once says yes he’ll keep his word. For a fence sitter he’s not a bad guy.”

“O.K. No problem,” Scanlon grunted. “So long as he doesn’t get the idea I’m begging.”

“He might for money. But not for… this.” The governor beamed at Brooke. “I wonder if we aren’t boring Mrs. Scanlon?”

“Huh, she’s probably guessed.” Scanlon’s grey eyes twinkled at the girl he owned. “She’s my wife, remember. You can talk.”

“I admire you immensely, Mrs. Scanlon.” The governor’s scrutiny was kind. “You perform a most difficult—”

“What he means, Brooke, is I treat you like a bastard.” The owner of the ‘J.Bar.S’ chuckled. “Tell him your version.”

“He treats me like a bastard.” Brooke bathed the chief executive in her sweetest smile. “I’m afraid I like it.”

“She’s a beautiful pervert. You tell him, Brooke.”

She smiled into the beneficence of the governor’s intent regard. “John’s made me what I am today.” She twinkled mischieviously. “We’re probably the most unorthodox married couple in the state.”

“I suppose you know who we’re discussing?”

“It sounds as though you’re making a gift of Dorothy Winthrop to some man I’ve never met?”

“Hell, girl, you’ve got it wrong,” Scanlon’s voice was uncompromising. “I’m keeping Dorothy. What the hell you think I got that cage for! It’s you Humbolt gets—gift wrapped!”

Brooke’s world collapsed. She sat, stunned. The two men allowed her time to grasp her fate before they joined forces in laughter.

“Your husband enjoys a pleasantry at your expense, Mrs. Scanlon,” the governor said gently. “Forgive us both. It was unpardonable.”

“If it’s unpardonable, how the hell can she forgive you!” Scanlon chuckled complacently. “But she bought it, didn’t you, Brooke?”

“Yes.”

“She’s mad. Can’t blame her. This girl is pure gold.” Scanlon

was unusually contrite. “Forgive me, sweetheart. I love you.” Brooke shivered. “Ugh… I was frightened.”

The governor’s regard had never left her face. His tone was quietly thoughtful. “You’d have gone to Humbolt, allowed yourself to be bound and delivered. You are remarkable.”

“I belong to John. I do what he wants. I love him too.”

Scanlon was sardonically proud. “I know what you’re thinking, Governor.” He grunted humorously. “Yes. Brooke will do what you want.”

“I would not ask.” A flush mantled their visitor’s cheeks.

“You can.” Scanlon leaned forwad. “This girl is not the common stuff of other women. Nothing I demand can diminish her. If she fulfills your desire, no one of the three of us will have lost face.” Scanlon turned to the girl whose heart was thudding painfully. “You know what we’re talking about. Do it.”

Brooke’s question was tremulous. “Upstairs…? May I?”

“Anyway you wish, sweetheart.”

Heat fiercely scalding, possessed by a ferocious excitation, the young wife of the ‘J.Bar.S’ leaped the stairs, forgetting pain. When she re-entered the presence of the men she was clad only in the whiteness of a wrapped around sheet. Positioning herself for the governor’s utmost convenience she cast the covering aside, standing before him naked,

erect, head bowed in submission. Pendent from her nostrils was her husband's ring.

There was no need of words. Each man knew that to speak would profane beauty. Brooke did not move. She stood with feet slightly parted to betray the biggest ring of all. Her nipples were proudly arrogant in their flaunting of the golden circlets the governor had suspected in that evening long ago. Now they were his to see, the nude girl could swear she felt a tangible impact from his study of her rings.

Two men and a naked girl, a girl ringed with gold, submissive to their will. There flowed between them a rapport others could never achieve. The exotic tableau lasted for pulsing minutes until female instinct told the girl to bring it to a close. Quietly, she retrieved the sheet but disdained its use. As she walked proudly from the room the whipmarks on her back were a proclamation of her faith.

Clothed, the ring gone from her nose, Brooke Scanlon returned to the dining table as Etta served dessert. The governor's tribute was reverent. "I have to thank you both. I have been greatly privileged." He turned to Brooke alone. "You showed me something more beautiful than I have ever seen."

They were sophisticates, saying nothing trite, belaboring no point. Under a feminine compulsion, Brooke returned to their previous topic. "Are you really going to use Dorothy?" She looked from one to the other. "She's been through a

bad time. Are you sure…?"

"She's the one I spoke of," Scanlon told the governor. "Supervisor at that Hibernia place. Then she got on the wrong side of Reese Branson." He grunted sardonically. "Branson had her shaved, every last hair. To show her things can always get worse I had her ringed between her legs. You're going to have yourself a shock."

They made a diverse trio, walking across the ranch yard to the barn. A gowned woman, an austerely immaculate statesman, and Scanlon stone faced and still very much the rancher. Passing the whipping post, the governor said nothing but looked at Brooke and smiled. She knew he was seeing her stripped and bound to the stark upright. Demurely she smiled back.

Dorothy Winthrop seemed not to have moved. She stood against the wire as Brooke had left her, the fingers of her silver shackled hands clutching the mesh. She evinced no shock at their arrival nor did she shrink away. The ring in her pudendum shone brightly, perhaps its effect on her had been as Scanlon had sardonically suggested. She was an appealing picture of a caged girl.

"Well. I'll be go to hell!"

The governor's excalamation was pure tribute. He approached the enmeshed beauty and demanded: "You can't get out of there?"

“No, Sir, I’m locked in.”

“And those shackles? Can you get ’em off?”

The naked captive backed away and lifted her chained hands as though seeing them for the first time. Her response was without guile. “Of course I can’t. They’re locked too.”

“D’you like being shaven?”

Captive eyes sought Brooke’s in need and Scanlon’s in doubt. The rancher’s command was curt. “Answer him.”

Dorothy shrugged, her voice was even. “I hated it. I wanted to die. I’ve got used to it now.”

“Going to let it grow back?”

“I don’t think I have anything to say about what happens to me.”

“Nice, John. Very nice. In fact she’s damn remarkable. The girl’s a beauty.”

“Not what you expected. I know. Too damn good for Humbolt.”

Brooke saw the heave of breasts, the glint of eyes. But the captive voice was calm. “Am I being sold?”

The governor coughed gently. “Not unless you wish, Miss Winthrop. You can be the supervisor at the Hibernia

Women's Correctional Institute tomorrow if you say the word."

Brooke knew it the ultimate cruelty, a decision imposing outrageous stress. She beheld the anguish in the caged girl's eyes and heard it in the faltering question: "This man who buys me…? Will I be whipped and tortured?"

"Your life would be much as it is here—you are caged." The governor looked to Scanlon for confirmation. "We have no reason to believe Humbolt overly severe?"

John Scanlon grunted. "He'll whip her ass. You can bet on it."

Brooke longed to speak, to implore, to plead. But they were disposing a life, the freedom of a beautiful woman. She wanted to urge: 'The prison, the prison, the prison! Take the Hibernia, Dorothy.' But she remembered the little cells, the handcuffs, the tears of girls and the hateful sitting on the horse. True, Dorothy would be in uniformed command. But still…! She kept an anguished silence.

"I'd be a slave, and I'd be punished and kept prisoner," Dorothy Winthrop was thinking aloud. "But I can't face the Hibernia." She smiled wanly at Scanlon. "I'm still scared of life, so I suppose you'd better sell me. It's what you want anyway."

"Thank you, my dear." It was the governor who spoke. "I will keep an eye on your fortunes." He repeated his gentle

cough. “I have some small influence in the state.”

“Will I ever see Brooke again?” The query was pathetic with longing.

“Get her out of that cage, Brooke.”

Scanlon’s wife obeyed the command, holding out a hand in comfort to the exotic nudity she led into full view. As though obeying an age old instinct, the onetime supervisor of the Hibernia Women’s Correctional Institute knelt before the state’s chief executive and said, simply, “I will be obedient. Are you my owner?”

“Dammit, I wish I was!” The governor raised her gently to her feet and patted her bottom paternally. “But I’ll deliver you.” He shrugged at Scanlon. “I’m afraid it had better be by the conventional method. Humbolt will expect it.”

“He means you’ll have to be bound and gagged, darling.”

“We’ll go back to the house for a brandy,” Scanlon announced. “Tie her and bring her along. We can gag her and tie her ankles when she’s in the trunk. Make a tight job, sweetheart.”

The two girls looked at each other, nonplussed. “I can’t tie you up, Dorothy,” Brooke said disgustedly. “I’ve never tied up a girl in my life. I’ll get Quince.”

“No, don’t!” Dorothy’s shackled hand was pleading on her arm. “You’re forgetting who I used to be. I’ve tied a lot of

girls for delivery—”

“But I don’t want to tie you!”

“I think you have to.”

“Well… I suppose—oh damn! Darling, I’m going to get to see you sometimes. I’ll insist—”

“Don’t get yourself punished.”

“I’m always being punished anyway.”

They clung. Impatiently, Brooke unlocked the silver shackles from wrists soon to be roped. They clung again, this time more satisfyingly, each in the grip of an urgent female need, until Dorothy whispered. “Darling, you’d best tie me. We don’t want them thinking—the way men do…”

There was plenty of rope. The girl to be tied made her own selection. They even contrived a giggle. “You can tie me perfectly well, Brooke dear. You’ve been tied enough yourself. If you do something wrong or not tight enough I’ll tell you.”

Brooke accepted cord. “I feel so foolish. When I think back—back—”

“Forget me in uniform. I’m a naked slave, being sold.”

“It’s crazy!”

“I don’t know, Brooke. You’re happy. Maybe I’ll be happy

too." The older girl looked back over a bare shoulder. "My hands first, palm to palm behind my back."

It proved easier than supposed. The tricks of tying were all stored in her mind from old experience. Brooke used them, even to the extreme of her captive's urgent guidance: "Tighter, Brooke! You know how tight it has to be."

"Can't we forget your elbows, Dorothy?"

"No, we can't. That's the first thing they'll look for. And you'll make them tight so they hurt."

"Oh, Dorothy…! Won't this be good enough?"

"You know it isn't. My elbows have to meet. You can help by using half a dozen bands of rope."

Dolefully the younger girl obeyed, adding to the loops of cord to lessen the bite of each into the tender flesh of a friend being sold into slavery, an impossible twentieth century slavery in which such things did not happen. There was upon them both a terrible awareness of parting as Brooke carefully placed each strand and pulled them tight to weld together two elbows she would have preferred to kiss. "I absolutely refuse to do that tie with a rope each side of your pussy," she vowed defiantly. "With that ring just in it would hurt too much. It's a beast of a thing anyway."

"O.K. let's try and miss that. I don't want it either. But they may insist." Dorothy sniffed. "This ritualistic binding of a girl for delivery has become a sort of standard procedure. I

suppose it's practical since she gets bunged into the trunk of a car." She gave a bitter laugh. "I used to supervise it often enough at the Hibernia. Most of the girls destined for the lower floor arrived as a tight bound package. I suppose I was a bitch to them, this all serves me right—darling, you'll have to tie my upper arms, not right on my breasts but criss-cross—"

"One for the road, sweetheart," Scanlon was unusually jovial. "You can tilt Dorothy's for her."

They made a strange quartet. The governor's attention flitting back and forth between his hostess and the tight bound nakedness she served with a double shot of brandy. "You sure it's a good idea?" Scanlon asked gruffly. "A bound and gagged girl in the trunk of the governor's car?"

"I never get tickets, John, and this way there's total discretion. You and me and Humbolt. I can drive right into his garage. Miss Winthrop will enter her slavery totally anonymous."

"Make her finish that giant of a drink, Brooke, then tie her ankles and knees and gag her. We'll carry her to the car." Again, it felt wrong to use upon Dorothy Winthrop the rope once used to bind her own limbs and to thrust within the uncontesting lips the gag once strapped inside her own mouth. But Brooke was obedient. She performed her task deftly under the approving eyes of her owner and the state governor. In mute farewell, she kissed the captive forehead

and the captive eyes. Scanlon's command was curt. "Stay here, Brooke. We'll carry her down."

The governor took Brooke's hand, then raised it to his lips, his eyes intent upon her own. "I admire you immensely, Mrs. Scanlon." He sighed at some vision of his own. "I envy John his possession of you." He glinted humorously. "If it was you I was taking, trussed in the trunk, my destination would not be Henry Humbolt."

Scanlon picked up Dorothy Winthrop's trussed nudity. Brooke stood compliantly and watched them go. She had a feeling as if something ended and a chapter just begun. Under sudden impulse, she fled to their room, stripped, and replaced the ring within her nose, then sped back to await her husband on his return.

If Scanlon noticed her ringed nakedness he gave no sign. He was impelled by intent of his own. He gathered the waiting girl into strong arms and welded her nudity unto himself with a fierce passion to kindle within his wife's whipped loins a raging fire to quench the pain of rings. "I love you, girl." His breath was hot in her ear. "You alone. No one else."

"John...! Oh, John... tighter! Hurt me!" Her whisper was as fervid as his own. "I love you too. I love you too damn much."

John Scanlon picked up his wife and carried her to their bed. Tossing her nakedness upon the covers, he asked gen-

tly: “You’ve had a damn rough day. Want to sleep?”

“You know I don’t.”

He turned her to run a hard finger down across the welts of Quince’s whip. “I’ll make these hurt?”

“I want you to.”

Scanlon turned her again, handling her with an ease to thrill her to the core. He fingered the ring by which her sex was locked. He saw her wince and heard her grasp. “This will be a real son-of-a-bitch of a pain.” He warned gruffly.

“I don’t care. I want that too.”

“You couldn’t keep still for it, sweetheart?”

“Tie me.”

John Scanlon tied his nude wife spreadeagle on their bed. He stripped. The vibrations of their twin desires impinged on bare skin a fusillade of erotic conquest, heralding an agony of fulfillment still to come.

It was not like any other key. A strangely indented sliver of steel. Scanlon held it up for captive eyes to see, then bent to the quintessence of an intimacy no other man could ever know.

Brooke screamed but once, then held control by tensing savagely against her bonds. Tied wrists and ankles became a friendly clasp upon a girl consumed by a great need.

Tension slacked suddenly when the male held up two golden crescents. “Comes apart,” he explained cheerfully. “Goes back in the same way. Want to be untied, sweetheart?”

“My legs would be nice, that’s all.”

Scanlon untied his wife’s ankles, then advanced between her opened knees. Brooke’s back was an old familiar anguish from the whip. Her biceps showed as her wrists strained against their loops of cord. The anguish of her pierced labia merged with the sweeter incandescence deep within to become one single frame of joy.

* * *

She walked slowly the familiar path to the barn, wondering idly how many times and how many punishments to which her steps had led. She would be punished now. But she had no reason to suspect severity. Her mind was filled with other speculation bred of breakfast converse.

“She’s gone, Brooke. It’s best. She bothered me.” Scanlon buttered toast and stirred coffee. “Shaven, and with what Melton made of her… it was too damn much, a permanent hard-on for any man.”

“What’s her fate going to be, John?”

“Goodness know,” he chuckled. “I’ll bet that if Humbolt lets her hair grow he’ll toss her out with a check inside a couple of months. If he does she’ll run straight to Branson —she’s still in love with him.”

“I wouldn’t if I were her,” Brooke mused, sipping coffee. “Young Susan’s right for him, not Dorothy. But, this Humbolt? Will he be cruel?”

“About the same as me.”

“John, you’re not cruel. You’re always saying—”

“Sure, I’m cruel. Put the ring back in your cunt, didn’t I! How bad’s it hurting?”

“It doesn’t hurt at all. It’s yours. I love it.”

“Little liar,” he grunted amiably. “I’ll get damn good at getting it in and out. You’d be shocked at what that ring cost. Damn clever job. D’you realize you’re still wearing the ring in your nose?”

“I’ll wear it all the time there’s no visitors. It sets me off so I balance. I’ll even wear it when I go to Quince.”

“Makes you lisp.”

“I like that, too,” Brooke paused. “But, about Dorothy. Did you two actually use her as a bribe?”

“Sure we did. Not my idea. But a damn handy way to get rid of her. Half liked the idea herself,” Scanlon snorted. “I

need Humbolt like I need a hole in the head."

"But what the governor said made sense?"

"Maybe, if I was running."

Brooke stared, fearful of what she had heard, sensing disclosure. "John… what…?"

"What good's the lousy job to me? Peddling influence? Walking a party line!" He broke toast irritably. "Hell, I can buy 'em all. I've been doing it for years."

"But, the chance at Washington?"

"The White House is the biggest dummy of all. Scared to say it's a nice day for fear it'll rain. Not my way!"

"Make it your way, John."

Scanlon put down his cup and stared with whimsical affection at the girl he had conquered and married. "Sweetheart, have you any idea how rich I am?"

"Not really. I'm supposed to be rich, too."

He spoke heavily. "That office of mine, the computers, the telex and the rest. At the other end of those lines is an empire. Sweetheart, if I was to die you'd come close to being the richest woman in the world."

"But, John, I want for you—"

"I can't do both. I don't spend my days in the office here

because I'm a misanthrope. I'm working, hard. And I need to think."

Brooke pursed her lips in feminine wisdom. "There's another reason… isn't there?"

"Sure! You!"

"No woman's worth all that."

"You are."

The female part of Brooke Scanlon was joyous in victory, the wife knew guilt. All she could think to say was: "I love you terribly."

"What we had in bed last night was worth six Washingtons." He grinned his granite grin at her in the surety of possession. "I couldn't have you ringed and naked anyplace but here, or send you to Quince…"

Brooke was joyously glad, knowing herself a girl greatly blessed. She desired the freedom and the pain of the 'J.Bar.S' as much as he. She was also wise enough not to push. If guilt lingered, perhaps it would go away. Absently, she enquired: "Do you want me to go to Quince today?"

"Sure. Can't have you getting rusty."

She laughed at his preoccupation. "Rusty! Have you forgotten? You sent me to him yesterday to be whipped."

"Huh, so I did." He twinkled. "Couldn't do that in Washing-

ton."

"Do I have to tell him anything?"

"No. Give the boy his head. I'd be surprised if he hurt you much. He's in love with you."

"He never touches me like that."

"I know. That's good. I'd hate to have to fire him. It's really a form of worship he has for you. You're a goddess."

"Do hired men whip goddesses?"

"Quince does, if I tell him, or you ask," Scanlon laughed. "He confided how ashamed he gets over the erection you give him every time you ask to be punished. Run along and give him another."

"I'm not going to wear clothes any more when I go to the barn. I always have to take them off."

"Why not. There's only the sun and the wind."

Brooke found her amiable custodian replacing a broken rail in the corral. "Want to sit me on there, Quince?"

"Gosh, miss, you sure come out with the damndest things."

"Well, I remember you sitting me on the top rail more than once."

"That was way back when the boss was still breakin' you in, Miss Brooke." Quince grinned at the memory. "You was

mad as a hornet at him when I fust got to look after you."

"You must have done a good job on me. I married the boss. Did you enjoy punishing me?"

"Gosh, yes," Quince was flushed with emotion. "If you hadn't been so rich and educated and such a lady I'd have asked you to marry me. Got a nerve, ain't I?"

"I think it's a lovely idea. If we'd got married would you have gone on punishing me?"

"Oh sure. 'bout the same as the boss has me do. When one lot o' whipmarks fade you gets another whipping."

"And hanging me up by my wrists and things…?"

"Shucks, that ain't punishment, Miss Brooke. You sorta like it."

The naked girl in all the glory of her ringed condition grinned ruefully. "Ought to be ashamed of myself, didn't I? What would you like to do to me today?"

"Didn't the boss say what you gets?"

"He says it's your day. You can do what you like to me—in the way of punishments, that is."

Quince removed his Stetson and scratched his head, a sure sign of puzzlement. "I ain't got no ideas, Miss Brooke. What'ud you like me to do to you?"

“I refuse the decision. I’m all yours. Aren’t you lucky, Quince?”

“Guess I am, miss. Lotta guys like to have you the way you is. How’d it be I’ll tie your hands behind your back?”

“Sissy! The boss would laugh at that one.”

“You mean you bin’ a bad girl or somethin? You deserves worse’n usual? I jest whipped you yesterday?”

“No, I’m a good girl. Think up something cute for me.”

“I could hang a weight on that ring you got in your cunt?”

“No thank you. That’s not cute at all.”

“Well, you’d have to carry it around with you, Miss Brooke. Or let it hang, and you wouldn’t like that?”

“Good try. But the boss wouldn’t like it. Be very careful with my rings. My rings are me.”

“Maybe a bit o’ you I could whip?”

“Oh, Quince, is that the best you can do! This is for all day. You can’t possibly whip me all day.”

The ranch hand sighed under the weight of decision and female caprice. Suddenly, he brightened. “Gosh, miss, we got the very thing.” With shy masterfulness he took her by the arm.

Brooke wondered why she had not thought of it herself.

Dorothy's cage stood tenantless within the barn. About it was a forlorn air of beauty past and gone. "You still got them keys hangin' round your neck, Miss Brooke. Best I take 'em." Quince was jubilant and in command. He opened the cage door with a flourish.

"You want me to step in there?"

"Sure do, maam. In you go."

Brooke walked inside to join Dorothy's ghost. She shivered. She was enmeshed in metal. Wherever she turned she was mocked by wire. She tested it with thrusting hands. It was as firm and implacable as the bars of her cell at the Hibernia. With more noise effect than was strictly needful Quince slammed the door and snapped the lock. "There you is, Miss Brooke, nice and safe for all day. T'other lady couldn't get out, don't 'spose you can." As helpful thought, he added: "And it don't hurt none either."

"You're awfully sweet to me, Quince." The caged girl did what all caged girls do, she clutched the wire and looked through it at the world outside, immensely thankful her incarceration was only for one day. "Jeepers, Quince, I'm glad I'm not locked in here for a month or a year. It's creepy." She shivered again. "I don't suppose you'd like to let me out?"

"No, maam, you gotta stay in there. You looks cute as all get out—same as that other lady." Quince scratched his head again. "But she was wearin' them nice chains."

“I wouldn’t mind them, Quince. I’m not doing anything in here. They’re hanging in one of the stalls, and you’ve got my keys.”

The cage was claustrophobic enough to cause its occupant to eye the re-opened door with longing. But Brooke held out her hands and watched the silver shackles locked tight upon her wrists. She could swear they were still warm from Dorothy’s flesh. “Thank you, Quince, they’re lovely.”

“Sure are, miss.” He slammed and locked the door on her again. His hair got one more scratch. “I sorta got me an idea.”

The feminine hands holding the wire were now chained, it did not matter. The silver shackles altered nothing of Brooke’s imprisonment. She watched Quince’s ambling round the barn with more than curiosity. When he returned she could shrewdly guess her fate.

“Hope you don’t mind, Miss Brooke. I sure do like this notion. I ain’t gonna touch nothin’ I shouldn’t. I promise.”

“Be my guest, Quince.” Brooke looped her shackle behind her neck, separated her legs, and watched the third opening of her cage door. “You’re so terribly clever.”

“Not really, maam. It was you and that lady gimmie the idea.” Quince snapped a link and padlock cautiously on the ring pendent between female thighs, then padlocked the other end of the two foot chain to the cage wire at the

height of his captive's brand. He went out, locked the door again, then stepped away to observe the effect on his inspiration. "Gee, Miss Brooke, you sure is a pretty gal!" After thoughtful minutes of gazing at the chained pudendum he went away.

Brooke could not sit down. The chain compelled her to stand. It did not matter much, she would probably have stood anyway, holding the wire and gazing at her limited view. In wry amusement she lifted her shackled hands to finger a ringed nose, ringed nipples, and the lower ring by which she was chained to her cage. It was one more day at the 'J.Bar.S'. Five P.M. would come.

Brooke Scanlon smiled.