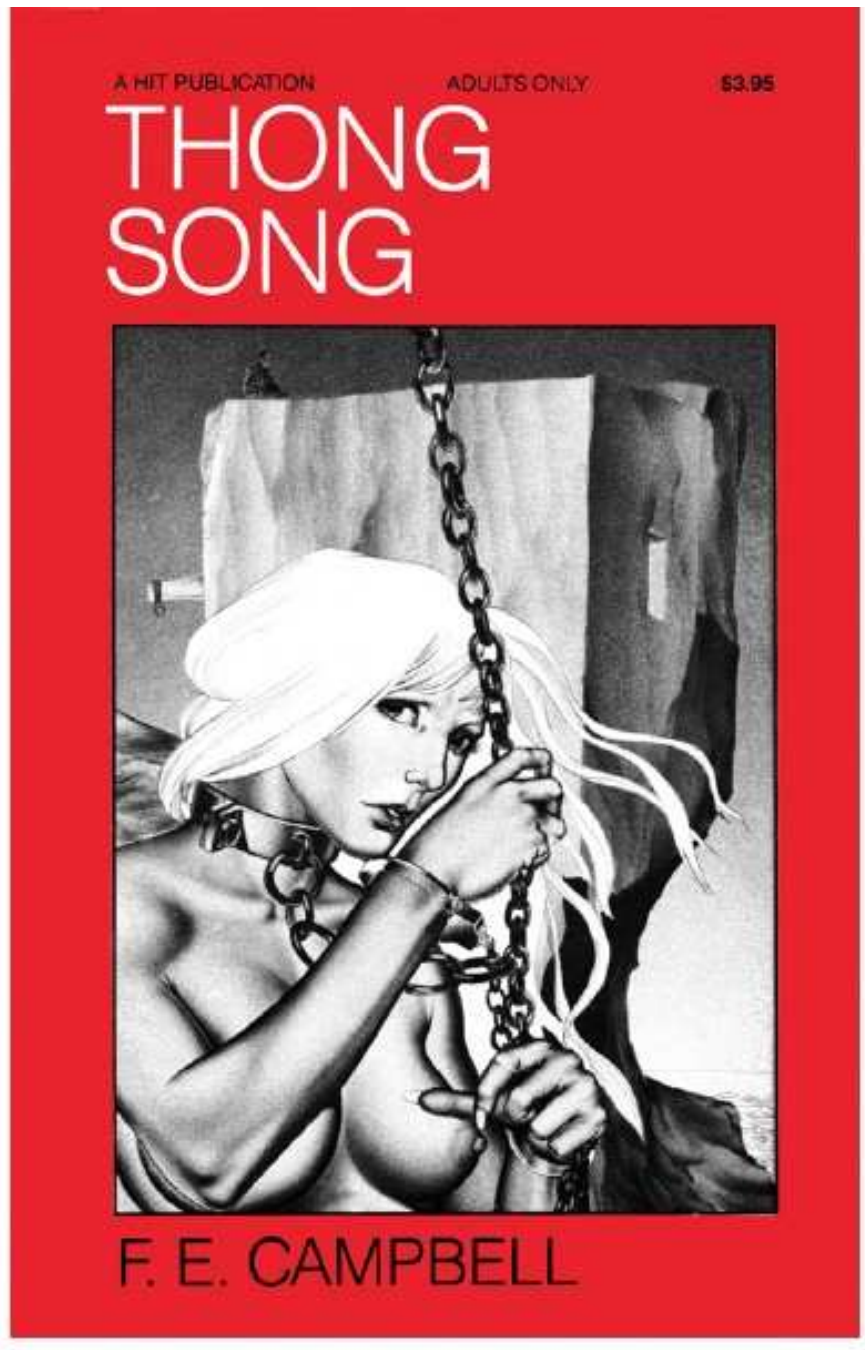


Thong Song

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**out of print*

Thong Song

by F.E. Campbell

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A Hit Book

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1

The Living Fantasy

He perked the coffee. His thoughts, as always, were on the girl downstairs. He knew exactly how she would be standing there – naked, with her arms wearily held high by their tethering ropes, the leather wristlets snug around the slender wrists. She would be tired, shifting from one leg to the other as the hours passed. When he entered she would raise her bowed head without expectation in a greeting minus both optimism and hope. It was just another day for the girl called Janice who was also a slave.

Or was she? Benny Matlin considered the word and knew neither of them had achieved its implications. He could whip Janice Latimer into obedience, but he had failed to mold her meticulous enactment of his fantasies into the pulse-throbbing eroticism of his dreams. Janice could be likened to a wife who performs her duties without love. She was not a slave; she was a prisoner.

Benny Matlin was not conscious of failure. In the beginning he had believed time would supplant submission for rebellion. The girl would tire of fighting her bonds and of screaming beneath his whip. She would accept a new life in which he was the central figure in a universe bounded by the dwelling in which he held her captive. Love had been an elusive hope unfulfilled.

He chose her favorite cup. He was not angry with Janice today as he sometimes was in the hurt of rejection. She would be grateful for the hot drink and perhaps for the human communion in her lonely helplessness. She had annoyed him yesterday so was enduring mild punishment. It was understood between them that the standing pose with her hands strapped above her head was one of her lesser travails. Its real agony was fatigue and boredom.

Over the months since he had stolen her from her previous life they had evolved a code by which it was now tacitly understood that certain behavior bestowed upon her inevitable consequences she could not escape. Benny had never considered his theft of Janice Latimer as kidnapping. His coercive sequestering of her body was for him a far more sacred act without motive of monetary gain. He had simply wanted a girl, and had since come to wonder why he had waited so long or why others did not acquire one in the same manner. He had treated her pleas for release with a kindly tolerance, only punishing her when they became too importunate. Neither did he allow her the faintest possibility of escape. She rarely tried anymore, but he did not relax her bonds. He was a miser hoarding an infinite treasure.

Benny Matlin had acquired an interesting collection of handcuffs, chains, padlocks, ropes, and things fabricated of leather, by which a girl could be immobilized or compelled to remain in one place. Some of his rooms would have adequately kept Janice prisoner, but he did not trust doors and bars alone. He only felt sure of her when she was handcuffed or bound or chained. He was willing to confess enjoyment in seeing her nudity thus confined. To Benny Matlin, Janice Latimer was the most beautiful thing in his life. His aesthetic worship of his girl in chains was a buffer absorbing the buffeting of her resentment at liberty lost.

He arranged the tray with care. There was a small table in the room where Janice was doing penance, so he would drink his own coffee with her and share a sandwich. He liked things nice. She was completely helpless, so he would have to feed her and raise the cup to her lips. But this had become commonplace. They would talk while he visually enjoyed his own aesthetic creation of female captivity. She would be tired after the hours of her punishment and was unlikely to indulge in recrimination lest it earn her additional dolor. Even though he had failed to make her love him, Benny Matlin was a reasonably happy

man.

The captive girl ran true to his vision. She raised her head and surveyed her visitor without curiosity. But some of her lassitude departed at sight of the tray.

"Coffee, sweetheart?"

"Oh yes, please!" Then she added, diffidently, "It's nice of you to think of it. I'm awfully tired."

"Shouldn't have misbehaved."

"No, I suppose not."

Their brief exchange exhausted a familiar subject. The naked girl infused her limbs with life and stood erect, her hands twisting against the coercion of the leather bands. She gulped hot coffee gratefully as it was held to her lips, then bit at a proffered sandwich.

"A few more hours to go, sweetheart."

"I know. I hope you notice I don't plead with you to let me loose ahead of time."

Benny Matlin had noticed, but he knew her submission was born of a prudent avoidance of the whip on her bare skin and that she was becoming inured to the tribulations of being his captive.

"Might say we understand each other," he suggested cheerfully.

"May I sleep with you tonight, Benny?" The pinioned nudity twisted, embarrassed. "I'm going to be so damn lonely by the time I'm through with this punishment." Hastily, she added, "You'd chain my ankle, of course, the way you always do."

"Don't expect ever to be loose any more, do you?"

"No. What's the use? You've had me a long time." Her words were commonplace, spoken with emphasis, but Benny Matlin felt the surge of a familiar heat. He would take her gladly in the night, even though she bestowed her body while retaining the detachment of her mind. They would couple competently, but that would be all. He was content to await his roseate dreams of love. She had changed greatly in the month of his possession. Perhaps one day – there was always the comforting thought that she could never escape.

"It's better now than the way it was with us at first?" She gulped more coffee from the cup she could not touch.

"I don't get myself whipped as much," she admitted. "But that's only because I obey you. I've learned I have to."

"Is it so bad?"

"Not really. I've gotten used to being what you want and being punished when I forget. I've just asked you to take me to bed. Remember how I used to fight over that?"

He remembered. Benny Matlin guessed he could feel pride in the transformation of a screaming she-cat into this passive nudity standing helpless but without complaint in his bonds. "But now you enjoy it," he insisted. "I can tell."

"Why not?" Janice grinned ruefully. "A girl who's kept a prisoner the way I am needs a bit of pleasure. That's what it is, y'know. I'm sorry it's not love."

"Why can't it be?"

How could she tell him? This was dangerous ground on which she could easily get herself a whipping. "I don't know. Don't think I haven't tried," she mourned. "But I think it's the way I'm – well, I'm a prisoner, and I'm always chained or tied some way, and I can't forget I'm a prisoner. I mean, do prisoners fall in love?"

"I don't see why not."

"I remember a little rhyme on a kitchen wall. It said how if you loved something, you set it free. If it loved you, it would come back. If It didn't come back, it had never loved you anyway."

"I don't dare risk setting you free. What you've just said is a nice thought, but there's no way it can be that way with us."

"I don't know how I'd behave if you did. I couldn't promise anything." She grinned in perplexity and tugged fretfully at bound hands. "We're boxed into a situation. All I can do is try and be a model prisoner and not get punished."

"Am I cruel to you?"

"You were at the beginning. I suppose you had to be. You're not cruel now. I don't see this punishment of having to stand with my hands strapped up above my head as cruel. You don't mean it that way. It's the way you feel about something that counts. I did something dumb so now I'm paying for it." Irrelevantly, she asked, "You like to see me naked, don't you?"

"You're the most beautiful thing in the world."

"That's silly, Benny. After you've slept with me tonight, you'll just see me as an ordinary girl who's probably a bit of a nuisance."

"You're worth the trouble." He bit into a sandwich. "A lot of guys would envy me the possession of as much of you as I have."

"The physical me, the bits you can tie and chain?"

"If you like. I'll be damned if I'm going to argue over this love thing. If it happens, it happens. I've wondered why you haven't tried seducing me, professing love?"

"I've thought about it, but I believe you could tell. I'm scared you'd punish me terribly. You would, wouldn't you?"

"Yes."

His affirmative ended the exchange. Benny would not stay with her long. Conversation eased her punishment. She must not be indulged. He picked up the tray.

"Thanks for lunch, Benny. How many more hours have I got?"

"What's it matter, sweetheart? You don't have a watch."

Janice Latimer sighed as she watched her owner depart. She faced an afternoon and possibly the evening tied this way. Her punishment might be only nicely started, or perhaps Benny would relent and let her loose early. In such matters he was unpredictable, and a contrived uncertainty added to her travail. She had come to assess each situation in the

light of her captor's desire. Her own no longer counted. She tugged irritably at her strapped wrists and rubbed one bare leg against another. It was all she could do. Her head rested listlessly against a pinioned arm, her thoughts drifted.

Escape! It was always there as a nagging demand on her composure. In all her months of being bound and chained it still seemed incredible that so much girl could be made helpless with so little metal or nylon. Right now she was denied freedom by a band of leather around each wrist. That was all. It was infuriating. Benny Matlin was merciless in keeping some part of her forever fastened. In changing her bonds he made sure of a restraint on her somewhere at all times. But she understood his need to keep her safe. If she escaped and went to the police, she could destroy him. There was also a strange content for her in this permanent helplessness. It saved the agonies of being forever tensed and alert as she had been in the first weeks of her captivity. It was a defeating realization but it was so.

She had hated Benny Matlin at the beginning, but the hate had eroded under the quiet pressure of his control. He was always firmly insistent, leaving her in no doubt as to what she faced. Apart from loving him, the only option he had offered was obedience. After many whippings she had accepted it. The first of these painful persuasions had been traumatic. She would always remember it.

"I have to give you pain, Janice. I don't think there's any other way."

Janice looked at her bound hands. There was one on each side of the post. Other bands of rope welded her forearm to it also to compel her to stand as though embracing the timber. She had been stripped naked so that all of her from neck to heels was available. She was vividly aware of her back. They whipped felons on their bare backs, didn't they? And hers was bare!

"You're sulky and won't give me any satisfaction, not right now," Benny continued soberly. "But I've thought about this a lot and I think it's best that I whip you. Whipping you is honest. The other things I can think of are mean and morbid and could take a lot of time."

Janice had wondered if she was captive to a psychopath. But the thought crumbled under Benny's quiet reasoning. At that point, she had no comprehension of how wickedly painful the thong of a whip could be across her bare skin. She was still thinking in terms of escape and rebellion. Quiet submission was unthinkable. But she understood his need to subdue her spirit. He wanted a slave and she would not be a slave. She would counter his purpose by gritting her teeth and bearing what she must. Perhaps he would relent, feel sorry for her, glimpse chivalry. She pulled at her tied arms, her fingers splaying out against the wood. She was helpless.

"I'm going to give you five strokes regardless," Benny informed equably. "It's best you know what it feels like, best you know it's always there waiting if you decide to be silly. After the fifth you can stop me anytime. You know how."

She knew! But to kneel before this man and offer humble thanks for being whipped was a thing which then was as remorseful as the whipping itself, a thing beyond comprehension. Janice Latimer trembled but remained silent.

The whip sliced her shoulders with an agony beyond anything she had dreamed. After one breathless moment of comprehension, she had pealed out a scream of pure outrage and torn savagely at her bound arms.

Her captor's voice came through the haze of pain. "There was no way of warning you. You have to find out what it's like for yourself."

She must stop him. He could not possibly know the awfulness of what he was doing to

her. She was enveloped in awesome pain, and while she was searching for the words to end it, the second blow curled across the twin cheeks of her bottom. There was something wickedly personal about the impact on that particular part of her.

Her words were vehement. "Stop it! I can't bear it! It's worse than I ever dreamed!"

"Only three more, sweetheart."

His whip bit at her three more times despite her screams and wildly kicking feet – first her bottom, then her wrists, and squarely across her back.

"That's your quota, Janice," Benny had said gently. "How do you feel about more?"

She had no answer. There was only a confrontation with surrender, and that was unthinkable. Janice tried to explain how unthinkable it was while the whip resumed its cutting of her skin. But her rationale became jumbled with screams and the frantic surging of her young strength against her tied forearms. The measured blows sliced her inexorably.

After the eleventh blow, she capitulated. "All right, all right! I'll do it! Stop! Oh, please stop!"

Janice was shivering with pain and fear, her skin glistening with sweat. Thankfully, she thrust her nudity against the post, uncaring that she was bound to it.

"One more, sweetheart – an even dozen." It was the worst of all. Her back flamed, but she did not scream. Now she faced only shame and defeat. Hopelessly, she thrust her forehead against the post and wept. She had given in. Benny Matlin had mastered her. It was hard to believe.

"Don't feel bad, Janice. You played it the way you saw it."

"How badly am I bleeding?"

"There's not a speck of blood. Forget it." Janice Latimer sobbed against her bound arms while handcuffs clicked around her ankles preparatory to the freeing of her hands. When the ropes were peeled from her arms, she could not flee. She accepted a handkerchief and wiped away tears. She then knelt determinedly in front of the male who still held the whip from which her skin was scored. Her submission was resolute. "Thank you for whipping me, Benny. I – I expect it was the best thing."

He carried her to the kitchen and made coffee. Handcuffed ankles rendered her helpless, so she was allowed her hands. She used them to feel her back and caress her weals as she watched the man at work. Everything was crazy. She felt soiled.

"I'm glad that's over," Benny said thoughtfully. "Now I'm going to take you to bed – after we have coffee. Do you want to be whipped again for that?"

"No, I never want to be whipped again."

"Thought it might ease your conscience. Girls are funny about being fucked. If I whip you into lying on the bed, you won't feel guilty." She considered the impossible again and heard her voice utter outrage. "I can't bear another whipping. If you want to ease my guilt, you can tie me to the bed."

"Sensible thought. Aren't you going to plead?"

"What's the use? You've kidnapped me. There's only two reasons for kidnapping a girl, and I don't have any money."

"You've been fucked before."

"Yes, but there was feeling in it. It was not rape."

"You call it rape – with me?"

She shrugged. "I'll either be whipped or bound. What would you call it?"

"You could do it willingly – find pleasure in it."

"No, but thanks. Can we stop talking about it now?"

They sipped coffee in awkward silence. The act about to be consummated hung over them like a threat, but Janice was glad he had chosen this time. The whipping had disorganized her and left her amenable to something she knew must happen. Best get it over with. She kept her sulky silence while she was carried to the bed and tied thereon, her hands spread out to the posts above and her legs obscenely dragged apart and bound below. She blushed for the first time when a pillow was thrust beneath her hips. She delivered her body to its piercing with as much cooperation as her roped limbs allowed.

Her twin submissions had been a new beginning weighted heavily in Benny's favor. Having touched the nadir of female fortune once, it was next to impossible not to touch them twice – and then again! But she was by no means done with the whip yet. It lay in wait for each imprudent word or sulky toss of the head. Benny wanted a tractable slavegirl and spared no effort in molding her to his heart's desire. In an increasing obedience, Janice walked deeper into slavery.

The girl being punished straightened angrily at this memory of her first submission. She had ceased to be ashamed of them, for she had learned how impossible it was for a naked girl to best the lash. The whip would always win and was best treated with respect. After the first couple of months it was used on her only as a punishment for a thoughtless error. She never invited it. With the passing of time Benny devised other punishments. The one she was enduring now was a favorite with them both. It left no marks. Its severity depended on the length of its duration and the tautness of its tractioning of her nudity. Today its stance was kind, but she suspected it might last a long time. Janice Latimer made her familiar tugs against her strapped wrists and kicked her bare feet to ease fatigue. Hopeless and helpless, she turned back to memories.

Benny Matlin had never been cruel for the sake of cruelty. He had given and she had received pain as the only possible alternative, an essential adjunct to making their association viable. Benny was aware of Janice's mental reservations, the quintessence of the girl his whip could never reach, but he waited patiently believing time was on his side. Sometimes she believed this herself. To love her captor still seemed an outrageous act of feminine weakness. But much of her captivity was a yearning loneliness and Benny was highly skilled in bed. Since he was unquestionably the only man in her life, it was tempting to turn to the assuagement of his arms. They found a rapport in speech.

"It's a long life, sweetheart. Why fight it?"

"Benny, don't you understand how hopeless this all is? If you set me free, I won't stick around to be a puppy dog for you. I promise I won't go to the police, but I can't promise beyond that. If you keep me like this, I'll always be chained or tied or handcuffed." She raised linked hands to emphasize her point. "I'm just a prisoner, that's all. Whenever I displease you, I get punished. But it's not a two-way street – I never get to punish you."

"Yes, you do – you get sulky."

"And then you whip the sulkiness out of me, so where does that leave us?"

The impasse of her captivity defeated them. It could not be circumvented. Benny dared not set her free, but chained she could not love. They lived a compromise.

Mostly they shared his bed, Janice's ankle chained securely to its frame, but sometimes, to reaffirm his dominance, he chained her in a small bare room to sleep alone on a spare thin mattress, his possession of her emphasized by metal bands around her neck, her wrists, her ankles, and often a belt constricting her wait. The chains from these metal circlets to the wall were heavy and unkind, but Janice learned to bear them in an understanding of the simplicity of their significance. Any one of them would have held her safe. All together they represented Benny's hand upon her flesh.

She was nearly always kept naked. Benny Matlin frankly adored her body and gave scant heed to her pleas for clothes, but there were times when he came home with some erotic trifle he had purchased and made her wear it awhile until he tired of its pathetic covering and tore it from her. She understood its tearing as an affirmation of his power over her and was careful not to protest. She had become so used to being bare she seldom thought of clothes.

Janice could laugh at her early attempts to escape. She had fought Benny's constraints with a conviction about freeing herself that left her wrists, her ankles, and her neck constantly chafed. She never managed to reach a locked door or barred window while untrammeled by bonds. Even when Benny bound her with old fashioned ties of ropes or straps, she never got the best of them. He blandly explained that they would give her something to do to pass the time and, with a fierce determination, she did exactly that. But she never got free, not once. When he returned, she was always as helpless as when he had gone away.

Janice Latimer never knew what her captor did for a living. His absences were intermittent and of varying durations. They made a game of pretending her lonely vigils were an opportunity for escape. He would, for instance, tie her hands behind her back, hang the door key on the wall of the bare small room above the reach of her bound hands or lips, and then leave, locking the door from the outside. Janice never knew if they key on the wall fit the lock on the door. She doubted that it did, but she earnestly strove to free her wrists, even knowing that if she did so she might still be confronted with the wrong key and a barred window. A prisoner resorts to anything to pass the time.

Benny played one unsporting trick. Janice knew it as one more self-assertion but felt aggrieved. It was to bind her hands behind her back in such a way as to enable her to free herself in the middle of the afternoon. But the door and the bars still defeated her and there was no key on the wall. Returning, he found her standing in a diffident and uncertain welcome, the discarded rope an exhibit of guilt upon the floor. "Finally made it, eh?"

"It didn't do me any good. I'm still here."

"Want a wrestling match, or will you let me retie you?" She knew it was useless to fight. Without a word, she turned and crossed her wrists behind her back. Gently, he pushed her around and placed her hands palm to palm in front. As he tied them, she guessed his intent. "You're going to whip me, aren't you?"

"Of course."

"But that's not fair. I didn't do anything."

"You got your hands free, sweetheart. That's an offense."

"I think you tied me that way on purpose. You enjoy whipping me."

"Regard it only as a deterrent, sweetheart."

Sulkily, Janice watched the binding of her hands. Unhappily, she allowed herself to be led to where they could be raised above her head to make her stand on her toes in stretched readiness for punishment.

"I think you're being terribly unfair," she said. "How many strokes do I have to bear this time?"

"Ten. Twenty if you scream or continue to look sulky."

Hurriedly, she rearranged her features. "Benny, I'm sorry, I really am. Please forgive me."

"Ten."

"Well, then, please punish me some other way. The whip's so terrible. Please?"

"Ten."

She knew it was useless. Once more she was standing naked and vulnerable for her flesh to be slashed. The pain would be awful, and if she screamed . . . ! But it was so hard to keep silent. She had been whipped often since that first time, and had learned some measure of self-control. The initial shock was still unbearable, but she had learned its limits and might be able to stifle her screams.

"Please gag me, Benny," she pathetically pleaded. "I sure don't want more than ten."

"No gag. Grin and bear it in silence, sweetheart."

Benny used the term of endearment constantly. It never seemed incongruous from his lips, not even now when he was about to whip her. It was a part of the strangeness of this man who held her captive and punished her at will. She called him Benny with equal naturalness, but now she clenched her teeth and closed her eyes.

He tricked her once more, using the long thin cane instead of the whip. It impacted across the curves of her bottom with the wicked sound of pain, bedding itself sharply into tender flesh. The owner of the bottom gasped, and her leg rose and fell, but that was all.

"You've got what it takes, sweetheart. You're quality."

His tribute was lost in the slap of the second blow. Pain seeped out through her being. Vehemently, but in silence, she assured herself, "Eight more to go – only eight." It helped to know the limits of her ordeal. She absorbed number three with the same stoicism, knowing that if she earned twenty, her flesh would be puffed and ridged so it would be days before she wanted to sit. Desperately, she counted the third, leaving seven to go, then six, then five, and so on. Janice Latimer moaned and gasped as her flesh swelled protestingly, and her feet flailed at nothing, but she did not scream.

"You took that ten damn well, Janice."

"You frightened me into silence. I couldn't bare ten more."

"Hurt bad?"

"That cane is awful, Benny. Please don't use it on me any more than you have to."

Having spoken the words, Janice realized she had passed a milestone. Never before had she been able to view her punishment objectively. Always she had screamed and writhed. She felt an absurd pride. It did not fully counter the scald of bruised flesh but it helped.

Janice's behavior took its painful course from the first days of purely animal reaction to her kidnapping on to experimentation and a determination to bear the least hurtful attitudes Benny would tolerate. The two of them formed a strange bond, learning from each other up to the point where they were at now. Her willingness to take fresh looks at her captor grew in proportion to her dwindling hope of escape. Neither had reached finality.

The naked girl, suffering the hours of her punishment, shook her head wearily as though to dissipate a profitless dream. She shifted her weight from one foot to the other, then squirmed to twist her wristlets to alleviate their chafe. She resolved to watch the fault for which she was being punished. It must not happen again. Obediently, she would eliminate every fault by which she might earn punishment. It might be an impossible ideal, but she would strive for Benny Matlin's complete approval. Perhaps he would find it a substitute for love.

Upstairs, Benny had disposed of the tray and completed a shopping list. The tied girl downstairs had hours to serve yet. There was plenty of time. She was a good kid and coming along nicely. He had decided to buy her a gift, a necklace he had seen. It would not interfere with her being collared, and there was not much else a girl prisoner could use. He looked forward to the presentation. Girls loved gifts, and he had been remiss in not giving her anything. He put the list in his wallet and left the house. He did not know it was for the last time.

He was halfway to the J. C. Penney store when the huge truck flattened his car, killing him instantly.

Back in his house his captive maiden stood wearily with her hands strapped out beyond her head.

She would wait a long time for Benny's return.

2

Perfumed Prison

Natalie Stephenson took pride in her relationship with her girls. She strove for a rapport with each and selected only the most promising lips and tongues. As office manageress she possessed considerable latitude. Because she was still only thirty-two and immensely competent, her predilection for female flesh was viewed indulgently. She never used coercion. She was a beautiful woman.

Originally, Janice Latimer had been viewed and found wanting, but since the notoriety of her kidnapping and restoration into the fold, she had warranted a second glance. Whatever it was her captor had done to her had certainly changed her personality. The girl had acquired quality.

"You've been back three weeks, dear––how does it feel?"

Janice knew all about Miss Stephenson but simply did not care. They liked each other, that was enough.

"I'm still mixed up," she admitted. "Coming back into life hasn't been as easy as I thought

it would be."

"You didn't fall in love with that – that . . . whatever he was, did you?"

"No, not that, but I was not allowed to do anything for so long I'm finding it difficult. Crazy, but I'll get over it."

"I haven't bothered you with questions, dear, but I read the papers. You almost made the front page."

"There isn't much to tell about being kept a prisoner, Miss Stephenson. I'd just as soon not talk about it. But if there's something you're curious about –"

"Well, actually, yes, there is. Look, it's past five. Why don't we go to a bar? It's been a rough day. Let's unwind."

It was easy to say yes. Benny Matlin had turned her off men for the time being, and most of the girls had boyfriends. Freedom had brought its own loneliness. In the bar, her reticence dissolved under the contents of her glass and the intent smile of her companion.

"What do you want to know?" she asked with unexpected candor. "I'm an authority on being kidnapped – all those months!"

"Eight of them, wasn't it? That's a long time. Do you mourn his passing?"

"Well, in a way. We'd reached a strange sort of understanding. He left a gap."

"Have intercourse with him?"

"Oh, yes, that was very much a part of his deal. He used to tie me spread out on the bed at the start. Then I got promoted to one chained ankle."

"Enjoy it?"

"Eventually, yes."

"How long did the police take to find you?"

Janice shuddered. "That was the worst part. I thought I was going to stand there and die." She grimaced at the memory. "There was no way I could get loose. Benny had me fixed but good. And I'll swear I knew the instant the truck hit him. I wasn't due to be freed for a long time, but I knew. The house was terribly silent, and I got more and more frightened."

"Interesting material for a book. How'd you handle it?"

"I panicked. I screamed and screamed, and tore at my wrists until I was exhausted. I knew I would die. I was sure I would."

"But you couldn't get loose?"

"No, I couldn't. If you'd ever been tied like that, you'd know what I mean."

"The idiot carried no identification. The police had a hell of a time finding the right house. You turned out to be a bonus." Natalie chuckled. "It's not every day they get a naked girl."

"It was pitch black when they broke in. I'd been sobbing hopelessly for hours, and I was

so damn glad to get rescued that I forgot about my pubic hair and breasts. I remember weeping on the lieutenant's shoulder when he cut my ropes. He was nice. The others seemed to think the whole thing was probably my fault."

"There are groups devoted to such games, you know."

"Oh, sure, but neither Benny nor I –"

"If the outer limits of the thing could be controlled, I'd like to experiment in such a situation. But any control would affect its validity. Didn't you find a terrific piquancy in such helplessness, knowing someone else owned you?"

"Well, yes, towards the end. Not at first, though. At the start I was simply frightened. I was sure Benny had to be looney. I envisioned him doing terrible things to me." Janice grinned ruefully. "But I suppose most girls would feel the things he did to me were pretty terrible anyway. Benny broke me in gradually. After awhile I was being cleverly managed."

"I never saw you as a pushover; I don't know. Are you a pushover, Janice?"

"Not really. But if someone has you helpless and whips you enough on your bare skin, it's an easy way out. I don't think any ordinary girl can hold out against being whipped beyond a certain point." Janice glinted an amused glance across the table. "Are you just curious, Miss Stephenson, or are you working up to something?"

"Call me Natalie. Miss Stephenson lives at the office. And, yes, I am working up to something. I want you."

There was no shock. There might have been before Benny Matlin but not now. Without concern, Janice said, "I am not a lesbian, Natalie."

"All females are lesbians."

"You think just because I was kidnapped –"

"I know so. Janice, I pick up vibes. Yours are coming through as a cry for help."

Janice Latimer considered this. She was not a child in the presence of an elder. There were not that many years between herself and the woman who was regarding her with such intent amusement. She was being outrageously propositioned, but felt no loss of face. Except for corporate hierarchy, they were equals. Overriding all else was a terrible loneliness which Natalie Stephenson filled most comfortably. In any case, what was suggested was no big deal these days.

Janice's pulse accelerated as she responded. "Shall we have another drink?"

"A toast to us?"

"Why not?"

They drank with zest.

"I inherited money," Natalie explained as they entered her apartment. "Nice, eh?"

"It's more than nice; it's splendid!"

"We'll cancel your place. You can move in here with me."

"But, Natalie, we don't – we haven't found out yet."

"I have. Undress me."

It was most definitely a command, but the drinks had clothed them both in a roseate glow in which the impossible was easily achieved. Janice Latimer's fingers sought the fastenings of the expensive stuff by which the office manageress was garbed. As nudity approached, Miss Stephenson disappeared and her place was taken by a shiny-eyed girl whose breasts were rising and falling to match those of the young woman who had made her naked.

Janice stood back in awe and remarked, "But you're so beautiful! I never dreamed!"

"We're both beautiful. Turn around."

Again, there was the ring of command. Janice turned around. This was starting to be fun. She stood erect in quivering obedience as she was stripped, then gasped in a flame of sensation as feminine fingers circled and found her nipples.

"You like that." It was a statement.

"Ooohhh! Oh, Natalie!"

"Better than a man?"

"Yes – oh, yes!"

"Face me and kneel."

It was suddenly there before her eyes: the heavy bush of shining curled fronds, below and within.

"Kiss me there."

In the scent of flowers, Janice Latimer obeyed. It was surprisingly easy, and the kiss was not enough. Her lips and tongue thrust into a new and perfumed world.

Natalie's command was abrupt. "Stand up. That will do for now. Never be greedy at the start."

Janice stood. It was a gorgeous game in which she did not have to think. Fingertips found her again to flame heat between her legs.

"In the lounge, Janice, this way. There's the bar. Go and fix us both a drink."

She went to the bar in a mist of happiness. She had kissed Natalie's sex, but her own had remained untouched. Subtly, that established their relationship. If Benny Matlin had been her master, then here most certainly was her mistress.

"You have a lovely naturalness in nakedness, dear," Natalie told her.

"I was always kept naked while I was – gone. I've been finding clothes difficult. I feel so silly in them."

"Silly about clothes?"

"Silly about me. I'm all out of kilter."

"Not any more."

Janice did not debate the point. There was lots of time, and it didn't seem to matter all that much. Carefully, she carried the drinks to where Natalie sat carelessly in an armchair.

"I want you to kneel with them. Careful now! Then offer me mine."

It figured. It also came naturally. Janice was unblushingly conscious of an assessing scrutiny as she obeyed. She was glad Benny had cured her of blushing. Blushing would have lowered her status. She felt poised and certain.

"You have a lovely body, darling. Are those what's left of your whip marks?"

"Yes. I got them less than a month ago."

"No, no, darling, don't get up. I'll kiss them later. Will they fade away or have you got them for life?"

"They'll fade, but what's left are the hard ones. They'll take time."

"Ironic, eh? That man's only epitaph, the marks he made on a girl's skin. I'm surprised he didn't brand you."

"I don't suppose he thought of it, but he didn't need to. He had me safe enough. I'd never have escaped."

They sipped their drinks, eyeing each other in a growing complicity. "That thought remains with you, Janice? The implacability of the ways in which he bound you? Your absolute helplessness?"

The girl on the rug chuckled. "Are you sure it's you who's the most intrigued, Natalie?"

"I'll confess if you will."

"Oh, all right. There is something to it, I'll admit it. The whole thing has to be sexual, and it's all so damned erotic. I suppose I'm glad I had the experience, but I wouldn't pay a dime for another like it."

"Are you sure of that, Janice?"

She let the question pass. Natalie was welcome to make what she could of Benny Matlin's adventure, but she herself was content in the luxury of where she sat. It was a warm, delightful female world she had never, before known. Feminine fingers tickled the nape of her neck with a sensuous message.

"Refills, darling. We're not quite tipsy yet. Not that we need to be, but it's nice. Stand close so I can see what that Matlin man did to you."

Natalie's lips were maddeningly potent on what was left of Janice's weals. They followed the dark lines lovingly, leaving them wet.

"I hope they never go away, darling. They're too beautiful. I'll watch them as you walk to the bar."

It was reassuring to be wanted, to share the secrets of her body. Janice deliberately swung her hips, but refused to think of what was still to come. The alcohol and Natalie would take care of everything. Unconsciously, she had made a decision. This time when she knelt it was closer to the chair, and the hand was waiting – the magic hand! She surrendered to it. If she had been a cat, she would have purred. They sipped contentedly

until the next command.

"Bed, darling."

"But isn't it early?"

"Silly girl. It's got nothing to do with time."

Natalie was right. Time passed them by. In a pleasant haze of exactly the right number of drinks, Janice entered the world of women and found it good. She was enchanted by the touch of female hands. Natalie's fingertips evoked responses within her she had not known existed. She tried to relate them to the male hands of Benny Matlin, but she couldn't. Benny's use of her body faded into a purely utilitarian function compared to the glory unleashed by contact with this female vibrancy. The two girls welded together in passion and became one.

Briefly, they would pause to add fuel to their fires. Sipping drinks, they watched each other in a shared knowledge of possession, their pungencies blending to emanate a heady brew of female scent.

"Happy?"

"Oh, Natalie – oh, yes!"

"So am I. You're a sweetheart. You're different."

They were wise enough not to analyze. When they put down their empty glasses, they returned with a purpose to a renewed exploration of each other's nudity.

Fleetingly, Janice remembered Shakespeare: "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways."

Eventually, they lay, entwined but replete, until the next command.

"Use the bathroom, dear."

Without thought of being obedient, Janice obeyed. The suggestion was practical. But when she returned, she was confronted by a thing to bring her to a sudden halt and widen her eyes.

"I want you to wear this, Janice."

She looked askance at the object in Natalie's hand. It was a shining metal cuff, from which a sturdy chain trailed to the bed-frame below. It must have been there all the time, out of sight.

"But it's a handcuff." Janice stated the obvious in dismay.

"Symbolic, Janice. It accentuates our roles."

"But that's what Benny –"

"Forget Benny." The older girl twinkled in amusement.

"You have to be aware that I've had other girls. I always make them wear this. It maintains our images."

"Mistress and slave?"

"You and I haven't gotten that far yet. Whether we do or not doesn't matter. Hold out your right hand."

Janice obeyed. She watched in a detached manner as the metal ring clicked tightly around her extended wrist. Satiated with sex, as she was, fresh heat still flared at this locking of her hand. She had no thought of protest, only a question: "Why, Natalie? I'm not going to run away."

"Never mind why. Call it a test of sincerity. Look, here's the key. I'll tuck it under the pillow. You're free to use it or not, as you please."

It seemed entirely rational. Janice lifted her hand and, without much caring, examined the shackle so reminiscent of Benny Matlin's. Its length of chain was adequate for fun in bed, but allowed her to reach nothing else. Suddenly, with a joyous peal of laughter, she flung herself afresh on the naked beauty on the bed. Passion entwined them.

Janice Latimer awoke in the night. Reaching for the key beneath her pillow, she flung it far beyond the limit of her chain.

Waking in the morning, she found herself alone. She guessed instantly it was late and Natalie had gone to the office, leaving her to sleep. She was still naked, still atop the covers. Bemused by the depth of her slumber, she made for the bathroom. The tug and clink of the tether on her wrist brought her up short in dismay. As far as she was concerned, the bathroom was in a distant land. Urgently, she searched for the key she had so thoughtlessly tossed away. It was nowhere in sight. She tugged irritably at her chain. It did not move. It was then that she saw the note.

It read: "The key is back under your pillow. I'll cover for you at the office. Have a leisurely breakfast, then phone me. I think you're gorgeous."

It was reassuring. Natalie was wonderful. Janice Latimer felt herself enveloped in a protective cocoon of love. She lifted her pillow. The key winked at her deliciously. Slowly, the naked girl freed her wrist, wondering how much alcohol had influenced her the night before and how much of her sweet intoxication was due to the magic of Natalie Stephenson. She shrugged. It did not matter. What mattered was the content, the rich apartment, and the perfumed suds waiting for her in the bath.

Janice approached the phone in trepidation, her heart thudding. Natalie must have had a reason for allowing her to sleep in. Now she would find out. The voice of Miss Natalie Stephenson in the office came to her over the line – cool, amused, authoritative.

"Good morning, darling."

"Oh, Natalie!"

"Happy?"

"Terribly."

"I'm going to be a real bitch, dear, and thrust a decision on you. It's one I should have made myself, but I'm indulging my conscience and giving you one last chance."

"Oh, Natalie, what are you saying?"

"I want you."

"Well, you've got me. Or I've got you. I'm not sure which."

"Yes, you are." Natalie's voice was crisp. "You know the roles we fall into naturally."

"Okay," Janice chuckled. "I make you a present of me."

"I accept. But I want you so you can never get away, so nothing or no one can change your mind."

"I won't change my mind, Natalie, not the way I feel, and not after last night. I never dreamed –"

"I want you to do one of two things, sweetheart. You can come down to the office right now and pick up your life where you left off. If you do that, last night will never have happened. The other choice is in the bottom right hand drawer of the dresser. Go get it."

Feeling like Pandora opening her box, Janice pulled open the drawer. She had already guessed its contents. Back at the phone, her tone was breathless. "They're shackles, Natalie, beautiful silvery shackles, heavy and wicked. I think they would fit a girl's ankles."

"Right. They'll fit your ankles. Now hear this: In five minutes you must phone me again. You'll have made your decision. If you lock those shackles on your feet, you'll have become my slave. There'll be no turning back."

"Delicious! You're making me all goosey."

"Be serious, nymphet. I want you to understand there's a streak of cruelty in me. Sometimes I'll hurt you wickedly and without good reason. I'll be a capricious mistress."

"What does it matter? I adore you."

"Think about it." The line went dead.

Janice Latimer did not think. She was certain a lot of thinking would spoil everything. She knew herself in the possession of a force, a current on which she wanted to drift and dream. If here and there she screamed, so what? Wrapped in a satisfying sense of destiny, she picked up the phone.

"I don't need time," she told Natalie. "Listen."

Janice Latimer raised her feet to the chair seat. She placed the receiver close. With immense deliberation she fitted a metal band around one ankle and snapped it shut with as much sound as she could contrive. The snap was final and satisfying. She repeated the act on her other foot.

"Did you hear that, Natalie?"

"I heard. I love you."

"I love you too, Natalie."

"I have the key. Don't bother to search."

"As if I would!"

"Oh. you'll have regrets, sweetheart. What you've just done is something more tremendous than you realize. But don't panic, I'll be home shortly after five. In the meantime, you can learn to walk again." Once more the line went dead, its dial tone mocking Natalie Stephenson's slave.

Janice shivered but not with cold. Despite euphoria, she could not entirely close her mind to what she had done. It could be the most far reaching act of her life. Most certainly she could not leave the apartment. Blissfully, she returned her feet to the floor and examined the manner in which they were now linked.

Heavy bands locked on her flesh, joined by a sparse tether of equally solid links. The metal and craftsmanship of the shining things spelled money. They also spelled captivity. It would be useless to prod at them with hairpins. She now belonged to the woman who had purchased them. Janice wondered if they had been purchased especially for her or for some other girl who might have sat where she sat now. She got to her feet and essayed her first tentative steps as a slave-girl. She blushed hotly at the thought of her new status. It was absurd, but not as absurd as it would have seemed yesterday.

It was not easy. Each step was snubbed short. She was hobbled. Janice experimented with techniques while the heat rose in her loins. She had snapped the shackles on herself, but it was Natalie who held the key. The older woman was a presence in the room. As a final test, Janice placed a glass of water on a tray and practiced serving drinks, striving for grace of motion and grace of mein. Kneeling with the tray was the most difficult, her feet demanding a long chain, but she mastered her need and only dropped two glasses of water on the rug. Her frantic clinking to find a rag with which to mop up the spills was something she could laugh at later.

Sometimes she tripped and fell. It was good that she did. It told her what she had become.

The day brought none of the promised regrets. She was too busy with her hobbled feet and her explorations of the luxury in which she had come to live. She wondered if unwittingly she had become the new custodian of its immaculate condition. It seemed a logical premise. She saw it all except for one room to which the door was locked. She called it "Bluebeard's Chamber" and went on her way, certain that she would enter it in Natalie's own good time. Returning to their room, she made their bed.

Janice realized herself still naked. She could have covered herself but refrained. She felt sure Natalie would want her as she was. There was no one else to see. It was all beautiful and exciting and wonderful. She blushed with happiness. Her heat refused to subside. The captive girl slapped her pussy and told it to behave, but she did not play with herself. It would have been an infidelity.

In the afternoon, she forced herself to think. It was silly to behave like a moonstruck teenager in love. Her emotional involvement with Natalie ran deep. It went beyond anything she had known or guessed. Janice forced herself to look down at her chained feet and ask if she had been wise in yielding her recently acquired freedom. But it was in fun, wasn't it? Natalie would unlock the chains and they would romp in bed again. Tomorrow she would return to the office. The chains of her ankles were too new for her to believe anything else. But she was surprised how little it mattered. Nothing mattered except being where she was now. When she heard Natalie's key in the door lock, she was as fluttery as a bride.

Breathless after their embrace, Natalie laughed. "Gosh, you're lovely. Don't ever wear clothes, not even when I'm not here." Janice clinked away, then posed, looking down pridefully at her chained feet. "Do you like them on me, Natalie?"

"Pet, they're gorgeous. Walk around."

The chained slavegirl demonstrated her prowess, preening herself in her mistress's approval. "May I serve you a drink?" she pleaded. "I've been practicing."

She managed it proudly without a spill. Nestling against nylon-clad legs, she sipped her drink and gazed up adoringly.

"Who told you to have a drink, poppet?"

"Oops, sorry! Shouldn't I –"

"I'll let it pass. But you'll have to get accustomed to asking my permission about things. Tell me about your regrets."

"I don't have any."

"Don't tell me you love your chains?"

"Of course I love them. They're so beautiful. What girl wouldn't? May I have another drink?"

"No, you may not! You gulped that one. Have you had some already?"

"No! Honest, I haven't. I saved these drinks and me for you."

" Mmmm – okay."

"You mean I can?"

"No, I don't mean you can. I was about to ask if you're hungry."

"Not really. I had an outrageous breakfast."

"Well, I am. We'll run down to Bruno's for dinner. I don't suppose either of us feels like fixing stuff."

"Bruno's! But I can't possibly –"

"Oh, you mean your chained feet?" Natalie laughed at a mental vision. "You forget I have the key."

"But then I'd be free."

"Don't look so heartbroken. If I take something off you, I can also put something on."

Janice pouted. "You can't possibly take me around in public chained – or even tied."

"Not visibly. But there's a lot of girl under the clothes you'll have to wear."

"You mean some sort of control?" She flushed excitedly. "Something locked on my body?"

"Or in it. Think of the possibilities, sweetheart. A cruel band around your tummy, a chastity belt – very tight – or how about a nice impalement with something strapped on to keep it inside?"

"I suppose you know you're making me shockingly horny?"

"If they sound too kind, how about clips on your nipples?"

"Ohhh! Oh, Natalie!"

"Don't worry. I'll make sure you know you're owned."

"Oh, Natalie!"

"You said that before, pet. Never be a bore."

Natalie was wonderful.

3

Girl Love

Bruno's was discreet. They saw only what Natalie wanted them to see. They seemingly failed to observe the handcuffs on Janice's wrists. In any case, they were in a booth, well shielded from view. After the first cocktail Janice ceased to care. She giggled.

"With that cloak you could take me anywhere," she mused happily. "If I put on nylons and shoes, you could take me nude."

"I recognize that as an invitation. All in good time."

"I feel like a brat. I'm going to flaunt my chains at the waiter. If anyone gets arrested, it'll be you."

"Phillipe couldn't care less. I've brought a lot of handcuffed girls in here. They know me."

Janice pouted. "I sort of hoped I was the first."

"You're the first I've felt this way about, and don't tell that to all the girls either."

"Am I a pet, or a slave, or simply a girl you're taking out to dinner?"

"You're all three. But I can give you a bit of emphasis when we get home. Go ahead, rattle your pretty bracelets and see if I care."

The repartee was the appetizer. Their real speech was with their eyes. Each pair sparkled, assessed, and smiled, finding immense satisfaction in each other. When the waiter returned, Janice held up her cuffed hands, fingers splayed. "Don't you think she's cruel to me?" she asked.

"I'm sure you enjoy it, miss."

"That put you in your place, pet," Natalie commented. "Two drinks and you feel foxy. From now on you're rationed."

"Don't be an idiot," Janice admonished herself silently. "You're twenty-five years old and ought to know better." She gazed adoringly across the table, not wanting to be seen as a silly child, yet still in the pixieish mood engendered by last night's love-making. The handcuffs on her wrists did nothing to dampen her joie de vivre. Instead, they added fuel to the fire between her thighs and a compulsive urge for mischief. But, contritely, she said, "I'm sorry. I'm not always like this. What we've done together has given me some sort of freedom and I'm reveling in it. I needed you."

Looking at the bright-eyed girl, Natalie Stephenson wondered how much of what they had discovered was owed to the dead man who had held Janice Latimer captive. He had

sensed something in this girl she herself had not previously known. Or had he created it? It did not matter. Now she was reaping his harvest. She sighed contentedly. Janice needed to be controlled.

"If I hadn't let you have those drinks, you'd be ashamed of those handcuffs instead of flaunting them," Natalie mused aloud. "That was the idea. Please try and be properly ashamed."

"But if I put them under the table out of sight, I'll play with myself."

"Janice!"

"Oops! Sorry again." The delinquent hastily put her hands out of sight and explained, "It's really your fault, Natalie. Everything you say or do makes me horny."

"Would the promise of a thrashing when we get home help, dear?"

Their eyes locked, sending messages. Janice cocked a naughty eyebrow. "It might, when we get home. Right now it's just made me wet. I'm not doing very well, am I?"

"Yes, you are doing very well. You've got something to look forward to when we get back to the apartment. But I want to talk to you. Can you be serious?"

"Of course. Look, I'll put my handcuffs just where you and the waiter can see them. But when I use a knife and fork–"

"Never mind the handcuffs. The important thing is do you truly want to be a slave?"

"Yes, as long as I belong to you."

"It's nothing to be that light-hearted about. You're disposing of your life."

"I wasn't enjoying it much until you came along. I'm all yours. Natalie, I make you a gift of myself – a hundred and nineteen pounds of girl."

"And I'll hurt every pound of you – when it pleases me."

"Oh, sure!"

"You're still being flippant."

"You really must thrash me. I'll keep thinking about it. I'm sure it will help."

The mistress smiled. "Or give you an orgasm. I seem to have unleashed a tiger." Natalie paused to order. She did it for them both without reference to her companion. Then she continued, "There are two ways we can do this, pet. I can keep you wholly a prisoner, or you can go to work at the office with me every day."

"But if I go to the office, how –"

"Easy. After five, when we get home, we revert to normal.

There can be a pretty little ritual. You will immediately strip naked, and go and stand facing the corner until I'm ready to deal with you."

"That one grabs me. Have you any idea its effect?"

"Good. Go ahead and have your orgasm, darling. I'm sure there will be plenty left. So

you opt for the office?"

"Gee, Natalie, I'm so lucky to have you."

"It's me who has you, dear."

"Oh, all right, but it's nice. I'm loving it. I love these handcuffs."

"You won't love being whipped."

"Maybe not. Let's not talk about it."

"If it sobers you up, we'll talk about it." Contentedly, Natalie Stephenson surveyed her eager prize. "I want you to consider being hurt. I'm a woman, and I can hurt you better than a man."

"Better?"

"That's from my point of view, not yours. I'll often punish you out of nothing but caprice."

"I'm so lucky."

"Half of that was sarcasm. I'm not sure I like it. But I'm also not quite sure how humble I'll eventually make you. I find the picture of the composed young businesswoman facing into the corner every evening delectable."

"So do I. Can we go home now?"

"You're teasing. I'm going to keep a tally of these cute remarks and make you pay for them."

"A stroke for a joke, darling?"

"And one for fun since we're being poetic. You'll be sorry. But you already know that. You're piling up demerits to see what I'll do about them."

Janice Latimer knew herself properly assessed. She was being silly on purpose in a bubbling over of happiness. Looking back, she beheld a desert of loneliness. Benny Matlin and what had gone before had been loneliness. But now! What mattered a little pain? It was a price she would pay gladly. In fact, she wanted the penalties promised for their return to the apartment. Natalie's voicing them had been a terrific turn-on, a carnal arousal in which she could view nothing rationally. All she wanted was the woman across the table and, since Natalie now possessed her, there was nothing to worry about. She asked herself if this emotion they shared was truly love, but could think of no other word for it. It was a miracle to be desired.

"Will you always order for me?" Janice asked irrelevantly.

"Yes. I'll orders things you dislike sometimes when you need punishing, and you'll eat it all."

"Mmmmm . . . ."

"You won't make a sound like that if it's porridge."

"For freedom from porridge, I'll be very well behaved." Janice twinkled. "What would happen if right now I simply walked out of here?"

"You'd be embarrassed about your handcuffs. But you'd overcome that. After you'd gotten rid of them you'd be alone. You'd have to find another job."

"You would fire me?"

"Of course. The situation would be impossible otherwise."

"Mmmmm . . ." Janice repeated her ecstatic sound. "You're so right for me, Natalie. You keep me in a dither of abnegation."

"You must be sobering up to use a word like that."

"Well, yes. Fact is I can hardly wait for you to get me back to the apartment. Natalie, may I call it our apartment?"

"No, it's mine. I keep you in it."

"Mmmm . . . oh, wow!"

"Good. We'll try the office, dear. If I find it's not working out, I'll terminate your employment and keep you a proper prisoner."

"Mmmm . . . but what about friends and relatives?"

"Some of my friends will know, Janice. Some of the girls at the office will guess. I have a friend or two who I'll allow to whip you. As for the rest, we'll adjust ourselves."

"But I don't want to be whipped by anyone except you."

"I know. It will be an extra punishment, or simply because it pleasures me. I always think the voyeur sees so much more than whoever has the whip."

Janice Latimer supposed they'd settled something. She had the best of two worlds: profit by day and super eroticism every night.

"What about weekends?" Janice enquired.

"That will depend on your behavior. If I'm displeased with you, you might spend the whole time in prison."

"Prison!"

"Remember the room with the locked door, dear?"

"You mean –"

"Yes. Among other things, there's a lovely cage in there. It will always be waiting for you. It cost me a lot of money so I intend to use it."

"Natalie, you'd lock me in a cage?"

"Of course. How does that grab you?"

"It grabs. Oh, darling, I – I'm –"

Natalie watched her slavegirl's orgasm with an indulgent eye. Janice strove for control but gasped, jerked, and spasmed enough to be entertaining. When their waiter served them,

she was still in the throes of ecstasy. Phillipe pretended not to notice. Natalie began eating.

Returning to the apartment, Janice lost no time. She held out her cuffed hands and begged, "Please?"

Perhaps guessing, Natalie humored her and used the key. Instantly, the younger girl threw aside her clothes, tearing them from her body in savage jerks and twists until, when she was nude, she was able to dart to the nearest corner and insert her nakedness therein, facing the wall. In docile submission, she placed her hands behind her back as though bound there. She was trembling in eagerness, finding in this simple return to childhood punishment an infinite fulfillment. Happily, but tense, she waited.

"Good slaves put their clothes away properly before doing penance, Janice." The mistress's voice was firm.

Chagrined, Janice turned from the refuge. Pouting, she retrieved her clothes and shoes, folded them neatly, then took them to the bedroom drawer. When she returned, Natalie had gone. Uncertainly, the delinquent slave resumed her pretty pose within the niche. Guiltily, she knew Natalie would have noted her pout. She shivered.

Natalie was silent. A door opened and closed. That was all. The nude girl could guess which door it was. She wished she had not been so precipitate in making real this fantasy of standing in the corner like a small child of another age. It was a petty conceit, but it carried the penalty of a terrible awareness. She herself was plain to see, but without peeking back over a bare shoulder she could not be certain if she was still alone. She knew that if she turned and found herself face to face with a watching mistress, she would be in trouble. But as minutes ticked past, the urge to break her self-imposed pose became a nagging need. Immobility was cruel, and her view more limited than any she had ever known. It was without inspiration. She suddenly realized she had sentenced herself to a real punishment. Hard on the heels of that came the memory of the thrashing Natalie had promised. Suddenly it was very close and very real. Dinner had sobered her. She wished she had been more circumspect. She wondered how heavy Natalie's hand might be upon the whip. Striving for favor, she once again put her hands behind her back and crossed her wrists.

"I like that, sweetheart. No! Don't turn around."

It took an effort of will but Janice kept still. Talking into the wall she accused, "You've been watching me all the time."

"You'll never know, dear. But I'm pleased with you. You look sweet like that."

"Thank you. May I turn around now?"

"No."

The silence was suspect. Vivid images made it hard to remain facing the wall. Janice half expected the blow of a whip or the binding of her hands. She stood in a vacuum, waiting. No doubt Natalie was vastly amused. The tenant of the corner searched for words, but could find none she thought appropriate.

"Stand still, dear. You're getting the handcuffs back."

Janice stood. She was suddenly aware of having been totally free and of having failed to use that freedom. It was her first glimpse of a captivity beyond bonds. She trembled at the clasp of cold metal around her wrists, but she knew the emotion as an erotic response to the hands of her mistress. She winced charmingly at the authoritative clicks as the cuffs bedded themselves snugly. Only part of it was feigned.

"Remain standing. Don't speak. Don't look back. You can stand there for awhile longer and wonder if I'm watching."

It was easier now that she was handcuffed and had made contact. Janice was not sure why but it was so. She stood in docile submission in the corner she had chosen. Her only motions were the twisting of her hands within their steel and the shifting of her weight from foot to foot. As far as her head was concerned, she could look up or look down. She dared not look sideways for fear of being accused of peeking. It occurred to her that Natalie had not threatened punishment for turning around, but she was sure it would be dire. She was very sober.

In about ten minutes Natalie's voice said, "You can turn around now. I'm ready."

Remembering silence, Janice followed Natalie to the Room. She would always think of it as that. It was no longer "Bluebeard's Chamber." She was glad for the helplessness of the handcuffs. They imposed docility and removed decision. Within the now open door her thrill was partly fear and partly excitation. Everything in the huge place was designed to hurt a girl – to hurt her! Some she recognized; others were mysterious threats. In the far corner stood the iron barred cage.

"No, you're not going in there, pet. Step over here."

She was now definitely frightened. It was all sudden and right here and now. Her quick scan had not failed to note the whips hanging on the wall. But she was required only to stand while straps were buckled around each of her ankles.

"Well apart now, Janice."

Comprehension came slowly. Janice's first awareness was of her naughtily exposed pussy. Her pubic hair blazoned like a beacon in the room. Restlessly, she fingered the metal on her wrists.

"I told you I'm a woman, dear. I punish a girl differently than a man. A man would whip your back, but I'm going to give you a feminine punishment. Oh, and you can speak now."

"You aren't going to whip my back?"

"No."

"My bottom?"

"No."

It narrowed the field. Janice found herself disinclined to ask about other places whereupon she might be whipped. Instead, she said, "Maybe you should tell me what I'm being punished for."

"You know already – for behaving tipsily at dinner and then pouting when we came home."

"Are those two things very bad?"

"How do they seem to you, Janice?"

"Sort of small, a bit childish. I'm sorry."

"But you do agree that you should be punished?"

"Oh, yes, of course. Natalie, I'll always try and be a good sport about these things, even if I don't behave very well while they're happening."

"You expect to make a fuss, pet?"

"I always did with Benny when he whipped me."

"That doesn't mean you have to do the same with me."

"I suppose it depends on how much it hurts. I don't suppose you've ever been whipped, Natalie. I've been whipped a lot, and it's terrible. A girl just can't keep still. After the first one or two, we start to jerk around and make sounds. I'm sorry."

"Don't be. I'll enjoy watching you." Natalie went to the wall and selected a whip – short, thin, and wicked. "This one will do."

"Are you really going to whip me, Natalie?"

"What do you think?"

"Well, yes, I suppose you are. I will admit I wondered if you were just frightening me."

"Feel repentant? Any last requests?"

"Yes, I guess I feel repentant. I wish I wasn't in this fix. Natalie, is this the way you want me tied for it?"

"It's more perfect than you think, dear." The girl to be whipped twisted uneasily, with her legs so far apart she felt insecure, and she had no hands. But suddenly she was enveloped in female. Natalie was holding her close and thrusting hard. They kissed vehemently, and soon a hand went down and cupped the hair at the juncture of the tractioned thighs. Janice gasped a huge indrawn breath.

"Like that?"

"Yes, oh yes! It feels so good."

"I'm not going to give you an orgasm. I'm simply loving you. Loving you and whipping you are separate things we can do at the same time. They don't conflict."

Janice did not answer. She was very happy. Kissing was about all she could do, but she did it with fervor. Before it was abruptly removed, the hand on her crotch had taken her halfway on a journey.

"Feel up to it now, sweetheart?"

"Yes, I expect I am."

"The insides of your thighs and up between your legs."

"Oh, Natalie!"

"You're being punished by a woman – remember?"

She would always remember. It was a purely female agony. It was a girl thing – terribly intimate, shocking, exquisitely painful. The thin thong cut knowingly at her secret places. Against it, Janice Latimer had no defense. She stood with widespread legs and garnered pain. When the leather bit at her lips, she screamed. It was the sixth cut. Her peal of agony

was also a cry of outrage at the violation of her sex. Her writhings mattered not at all. The tenth was a fearsome cut, but Natalie ended the torture after delivering it.

"Ten, darling. Probably enough for your small sins."

"Thank you. Oh, thank you!" Janice did not know if she was offering thanks for her whipping or for its cessation. She was enveloped in a great thankfulness and once more in the soft comfort of female arms. She orgasmed instantly when a searching hand cupped her bruised and swollen lips. Jerking and shuddering, she cried out in an ecstasy of turgid anguish.

"You were adorable, poppet, simply marvelous."

"Oh, thank you. I'm so pleased. May I be untied now?"

"No, I'm enjoying you."

"Oh, all right. But whatever I'm doing is because I have to, not to put on a show. You hurt me so much."

"Worse than you expected?"

"Oh, yes. It was utterly different from Benny."

"I'm made quite a lot different from Benny Matlin, you know." Natalie paused for effect. "Now, if I told you I was going to give you ten more in the same place, what would you do?"

Janice was by no means sure she might not get them. Her answer was swift. "I'd beg you not to. I'd make all sorts of promises. But if you whipped me anyway, I'd just stand here. The way you've got me fixed I'd have to. Natalie darling, I simply can't move except to writhe and twist. I can't help out the bits of me you're whipping in the least."

The mistress laughed joyously. She freed her slave and took her to their bed. Clipping the wristlet and chain on a docile wrist, she admonished, "I hold the key to this, sweetheart. It's not under your pillow tonight. I hold the key to all of you."

Their second night was better than the first. They ascribed Janice's insatiable need to her whipped pussy. She was tender and immensely responsive. The mistress fed eagerly. They forgot everything except each other.

In the morning they went to the office together.

It was hard to concentrate at the office. For Janice, the effort was too great. She could not see her typescript for the vision of Natalie's moist thighs and pubic patch. They were everywhere. There was also the arousal of her own libido by her whipped places. They would not leave her alone. They were a constant presence, sharing her desk and demanding surcease. Janice kept her hand from them, but that was the limit of her control. At mid-morning she went to Miss Stephenson's private office.

"Natalie, it's no good. I'm useless here. All I can see or think about is those nice places you have between your legs. And your breasts, of course."

"Poppet, I can't possibly be carnal with you here."

"Well, no, I wasn't thinking of that. Take me home at noon and lock me in that cage. We can talk this evening."

"If I put you in that cage, you'll stay there for a long time. Then, first thing I know, you'll be wanting to come back here."

"Natalie darling, what's gone wrong with me? I've never been in a dither like this before. It's you."

"You've simply became a woman, precious, that's all."

"Well, yes, maybe, but will you take me home?"

"No."

"But, darling, I'm offering you all of me. You'll own me far more that way than you do now."

"No, I wouldn't." Natalie grinned across her desk. "You'd do anything I told you to, wouldn't you?"

"Yes, of course."

"You can't give me more than that, poppet."

"But I'm no good here. I'll feel guilty about taking the paycheck."

"To help you take and earn that paycheck I'll promise you the whipping of your life this evening if you don't deliver a good day's work. How's that?"

"I guess it's all right." Janice looked wan. "It only means I get terribly punished this evening. I don't want it, but the prospect is wetting my pants already. See what you do to me."

"Darling, that's good news. Neither of us needs sympathy."

Forlornly and unconvinced, Janice returned to her desk. She knew herself besotted by her love for Natalie. The older girl had become her whole existence. That Natalie remained the cool executive only accentuated their roles.

At five p.m., Janice delivered a bundle of execrable work. "There," she said with a note of triumph. "Am I fired?"

Natalie examined the botched sheets. "No, you're not fired. You've simply earned yourself another punishment this evening. You'll tire of the pain after awhile. Would you like what's coming to you before or after dinner?"

"Natalie, don't joke."

"I'm not joking."

"Very well, I'll take it on an empty stomach."

They drove home in silence. It was not a hostile silence, but between them was a punishment the slave deemed undeserved. Careful not to pout, Janice stripped and disposed of her garments before facing into the corner of the wall. Her heart was thudding painfully in anticipation of what was to come. In obedience to a command, she put her hands behind her back to be handcuffed. The clasp of chrome felt natural, but eased her tremors only slightly. She had felt her pussy and found it damp. It was not as wet as the previous evening. She sighed. She was out of her depth. She waited.

It seemed a long time before the mistress's cheerful voice commanded, "Turn around and come to the Room, beloved girl. You can speak if you wish."

"Do I have to be whipped again?"

"No, I've got something special for you this time. I don't want to whip you too often – it will lose its potency."

Janice suspected she would be out of the frying pan and into the fire. With Natalie Stephenson, release from the whip was a doubtful blessing. But, with her handcuffed hands clinking at her back, she followed the older girl to her punishment. She wished she could have had a drink or didn't feel hungry.

"You sit on the bar, dearest girl. Where's all that sweet insouciance gone?"

"I think a drink might have revived it, darling. I feel awfully empty. Do you think perhaps –"

"No! No drink. You will suffer while sober. Throw your foot over. You're almost ready."

It was a bar on two trestles, beneath it a box. Janice stood on the box for the leathers to be strapped around her ankles. She was taking a serious view of total obedience. It might have its merits.

"Sit down, dear."

"I can't. The board's on edge."

"Sit down anyway."

Janice sat. Instantly her feet were drawn sideways and far, far out. While she was absorbing the shock of unbearable pain, tethers were tightened until she was beyond a dancer's split, her tendons taut, her muscles ridged. Natalie calmly raised the handcuffed arms to where they enabled a hook from above to snare the single metal link between. The punished nudity leaned forward to accommodate the stress.

"I can't stand this, Natalie. I can't, I can't!"

The mistress stepped back to view her work. "It's called the horse, Janice. It's an ancient punishment."

"It's cutting me in two. All my weight's on my pussy. Get me off quick. Oh, please!"

"I understand it gets worse the longer a girl sits there," Natalie observed in a detached tone. "But I only have the word of the girls I've put on there, so you never know."

"I know! It's terrible! Natalie, get me off!" Janice was certain she was suffering grievous injury. The pain in her crotch was intense and getting worse. "Please!"

"I'll only leave you on there for an hour, darling."

"I'll die! I can't stand it!"

"The exact words of all the others, dear. I kept one girl on here all day. She just walked funny for awhile."

Janice called after the retreating figure, crying out her agony, pleading for release. Her cries continued with a diminishing hope long after Natalie Stephenson had disappeared.

Then, wracked in all directions, she quietened to moans and gasping sounds of pain. Silence and loneliness took possession. She had been left to suffer, and suffer she would. An hour like this would be an eternity. She could not move. Her posture had been cleverly devised. She had been made to sit squarely upon her pussy, and her pussy screamed in outrage in shafts and spears of intolerable pain.

Perhaps what was being done to her needed doing. Striving for reason in her agony, Janice Latimer conceded her irrational bratishness since entering the apartment. It had been a spill-over of joy and exuberance resulting from her escape from Benny Matlin and her discovery of Natalie Stephenson. She could see it now. She had also imbibed more alcohol than she was accustomed to. The result was what was happening to her now. She had underestimated Natalie Stephenson. The older woman wanted a slave and was determined to have one. That they adored each other was a thing off to one side. From now on she would have to yield unto Caesar!

Natalie wanted obedience. In her own immaturity Janice had been inclined to infuse into her role more levity than it could bear. In her present agony she knew she would promise anything forever for release. The horse was a frightening experience. Left alone on the trestle as she was, it became a far worse ordeal than any whipping she had ever received. It was less personal, more human. It left her with nothing but a confrontation with herself. If she found herself wanting and falling short of perfection, she must mend her ways. Another session with stretched legs and wracked shoulders to torture that on which she sat was unthinkable. She would be a good girl from now on.

The intolerable flame burned steadily and mounted higher. The naked girl in penance wept alone, her tears splatting on the bar or falling all the way to the floor beneath her bowed head. It was the only view she could endure. To look elsewhere meant stress. Never in her life had she striven for such motionless immobility. She moaned in self-pity.

In agony Janice's feelings for Natalie Stephenson remained intact. She wondered why she felt no resentment, no hatred for this awful punishment. All she wanted, beyond release, was the feel of the older girl's arms and lips and the murmur of her voice. In bed tonight this awfulness would be forgotten. The hurt in her crotch would probably provoke an added eroticism for both.

Lesbian! Janice Latimer surveyed the word she had always detoured in the belief that it was probably not as black as it was painted, but still not quite nice. Something best left in the dark. But hypocrisy was no longer tenable. She had a sudden lustful close-up vision of Natalie's loins: the plump lips of the neat slit, the fragrant fronds of pubic hair redolent with the pungency of feminine sex, and above all the girl scent which was wholly Natalie's own. She knew she exuded a similar aura. Laughing in discovery, they had sniffed each other like dogs. She had not always been a lesbian, but she was certainly one now.

Natalie was so gorgeously female. There was nothing of the dyke in her make up. She was simply a woman who adored her own sex and was determined to own one of them utterly. That she herself was one of a long list of probationary slavegirls bothered Janice not at all. She found it easy to accept her mistress's assurance of first love. The others had been mere playthings, their tenures short. It became suddenly exciting to the tortured girl that others had sat where she sat now – that other feminine pussies had been squashed in agony on this same bar, and other female arms raised and chained as were her own. She would ask Natalie about them when their moods were right. She had noticed a girl in the office gazing at her speculatively. Perhaps . . . !

Janice Latimer, suspended on the bar, fell into a maze of pain in which she ceased to think. She simply sat on her crumpled crotch and suffered. Her visions became illusory and fragmented. She drifted into semiconsciousness. When the hour of her travail was done, she was lifted from her perch and held silently in adoring arms. There could be no doubt of the adoration. It enveloped her in heat. She stood, quivering, and absorbed it. She could not

return the hug, for her hands remained locked behind her back, but she buried her tear-stained face in the softness of Natalie's neck and kissed and kissed in a fervor of thankfulness.

"Can you stand, sweetheart?"

"Yes, I think so. But hold me when we walk. Oh, Natalie, I'll never be bad again, not ever."

"Yes, you will, poppet. You're human, and you're a girl."

"I'll never be bad enough to sit on that thing again."

"You weren't that bad this time." A reassuring arm squeezed her. "But I wanted you to know it's there, waiting for you."

"Natalie dearest, I'll do anything – anything!"

"Hush, dear, you're not going back on it, maybe not ever. I love you terribly."

"I love you too. Oh, darling, I'm hurting in such a wonderful way down there. It's become a sort of gorgeous agony. Can we go to bed?"

"Don't be silly. We haven't had dinner."

"I forgot," Janice giggled. "I can blame everything now on your horse. Do we go to Bruno's again?"

"No. It's another little place where foibles are understood." The mistress chuckled. "I'm taking you to another place – naked."

"Natalie!"

"Don't sound shocked. You hinted at it yourself. I enjoy showing you off. Oh, and your hands will stay as they are. I'll feed you."

"Natalie, we can't! Handcuffed behind my back and naked in public!"

"Yes, we can. You'll see."

"Natalie, I can't!"

"Sooner go back and sit on that bar awhile longer?"

"No!" The word was an explosion of dismay. "Never mind. I'm sorry. Don't pay any attention to me."

"Silly girl. I have to pay attention to you. You're very much here. Besides, I'm in love with you, even if you are a brat."

The Elite Cafe was a far cry from Bruno's. But it had one very private booth and a staff sympathetic to deviance. The private booth was instantly available. Janice stood, dressed in her cape, nylons, and shoes, blushing. Natalie had kept her promise; Janice was naked. When her cloak was taken from her, she was sure she was the focus of a hundred eyes, but there were no eyes to see, except for those of the pert waitress who exclaimed enthusiastically, "Gee, you have a lovely figure, miss! Please sit down. No one can see – except me."

"Cute, isn't she?" Natalie chuckled. "Sit down properly and look natural. You don't need

hands. If I let you have them, you'd only use them to cover your breasts."

"Natalie, this is awful. I'm scared. Couldn't you sort of drape the cape over my front?"

"No, I can't. I want this girl to look at you. Her name's Beryl. I owned her once, very briefly. I couldn't compete with her boyfriend. I should have whipped him out of her system, but I didn't have the experience I have now. Be sweet to her."

It was useless to protest. Janice was not sure she wanted to protest. It was comforting to be swept forward on Natalie's indomitable tide, and the cold seat on her bare bottom brought its own assuagement to her wound. She watched her mistress study the menu; her own had been taken from her place and set aside. She noted the deliberate act with a tiny thrill. She was owned. She would make few decisions. The handcuffs on her wrists were Natalie's hands.

"Are her hands tied, Miss Stephenson?" Beryl asked, beaming impartially. But her eyes were alive with curiosity.

"She's handcuffed, dear. They're so convenient."

"You never handcuffed me – that time."

"I didn't have any then. But if you want a short rerun, you can come around this evening."

"I'd love to, miss, but my boyfriend –"

"I don't want to hear it." Natalie Stephenson's tone became icy. "I am allergic to boyfriends. They are a plague and a curse. I hope he has the decency to play with you."

"Not really, miss. I've tried to teach him, but he says it's a lot of nonsense."

"What's he do for a living?"

"He's unemployed. He's mostly unemployed."

"That figures," Natalie said, snorting with disgust. "You work for a leech who won't even whip your bottom. You girls are impossible."

Beryl shuffled and looked coy. "It's crazy," she admitted, "but there is Mr. Swanson. He runs the place, and he's really into – well, you know what."

"You mean he whips your bottom when you drop a dish?"

"Only about half the time. He thinks of a lot of things." Beryl shuffled and blushed. "Matter of fact, I'm being punished right now. Want me to show you?"

"Show Janice."

With all too evident eagerness, Beryl bared her breasts. On the nipple of each a metal clip bit viciously.

"I have to wear them for a whole hour," she said proudly. "They hurt something awful, but aren't they sweet?"

"They're lovely. Take them off and clip them on Janice. If she wears them awhile, it will give you a break."

"Oh, I daren't." The girl covered herself hastily. "Mr. Swanson feels me every so often. If he found them gone, he'd either take me in back and whip me, or fire me on the spot. And with jobs hard to find, and Jim without a job –" She shrugged and disappeared with their order.

"How the other half lives," Natalie said, pursing her lips. "Those bloody boyfriends! I'd exterminate the lot. If I ever catch you even looking, I'll skin you!"

"Are you ever going to allow me the chance? I mean, aren't I going to be a prisoner now? I won't even see a male, and that's okay by me."

"Hmmmm." The mistress cocked an appraising eyebrow. "I was thinking about that, and your day at the office, while I had you sitting on the bar. There's only one thing against your staying a prisoner in the apartment, and that's boredom. I want a happy slave. Now, I can counter boredom with varying degrees of pain and discomfort and maybe the many kinds of bondage I can use on you, but is that enough?"

"Couldn't I just look after the apartment and us?"

"And be a domestic slave, poppet? Not very glamorous."

Janice Latimer was becoming used to being naked in a public place. Beryl had served the salad, which Janice munched with unsuspecting appetite. "But, darling, you can think of something," Janice protested hopefully. "You wouldn't leave me free to come and go."

"I could put my chain on your ankles and keep you handcuffed in front. They wouldn't stop you from doing the work; they'd just slow you down."

"I think that's a lovely idea. If you found things I hadn't done right, you could punish me. Not on the horse, of course, but other things."

"Things? Such as?"

"I can't name my own punishments, darling, I just can't!" Janice protested. "There's chains and ropes and things." Brightly, she added, "And you can always whip me."

They left it at that.

4

The Sadistic Sisters

Janice latimer sighed. The sigh was one of many through her day. It was not a sigh of exasperation with herself. Bound nude against the post, she had the whole day in which to think of her increasing dependence on the woman who had tied her thus. More and more she was becoming a possession of Natalie Stephenson and loving every moment. She was besotted with the older girl. Each of their nights welded them closer to cause her, during the days, to think lustfully of moist thighs and fervid breasts. Their sexual appetite for each other had become insatiable. Her sigh was in rueful memory of a lost identity. The girl who had walked so blissfully into the apartment less than two weeks ago had vanished.

She stirred against her bonds. They were tight but few. Her concave tummy was belted to the upright timber by several strands of rope, one of which had been circled around the bands themselves and drawn harshly tight in a cinch. Her ankles were bound in the same manner below. Her hands had been raised above her head, wrists crossed and fastened to the post in the same way. No stress or strain, simply a naked girl immobilized in an artistic

pose.

"I like you that way, sweetheart. Should have thought of it before. You appear sweetly martyred."

"But, Natalie, I won't be able to do any work. I can't do a thing except just stand."

"The place won't miss you for one day, precious. You can stand and repent for spilt coffee and burnt toast."

"My arms are going to get awfully tired up there."

"They can rest against the rope. It's not as though you were having to hold them that way."

"Please hurry home, darling," Janice said with a sigh.

"I'll be home at the usual time. I refuse to hurry. You'll just have to stand there and wait. If it's any consolation, I can tell you that you look very pretty."

"I can't even touch myself."

Natalie Stephenson laughed, delighted at the idea. "That will give you a good rest. Look, I've got to rush. Bye-bye."

There was then a swift kiss on captive lips and the girl Natalie had become the svelte Miss Stephenson once more.

Janice had emitted her second sigh when the door slammed shut and the lock snapped with unnecessary emphasis on her condition. She knew her naughtiness was make-believe, an excuse for a day in tight bondage. Wryly, she compared her circumstances now with those of the girl she had been two weeks ago. That girl was gone. Perhaps she had never existed.

She had been a house slave for a week: chains and work by day, love by night. She had been ridiculously happy. They did not refer to her often as a slave. The word had primitive connotations. They called each other by their Christian names or by terms of endearment. But there was never a doubt as to who was the mistress and who was the slave. Natalie reveled in the possession of Janice Latimer. On this day against the post the possession was sharply accentuated.

When the mistress had gone, the slave was wet, tumescent from the touch of hands on bare skin and by the banding of the ropes. Janice had stood, breathless, while it was done to her, treasuring every moment of increasing helplessness until the final knot had rendered her completely immobilized. Alone, she had struggled for release only long enough to assure herself none was possible. It was then she had made her third sigh and relapsed into reverie.

The two girls had achieved a fine balance. Janice's giggling period of the first days had been replaced by a young woman completely subservient because she loved deeply. The chain she wore or the ropes by which she was daily bound relieved her of decision and were an affirmation of love in the same sense as was a wedding ring. Her punishments were in the same context. She had been whipped only once.

"I'm going to whip you after dinner this evening, Janice."

"Are you, darling? What have I done?"

"Nothing. I just want to do it to you."

The slave's eyes glowed. She was standing with shackled ankles and handcuffed wrists, preparatory to their morning goodbye.

"Mmmmm, I suppose it had to happen sometime," she reflected without rancor. "I'll go crazy thinking about it all day."

"Not mad?"

"Gosh no! You warned me. I think I'd sooner be whipped for innocence than guilt. Are you giving it to me on my girl places again?"

"I've been rough on your girl places; we'll give them a rest. That still leaves a lot of you available."

Their casualness was belied by their erotic glances and heaving breasts. They were potently aware of each other, needing to prolong their time together.

"Will you whip me hard," Janice asked, "or is this just a fun thing?"

"It's a fun thing, and I'll whip you hard, poppet. I'd sooner give you five hard ones than twenty playful pats. A whipping must always mean something between us."

At dinner the coming punishment had not been mentioned. Afterwards, the two girls had sauntered to the Room as though out for an idle walk, but their breathing was fast, their breasts in tumult.

The first reference to what was about to happen was Janice's question: "How do you want me, darling?"

"You're already handcuffed. We can leave it at that. They're so handy."

The hook from above had snared the link between Janice's joined hands. When she was standing on tiptoe from the pull of the tethering rope, she was helpless.

The mistress ran her hands up and down the captive flanks lovingly. Her voice was like a whisper: "Think, Janice dear, I can whip all this lovely skin that's you, any way I like."

"I've been thinking about it. That's why I'm shivering."

"But aren't you scared?"

"Not when your hands are on me, Natalie. I'll be scared to death the moment you take them away."

The hands had gone away, and Janice whimpered, "Please, not too hard. Oh, darling, not too hard!"

The five strokes had been cruelly hard. Janice screamed in shock, then squealed afresh at each added stroke, dancing and kicking from her handcuffed hands like a puppet on a string as her back responded with the tell-tale scarlet lines. At the end of the fifth stroke, her breasts were heaving tumultuously and pain generated beads of sweat, which trickled from her strained armpits.

"That's the hard ones, sweetheart. Now for the fun strokes."

Janice clenched her teeth. She did not want to scream any more. The sounds she made

sounded awful to her own ears.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry," she moaned again and again, as though apologizing for her pain. "I will try – I will!"

There now came hard flicks, the leather striking her here and there without a pattern. Janice fought the instinct to twist and turn away, fearful that if she presented them to view often enough, Natalie might whip her breasts. Her breasts had not been mentioned, but fastened as she was, she had become terribly aware of them and their vulnerability. She stood erect, shivering and trembling as the thong cut at her like brief licks of fire. Natalie gauged the tolerance of the girl flesh and took it only to its limits, not beyond.

"One under each armpit, dear. I've never heard of a girl being whipped on her armpits."

The secret place beneath Janice's arms were almost flat below her stretched shoulders. The tip of Natalie's whip splatted into them wetly with a new and different pain. She closed her eyes and absorbed them, knowing their limits, thankful for only two.

"There, darling girl, you've been whipped purely out of caprice. Hate me?"

"Oh, Natalie, hold me! Please hold me. Of course I don't hate you. I love you more than ever."

Then came Natalie's two arms, and her scent, and her lips softly whispering, "Now I'm going to do it to you all over again."

Tense in shock and her knowledge of a too familiar anguish, the naked girl could only say, "Thank you, darling – oh, thank you!" And then, after a moment, she added; "Please gag me first – please!"

The mistress's laughing voice responded, "I'm not that cruel, pet. You don't deserve another stroke; you didn't deserve those you got. But why did you thank me?"

"I don't know; it just came. Natalie, I'm so glad you were only teasing."

"I wasn't teasing. If you had said the wrong thing or made a fuss, you'd have got a double dose. But what you did say was perfect. I adore you."

The girl at the post sighed again in retrospect; everything done to her had enhanced her potency. After the whipping, she and Natalie had coupled desperately as though for the last time. The next day Natalie went to work bleary-eyed, and the slave spent a day lax in her chains. They almost felt ashamed of themselves, but went to bed earlier than ever.

Janice's arms were tired. The post, as she was tied to it now, was not a punishment, but she had been tied against it a long while.To relieve the tedium, she had struggled from time to time and got herself chafed skin for which she would undoubtedly be censured. Her wrists were complaining of their cords and her tightly tied tummy was a band of steady discomfort. She longed for Natalie's return.

"Hello, sweetheart, how was your day?"

"Oh, Natalie, you know how my day's been. I've just had to stand here."

She was adequately kissed and her nipples pinched.

"I've brought something nice home for dinner," Natalie said. "Since you've had a difficult day, I'll get it ready for us, and then maybe a shower."

The captive watched her mistress depart while she remained tied to her post. Every fiber of her being longed to plead for release, but she dared not ask. Importunities were a no-no for slavegirls. They were supposed to suffer in silence and be patient. Janice knew she was being played with. But still, that was the name of the game. She wriggled fretfully. She could easily be left as she was for another hour. A tear of self-pity trickled down her cheek.

"Been crying, baby?"

"I couldn't help it. You went away and left me, and I've been tied like this for so long."

"Mean to tell me you couldn't get loose?"

"You know I couldn't."

"You did try, though, didn't you?"

"Just for something to do. After you left I got so lonely."

"So you'd like to be untied?"

The captive girl wanted it urgently, but she was cautious. "Only if you want me untied," she said humbly.

Her mistress laughed. "My, my, what admirable behavior. I'll have to tie you this way more often. I'd leave you there all night, but we're having company."

"Company! Oh, Natalie, no! Company – and me like this!" The bound girl was wide-eyed in consternation. "Who is it?"

"Silly, silly! I'm about to untie you. Never mind who it is. They won't arrive early, so we'll have lots of time to feed and bathe you."

"They?"

"Stop probing or I'll leave you the way you are," Natalie said, tugging at the first knot.

Again came the gorgeous feeling of being handled, dealt with, and controlled by loving fingers. She had been bound, and now the same hands were freeing her. It was one more emphasis on being owned. Janice Latimer closed her eyes and glowed as the ropes were peeled away. That the peeling hurt mattered not at all. When her hands were freed, she was grasped by hungry arms. The two girls clung to each other. For a little while they ceased to be mistress and slave-girl, and were only lovers. Then came the handcuffs once more.

"In front, dear. I don't have time to wash and feed you."

Janice giggled. "Don't you realize that I've been free for at least two hours? I could have run away."

It was Natalie's turn to giggle, and she replied, "We both forgot. Stick out your hands."

There were the usual impressive clicks. Janice looked down at the metal locked on her wrists. Things were back to normal. She ran to her dinner, a nude nymph captured in shining steel.

"I'm going to humiliate you this evening, darling. It's something we haven't tried. I'm curious."

"Mmmmmm." Janice was eating hungrily. "Thanks for cutting up the big bits; I can't do it

handcuffed. May I ask questions?"

"No."

"But you're not going to exhibit me naked, are you?"

"You'll start out exquisitely gowned. I'm terribly proud of owning you. I'm going to show you off."

The gown was like a second skin, svelte and gorgeous. Beneath it, there was nothing but the contours of a girl.

"It makes me feel ten times more naked!" Janice exclaimed, preening in front of the big mirror. "Oh, Natalie, I've never worn anything like this before."

"You love it."

"Well, yes, I do, but must I be handcuffed like this?"

"They complete the ensemble. You are perfect." Natalie placed loving hands on bare shoulders. "Are you going to obey me?"

"Wow, is it going to that bad?" Janice looked askance. "But, of course, I'll obey you. Don't I always?"

"There is always a first time. Sooner or later, I'll push you to far."

"Natalie, don't be so serious. You scare me. What would you do to me if I disobeyed or acted up?"

"You'd be a sorry little girl."

The handcuffed maiden was secretly thrilled in a delicious blend of apprehension and fear. She felt certain her destiny held pain, but she did not want it this evening. The two of them would bat the possibility around until feminine curiosity thrust her into the necessary guilt. But the influence of the horse and her day at the post was still potent. She would be a good girl.

The Dunbar sisters, Theo and Amanda, were an uninhibited pair, cheerfully happy with each other and possessed of an insatiable sexual curiosity. They lusted after Janice Latimer on sight.

"Where did you get her, Natalie? She's yummy."

"We'll take her off your hands. How much?"

"Was she born handcuffed?"

"She can go down on me now before we start any serious conversation. Come over here, dear."

"Cease and desist!" Natalie laughed off their instant approval of her nonplussed slavegirl. "Everything in good time. Janice, you can serve the drinks."

It had been decided not to chain her ankles. Shackles would not go well with the gown. Handcuffs were no great impairment. The drinks were easy. She knelt and offered them, conscious of scrutiny, but meeting no eyes.

"Got yourself a beauty, Natalie. We'll have to whip her sometime this evening."

"Why the devil did you let her wear that dress? Make her take it off."

"We lost young Marie, you know. We had her handcuffed, but the little baggage walked off with them. We suspect she had a boyfriend."

Natalie laughed at their disgust. "I'm not surprised, the way you treated the poor girl. Try and be a bit kind to the next one."

"We were kind. We hardly ever whipped her more than two or three times a week, and she only had to service the two of us – except when Basil and Roger visited. We made her suck their cocks. I mean, it was the hospitable thing to do," Amanda snorted. "You know what we think about being screwed, but now that the little bitch has gone we have to look after the boys ourselves. It's a drag – really!"

The Dunbar sisters were unreal. Janice wondered why her mistress bothered with them; they were not her kind. But if she was to be humiliated, she was sure they would be the ones to do it. She stood submissively to one side, waiting. She had been denied a drink. The sister's plaint resumed.

"We've been after Basil to get us a girl. He's into a lot of things, and we'd sooner pay him something rather than kidnap one ourselves. We don't seem to move in the right circles. But he insists on free screwing afterwards – and he means all three of us. Men are the pits."

"Hey you, girl, come here!"

Uncertain and scared, Janice looked at her mistress. Receiving a curt nod, she advanced to Theo's beckoning hand. But when it darted beneath her gown and between her legs, she backed away in alarm.

"Stand still, Janice dear. Theo won't hurt you. Don't make a fuss."

There was no help for her. Janice Latimer stood with her feet apart and her cuffed hands awkwardly up between her breasts while Theo Dunbar's exploration of her sex resumed. Clothed, as she was, the fumbling act was far more obscene than if she had been naked. She stood stiffly against a cupped palm and then a probing, unkind finger. When it was thrust inside her sheath, she winced and bent at her knees.

"Stand still, girl. Damn, you're dry!"

"Go easy on her, Theo," Natalie admonished. "Janice is far more of a lady than you're accustomed to."

"Their cunts are all the same," Theo Dunbar observed cheerfully. "Here, Amanda, you have a go. I think she'd be good if she was secreting, but she's dry as a bone."

Janice moved two paces forward, submitted herself again, and was still found wanting.

"I suppose the damn girl's nervous with us," Amanda conceded. "We're a fearsome pair at first glance. Take your left breast out, dear, and let's have a look at it."

It was an ugly and uncouth act. The handcuffed girl cast a pitiful glance at her mistress but got only a nod of permission. Unhappily, she pulled down enough of the lovely gown to reveal the requested breast. Once more she was conscious of an obscenity. She continued to stand stiffly while graceless fingers assessed the nippled sphere.

"We picked up some new clips the other day, Natalie. Mind if I try one on her?"

Again the nod of authority. Clenching her teeth, the slave-girl braced herself for pain while Amanda rummaged in her bag. The small object she produced was unexpectedly beautiful, a tiny butterfly. It was passed around for approval. When the girl who was to wear it tested the tension of its springs, she clenched her teeth even harder.

"Closer, dear, and stick it out. I'm sure you know how."

Janice tried not too look, but was too fascinated. Handcuffed hands now held at her waist, she watched her nipple teased to erection and then clipped. The pain was an affront, but she made no sound.

"Cover it up and wear it, dear."

This too was an affront. The clinging gown would aggravate the pain, and the clip would remain visible through the thin fabric. The hurt girl had no choice but obey.

"We'll have a second drink, Janice."

Her breast burning hatefully, the punished girl served them. She longed for one herself. This was the sort of situation in which a girl wanted to be tipsy and feel no pain. But once more her questing glance was denied. Dutifully, she knelt with her proffered tray.

"What can we do with her, Natalie? You didn't get us over here for a glance at one tit, did you?"

"Just a social evening, Theo. What would you like to do?"

"Whip her ass. Cane it, actually. We know you have a cane. Amanda and I are partial to the cane. It makes their bottoms bounce."

"I expect that can be arranged."

"Thanks, Natalie. We'd expected you to put on an act with her, but we don't mind doing all the work. And incidentally, we've brought along a pair of the old Victorian whipping drawers. They're made of some modern stuff which makes them doubly effective."

Janice cringed inwardly. She failed to warm up to Amanda and Theo. They were all too matter-of-fact about agony. They had probably never felt any and regarded it in a purely academic sense. In obedience to her mistress's command, she went and fetched the hated length of rattan.

"Can we make her naked now, Natalie? Can't whip girls with their clothes on."

"You're only going to cane her bottom. Much more erotic if you make her take her panties down and replace them with what you've brought along. Remember, she's handcuffed."

"What then?"

"Make her bend over and touch her toes. You raise her dress and bare her bottom. It's sure-fire."

Humiliation was indeed the word. The mistress had promised it and here it was! But it was to be accompanied by a pain she would hate. Janice saw their evening as a write-off.

"Please, Natalie, don't be such a prude with her. Make her naked. If she isn't naked, we don't want to play."

"Oh, all right," the mistress said disdainfully. "Take it all off, dear."

The slavegirl stripped. The butterfly on her breast winked in the light, her nipple screaming in outrage. She stood submissively.

"Nice!" There could be no mistaking the tribute in Theo's voice. "I'm glad to see you've whipped her. These girls need it constantly. You've had her tied too. I noticed that at the start. And, my, what a pubic patch!"

"Her right tit looks bare to me," Amanda said pointedly. "Okay if I clip it?"

"The poor darling might as well wear two as one," the mistress said, sounding disinterested. "Put it on."

Janice could not forbear the wince at the bite of metal on her most tender spot. The two butterflies stood out on the twin apex of her chest as though they were real. Their bite was vicious. It absorbed her attention. But her homage to the cane and what it would do to her was not allowed to relax. "Now we'll try the punishment drawers." Janice did not bother to look at her mistress. She knew herself the target of the evening's sport. It was taking all her fortitude not to reach up and take the clips from her breasts. It would be so easy to do. She shuddered at the prospect of the inevitable punishment. Keep a straight face and suffer – that was her role. She examined the object now brought to view, her face showing no emotion.

"The idea is they have to be real tight to make her flesh bulge under the constriction. I think these will fit real good." They did not fit at all. Janice's handcuffed hands were inadequate to drag the tiny thing over her curves, but she had no lack of help. Amanda and Theo tugged and pulled with her until her loins were solidly encased in a material she did not recognize. It was tighter on her than her own skin. "Even if we didn't cane her bottom, the effect would still be lovely."

From their differing views, both slave and mistress were forced to agree. The whipping drawers achieved an erotic perfection beyond anything fabricated during the reign of the renowned Queen Victoria. They bestowed upon the bottom and loins they encased a life all their own. If she had not been sure they were a prelude to pain, Janice might have been proud of them.

"Now walk around a bit, dear. You'll love them."

Her loins behaving outrageously, Janice obeyed, blushing at the sway of her hips she could not control. The fabric felt as though it would burst under the stress, but it held firm.

"Makes a lovely whore. You should farm her out, Natalie."

"Can she stand still to have her bottom caned, or does she need to be tied?"

"I'll stand still for it," Janice interjected swiftly, shrinking from the thought of being bound at the mercy of these two sisters.

"No one asked you, honey. That gets you an extra five. Okay by you, Natalie?"

"Yes, I suppose so. Try and behave, Janice."

Behave! The girl with the prisoned bottom raged inwardly at this injustice. She loved Natalie, and she would take Natalie's pain gladly, but these two witches were something else. Naked and handcuffed before them, she felt terribly in their power. Janice swallowed hard, choking back protest.

"Bend over and touch your toes, honeybunch. Keep your knees straight."

Janice did as she was told. The motion stretched the fabric and her enclosed bottom in a cruel preparation for the strokes to come. She held her breath.

"We'll get rid of that five you eared yourself, girlie, before we get serious," Amanda said equably. "Now don't move."

It was new and different and horrible. The whipping drawers had the effect of making the blow felt on every part of her being and deep within. It burrowed inside the girl. She held a vision of her bottom swelling out and out in agony, fighting its stricture. It took all her love for her mistress to remain as she was and to keep quiet.

"She takes it well. You've got a good one here, Natalie."

"Her bottom will be a sight when we take the drawers off. You'll see."

"Her rump will swell. May have to cut the things off." The air was sliced again. The cane struck with a crack. The bent girl moaned. The air in the room was electric. "They wouldn't do for caning her cunt." The words were conversational. "It's best to have her cunt nude for a whipping. After the first few it splats."

The third stroke struck heavily, making the hips sway. Janice took the next two stoically, then broke. With a cry of anguish, she ran for her mistress and flung herself at Natalie's feet, clutching her legs with handcuffed hands.

"I can't take any more," she sobbed. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Oh, darling, I love you – not them."

"Come back here, you bitch. We haven't even started yet. You've only had the five easy ones for talking out of turn."

"I can't, I can't!" Janice clung passionately to her mistress's legs. "I can't take any more from them. Darling, please help me."

A hand was in her hair. It was a loving hand. Natalie's voice was decisive: "You've tried the pants out. Leave it at that. Take the sweetheart on to whatever you have next."

"Hell, we only gave her five licks. We were aiming for fifty."

"That's absurd. We'd have been obliged to tie her. She'd have been screaming." Natalie's tone was faintly irritated. "Go easy on the pain. You said you had other things, right?"

"A tender seat will put her in the proper mood for whatever else we come up with. The gal's a bit uppity. Let's give her at least ten more."

"No, no! Oh, Natalie, please!" Janice was distraught.

"Is she your slave, or are you hers?"

"You can give her five more, that's all. And that's final, Theo." Natalie looked down lovingly and patted the distressed head. "You can manage, can't you, dear?"

"I – I – I suppose so, if you want me to."

It was hard to go back to her punishment. The nude, handcuffed girl thought it best to try and mend fences. She looked at the sisters pleadingly.

"I'm sorry about not being clever about pain. That cane on these pants hurts terribly. I guess I'm not that used to pain like that."

"We'd soon get you used to it, honeybunch. A month with us and you could take this smiling."

"Well, yes, I expect so. Thank you." Janice sighed. "How would you like me to arrange myself?"

"Kneel, with your forearms on the floor, and your forehead down there too. Then pull your knees in to touch your elbows."

Until she had done it, Janice did not realize the awfulness of the effect. Her bottom reared, bulging against the constriction of the drawers. It was tight as a drum, and her handcuffed hands were splayed out beneath her chin on the rug.

"It's going to hurt me worse this way. I'm terribly stretched. Please, may I ask you not to hit me so hard like this?"

"You can ask, kid, but it won't do you any good." Amanda patted taut curves lovingly. "I'm going to cane this little number any way I choose."

Janice rolled to the floor, writhing at the first stroke. The severity of the blow itself was partly responsible. It impacted across her tightly packed curves after a vicious swing. She grunted, screamed, and fell. She did not immediately rise, but only lay there rubbing herself and crying.

"Up you get, girl."

"We'll have to tie her, Amanda."

"Leave her alone," Natalie commanded. "She and I will renege. You can blame me. You forgot I love the child, and she's still new to pain in the doses you hand out."

Janice hugged herself and wept. Her adoration for her mistress was in the glance she sent, pleading for mercy. Save for her sobbing, there was no sound.

"The girl's no child. She's as old as Amanda. Natalie, you're losing your touch."

"Oh, don't fret about it, Theo. Let's put these on her instead. They're a zinger for a girl who's never tried."

Janice looked up. The zinger appeared to be another pair of panties. When she divined their purpose, she hastily looked away, blushing.

"Come along, dear, if you don't like the ones we've got on you now." Amanda giggled. "At least half of you's lucky." The handcuffed girl supposed she should be thankful. She would not embarrass her mistress further. Janice got up off the rug and dried her eyes. She managed another weak thank you.

It took all three of them to tug down the whipping drawers. She stepped out of them gratefully, her bottom flaming.

"There's all sorts of names for these here," Theo said. "We call them the twins."

The new set of panties were made of heavy rubber, with two huge prongs. The punished girl gazed at them in dismay.

"I – I don't think I'm big enough –" she said, her voice faltering.

"Many a bride's said that, dearie."

"We'll anoint them for you, honeybunch, seeing as one of them has to go in a dry hole."

Janice stepped into her new affliction, anxious now to get her ordeal over and done with. Alone with her mistress later, she told herself, she would have a few sharp words to say about the Dunbar sisters, and if Natalie wanted to punish her for them, she was welcome.

"It hurts less if you do it yourself, dear. Ask for help if you need it."

"I can get the back one inside for you if you want," one sister offered. "Once you get it ready, you'll have to spread your legs a lot wider."

Her lips pursed grimly, Janice Latimer tugged and pulled. The prongs within the new torture rose menacingly. She fitted the larger of the two within her lower lips and gently exerted pressure. When the other nuzzled her cheeks, she did the same for it.

"Damn gal's done this before, Natalie."

"I haven't either!" She flushed and gasped against the intrusion. "Just because I'm trying to obey –"

The watching eyes shamed her deeply. Janice closed her own as one hand pulled and the other flew alternately from front to back. She knew her motions obscene in what she was being forced to do to herself. Being handcuffed made her ordeal twice as hard, but she did not ask for the freedom of her hands. Finding she could not get the two of them all the way around, blushing hotly, she sent them to their task from between her thighs. Even so, it was Amanda who made the final adjustments. Then, between the two, they tugged this fresh covering of female loins into place. It was not as tight as the previous sheath, but it was tight enough, clinging to every curve and hollow, and exerting the needed force to thrust and keep on thrusting the double impalements now within Janice Latimer's flesh.

"Now walk around, dear."

It was a strange feeling. Her two orifices were still protesting the stretch, the prongs bedding themselves within. Passively, she obeyed, hips responding outrageously, her legs a trifle spread.

"A walking fuck, dear. You lucky girl."

"Screwed and sodomized! Absolutely unique!"

Mistress and slave said nothing. Then the doorbell rang.

"That will be the boys," Theo said comfortably. "Always right on time. We have a small surprise for you two."

It happened so swiftly that Natalie had no defense. Suddenly, she was standing and wrenching in shocked amazement at arms handcuffed behind her back. It had taken but a moment for the Dunbar sisters to overpower her.

"Take these things off me!" she demanded angrily. "Enough's enough. The game is over."

"It's just starting, precious girl," the sister said. Her tone was honey.

"No, it's not! Get me out of these things."

"Don't take on so, Natalie. Stop struggling. You know you can't get them off. You've been using them on dear little Janice."

Shocked and horrified, the younger girl leaped toward her mistress. She was instantly seized and, with swift, sure motions, her handcuffs were changed from front to back. The Dunbar girls now had two helpless prisoners.

"If you two only knew what we've got in store for you!" Theo chortled. "Amanda, go get the door."

Basil and Roger were a surprise: business types, early middle age, clean-cut. They did not match the Dunbar sisters at all. There was no evidence of surprise at what they saw. There was about them an air of having witnessed everything before.

"There you are, boys, we've delivered."

"One naked, one with clothes," Amanda giggled.

The man called Basil glanced around, focused on Natalie Stephenson, and spoke, "Remember me, woman?"

"Your name isn't Basil!" the angry office manageress accused, staring at him in disgust. "You're Denver Cartwright."

"Remember giving me the frosty treatment and slapping my face?"

"Any self-respecting girl would have. Is this your idea of revenge? Isn't it a bit childish?"

"What are you tugging at those handcuffs for ?" His lips were pursed in amusement. "You surely know you can't get them off. Your first time, though, eh?"

"Look, Cartwright, there's still time –" The slap on her cheek knocked Natalie sideways. Regaining her feet, she glared, panting and frightened.

"I'm not the hired help any more." His voice was curt. "You'll call me sir."

"Like hell I will!"

The second slap knocked her in the other direction. Erect again, she stood with two scarlet cheeks from his blows. But, even in defeat, she was still the businesslike Miss Stephenson.

Evenly, she looked him in the eye and said, "Very good, sir."

"That's a start," Cartwright chuckled. "I'm looking for you to minimalize your losses all the way." He looked at Janice and continued, "I'm not sure about this one, but she's not so important – just a bonus. It's you I want, Miss Natalie Stephenson. I'm going to make you eat crow."

"If your quarrel is with me, why involve all these others?"

"Just worked out that way. The girls and Roger will be leaving soon – after we've watched Roger fuck you. He's an expert. That's why he's here."

"You can both go to prison for life for –" Cartwright held up a silencing hand. "No one's going to prison. Here's the way it works: I'm going to own you for one week, and one week

only. You're going to behave normally and go to work everyday. Your little lesbian stays here as a hostage."

"And if I refuse?"

"You won't; you're too adult. You won't buy scandal." Janice Latimer looked at her mistress's face and knew defeat. The invader's plan had the genius of simplicity. Natalie would accept what she must for a single week. Cartwright had thought this out, his judgement of women accurate. "You intend to reside in these premises?"

"It's convenient," he said, shrugging it off. "I can always tie your little lesbian canary when I'm not using her and need to leave." He turned to the watching eyes. "Strip her, girls."

"No, don't! Stop!" Natalie's demand was urgent. "Free my hands and I'll remove my clothes for you. I won't fight." Cartwright treated the plea as beneath contempt. "Strip the bitch," he repeated. "If she makes a fuss, go get a whip. You, Roger, sit down and enjoy the show, for Pete's sake!"

"But, Basil, we'll have to tear –"

"Go ahead. She won't need clothes for seven days. Let's have a real classy strip. But first, one of you can serve us drinks. Little les' over there can't do much of anything except looked shocked."

It was done. In a desolate silence, utterly helpless, Janice watched her mistress stripped naked before the gloating eyes of two men. It shocked her more deeply than if it had been done to herself. The scene violated all her precepts of what was right and proper in her current life. Natalie Stephenson, her mistress, should not be treated thus. But she was helpless; they both were.

"Damn fine body."

Natalie did not deign to answer. With her torn and scattered clothes around her, she stood at bay, glaring, helpless, her hands still working ineffectually against their bonds.

Breasts heaving, she turned her cold eyes on the tense and expectant Dunbar sisters and demanded, "How much did he pay you?"

The bitter question was demolished by Cartwright's incisive demand: "Roger! Take her – any way you like. Give us a show!"

It was easy to see why Roger had been chosen for Natalie Stephenson's rape. Naked and immense, he stood surveying his palpitating prize. Like boxers in a ring, they gauged each other's strength.

Drearily, the stripped woman said, "You were right, I'll cut my losses. Take these handcuffs off my wrists and I'll submit."

"Slap the bitch down. She's still giving orders." Roger's hand was swift, but Natalie's foot was quicker. It caught him in the groin and doubled him over. Painfully, he stepped back, realizing the enormity of her offense. Cartwright's voice was terse: "Get me a whip."

Janice watched, cringing as she saw the snake-like thing placed in the male hand, and saw it flash to implant a crimson weal upon the thighs of the one she loved. Natalie Stephenson squealed and stumbled to the floor where she writhed under blow after blow, curling herself into as small a female ball as she could, but never small enough to escape Denver Cartwright's punishment.

In a moaning wail of anguish, she cried out, "I'm sorry! I didn't think. I shouldn't have kicked – ohhh, please stop! Stop!"

Denver Cartwright stopped. His voice was grimly pleased. "Why should I stop whipping you, Miss Natalie Stephenson?"

"I've said I'm sorry. I just wasn't thinking. This whole thing is so confusing."

"Will you stand up and hold still for six across your ass – be taught a lesson?"

"Yes, I suppose. Yes, I will!"

Janice's heart bled in sympathy as her striped mistress slowly stood and positioned herself for the indecent punishment, lifting cuffed hands to leave the swelling curves of her bottom exposed to the lash. She was very beautiful. "Is this how you want me?" she asked.

"Here, Roger, whip her ass, and then screw her while she's hurting." Cartwright tossed the whip to his henchman, and then promised to Natalie, "If you don't stand still for this, woman, you'll get double."

Natalie stood still for her agony. Janice winced as each cut left its mark on the soft flesh she had so often caressed with her lips. Each blow was cruel. Roger's dignity as a male had been hurt along with the pain from his kicked genitals. The whip sang evilly in male triumph as it splatted its venom across the proffered cheeks. When the sixth stroke cut its furrow of ridged flesh, the erotic tableau allied itself with the rubber impalement of Janice's sex to take her over the brink. While she clenched her teeth and fought to move as little as possible, her senses responded to the twin stimuli and relieved themselves in a flaming orgasm.

Janice Latimer need not have worried. No one saw her shame. All eyes were focused on the impending rape of Natalie Stephenson. Absorbing her pain, she looked at the man who would mate with her.

"How do you wish me to arrange myself . . . ?" she asked, then adding a contemptuous, "Sir!"

"On your whipped ass. Get down!" Natalie did not ask for her hands. Awkwardly, she sought the rug and postured herself, lying on a captive forearm and planting her flogged flesh in a firm acceptance of pain. Dismally, she widened the space between her legs.

Roger took her. He was unconscious of the eyes that loathed, secure in his immense virility. He spared his lesbian victim nothing, thrusting hard from the first to bestow maximum pain to a vagina unready and unwilling for masculine invasion. After one single cry at his entry, Natalie closed her eyes and for the duration of the cruel and public coupling made neither sound nor motion as the male rod plunged savagely within her again and again and again.

When it was over and she had been compelled to cleanse the gleaming phallus with her lips and tongue, Cartwright's mocking came again. "Care to slap a cheek, Miss Stephenson?"

"No." Her words sounded dazed. "In any case, I can't."

"Have you thought of any apology, Miss Stephenson?"

"I'm sorry. I apologize for slapping your face – sir." It was a male victory, a feminine defeat. Janice watched it in abject misery. She knew her mistress was being prudent, but it still hurt. Fretfully, she tugged at her handcuffed wrists – those damned handcuffs! Two

pairs of handcuffs obliged a woman and a girl to suffer degradation. Metal around their wrists made them subject to a man's will. For them there would be no sleep.

"Run that past me again, girl."

Natalie visibly swallowed, but her voice was firm as she repeated her apology: "I'm sorry I slapped your face, sir. I deserve to be punished. I beg your forgiveness, sir."

"Not bad," Cartwright conceded grandly. "Fuck her again, Roger."

Lesbian revulsion fought for control. This time was different. Hard male hands posed the female nude as it passively allowed its contours to be positioned for further degradation – a crouch from which the whipped bottom rose in indecent supplication. Grunting his pleasure. Roger entered the punished flesh from the rear. Natalie gasped and moaned only as she was invaded. Her moan said everything there was to say. At the end of her ordeal, she remained kneeling on the rug, her tear-stained face stoney and unseeing, her hands still twisting at the steel bands on her wrists.

"Damn good show, Roger." The master of ceremonies beamed his approval. "While you're resting up, our two little lesbians can put on an act for us. But this won't be acting. Come on, you two cunt-lappers, get with it." He grinned at Janice. "About time you entered into the play."

"No!" Natalie's negative was an explosion of female outrage. "Janice never hurt you. Leave her out of this."

"Hell, girl, it's only what the two of you do every night – and maybe six times a day."

"But I've just been violated. That man's semen is still inside me!"

"So what? Get together, girls. Should be worth watching how you make out without hands."

"Leave her out of this." Natalie's demand was sullen. "You can do what you like with me. Isn't that enough?"

"I can get at you through her. Now get back down and spread your legs. You, girl –" He turned imperiously to Janice. "Get on top of her and go to work. Swallow anything that's there."

The handcuffed girls looked at each other in desolation. What was between them was intensely personal. Now it was to be made a public spectacle. As an aid to compliance, Roger slashed the leather hard across the mistress's bare shoulders. It dawned suddenly on every female present. The sisters emitted a gale of merriment. "She can't be tongued in those panties, Basil."

"Take them off her then. They fit so tight I hadn't noticed."

"They're not what you think."

Cartwright focused serious attention on Janice's loins. Slowly, his features split into a grin of comprehension.

"You mean – ?" He guffawed a gust of delight. "You telling me the kid's wearing a pair of – ?"

"Yes. There's a couple of prongs up inside her."

"I'll be damned. Bring her over here and let me watch you tug them off. They're damn near a part of her skin." After one doleful glance at her mistress, Janice allowed the sisters to lead her to be shamed. She stood with legs spread and breasts palpitating while Cartwright felt and prodded the strictures within her crotch. Erect, gazing above his head, she held herself firm as female fingers inserted themselves beneath the waistband and dragged the reluctant rubber sheath down over her hips. At any other time she would have been grateful for the withdrawal of the demeaning prongs but not now! Not like this as a feast for salacious male eyes! She met no one's gaze as the glistening objects, wet with her own secretions, were slowly plucked from the sanctuary of her flesh.

"I'll be damned! That's quite something. How many orgasms did they give you, girl?"

"Only one, sir. They'd only just been put on me when you arrived."

"They need cleaning. It's a girl's job. Someone hold them for her."

Nothing seemed to matter any more. While Theo lifted the wet panties to a convenient height, Janice sucked the prongs dry. Her only thought was to save Natalie from this hateful man.

Cartwright watched the performance of woman's most degrading task. He did not fail to note the subtleties of her feminine curves. The girl was indeed a bonus, and he would use her. She would be obedient under threat of pain for the woman she adored. Lesbianism had its uses.

His command was that of an owner: "Go do your other job now." His voice became a huge sneer. "The office manageress has spread her legs for you. Don't make her wait."

Without hands it was awkward, but Janice slithered into the age old position and looked down at the familiar bush of pubic hair. If only she weren't asked to do anything worse than this! When Natalie's tongue burrowed between her lips, Janice forgot the watching eyes.

When their shame was done, they stood abjectly like a pair of sluts as Roger and the sisters said their farewells. Amanda furtively accepted an envelope and slipped it in her bag. When the trio had departed, Denver Cartwright turned his full attention on his naked female captives.

"It will be a chore looking after you two," he admitted bluntly, "but I want you to myself. Miss Natalie Stephenson, you're going to have seven days of knowing what it's like to belong to a man."

"So I gathered."

"And since little sweetheart here is my ace in the hole, she'll never have a chance to escape."

"We understand that too." The former mistress sighed. "There's no need for overkill. You can keep Janice hostage for a week without being unkind to her." She met his eyes. "I'm accepting your assurance about the seven days."

"You're a cool bitch," Cartwright conceded. "You've been whipped and fucked, and you're still making suggestions. I expect it's hard to stop being a manageress." He chuckled. "So far as your little beauty goes, I'll do what I damn well please with her. She's mine as much as you are."

"Only in a different way. She's a hostage to my obedience. If you're mean to her, there's no need for me to obey; I'll go straight to the police." Natalie paused. "If you're thinking of

holding us both the way we are now, forget it. The office will be all over this place if I don't show."

"Touche!" Cartwright laughed without rancor. "So, okay, that's the deal. But you both have to remember I have to keep our little pigeon from flying away. That means a chain or a rope on her at all times, especially when you're around. While I'm dealing with you, she could make a run for it."

"This whole affair is your idea. I can't solve your problems. Just don't be mean to Janice, that's all."

"No, that's not all, you snooty bitch. What I need from you is fewer quiet sarcasms and more respect. Bend over. I'm going to give your ass another half dozen you'll remember."

"No, please don't! I apologize." The mistress looked around in desperation. "I know I'm bossy – I'll watch it – but please don't whip me again. It's a beastly awful kind of pain I'm not sure I can stand still for."

"Hmmm, made an impression, eh? Maybe if I whip you enough you'll become human."

"Please, I implore you. Do you want me to beg?"

"Nice idea. Yeah, go ahead and beg. In the meantime, I'll look after little sweetheart." He rummaged in the bag the sisters had left and came up with a chain and cuffs. "This will cement your attachment to each other," he observed as he shackled Janice's left ankle to Natalie's right. "There. While I look after you, our little canary won't be flitting out the window."

The tethering chain was long, impeding nothing except escape. Janice looked down at it ruefully. With that locked on her ankle and her arms handcuffed behind her back, she was effectively disposed of. But she would have to be around to watch whatever this hated man would do to Natalie. Poor darling Natalie!

"I can't think of anything sufficiently debasing," Natalie said wearily. "You want me to bend over?"

"Yes, it stretches the skin of your ass – hurts more."

"How thoughtful." Natalie bit her lip. "There, I've done it again. May I say I'm sorry?"

"No. You get two extra. Bend over for eight."

Natalie flushed at the rebuke. "I'll try," she said hesitantly. "But I'm frightened."

Cartwright had substituted a limber riding crop for the whip. It snapped across the bent and proffered cheeks of Natalie's bottom with a horrendous sound. The whipped nudity made a choked, inarticulate sound, and her knees buckled. But she instantly resumed her shameful pose for punishment.

Janice was wide-eyed and distraught. She stood at the end of her tether feeling more helpless and useless than ever before in her life. When the second stroke cut the cherished skin, she could no longer remain quiet.

"Stop it! Oh, stop it! Can't you see that she's had enough? Whip me instead."

The man paid her no heed. She might as well have kept quiet. She realized her role was only that of a prisoner. She could influence nothing.

Tearfully, she complained, "You're being cruel for the sake of cruelty, Mr. Cartwright. I don't see any profit in making us hate you."

Surprisingly, it achieved results. Cartwright stayed his hand. Natalie looked back up hopefully.

"You're a sweet kid," the man said. "It's probably a mistake, but I'll forgive the extra two." He looked over the bent girl's pink cheeks. "That leaves you four to go. Do you understand?"

"Yes, I understand. And thank you."

"Well, we are making progress." Cartwright swung heartily again. As the scarlet wound sprang into being on the innocent flesh, he added, "First thing we know you'll be saying please and thank you for a fuck."

Janice stood morosely as the bottom of her beloved was cropped four more times. She shared each blow, wincing as the crop made impact, gasping as her mistress gasped. She watched the weals form, hating her own impotence, feeling like a child.

After the fourth cut had left its mark, Natalie asked humbly, "May I stand up now, sir?"

"Why not? Unless you want some more."

"Thank you for whipping my bottom, sir." The office manageress stood erect. "I expect I deserved it. I have to learn my lesson."

"Sensible girl. I knew you would be. Lie down to be fucked."

"Yes, of course, sir." Natalie arranged herself on the rug.

5

The Third Kidnapping

Here began for the two girls the strangest week of their lives. In the noon hour of the first day Natalie rushed from office to apartment in a desperate supposition that Cartwright would not be there. She was right. Janice was a lonely captive. She lounged on the couch reading. She was handcuffed, but around her waist a heavy chain was padlocked. Its links trailed across the carpet to terminate in another padlock around the steam pipe to the radiator.

"Darling, it's no use. I've tried and tried. I'm fixed but good," the captive girl said wanly. "Get back to the office before he finds out."

Janice was right. Natalie tried every expedient, but her beloved remained captive to the chain. On the second day the mistress arrived armed with bolt cutters and a hacksaw, but the moment she beheld her loved one's face she knew her error, even before the mocking voice came from the door. "I'll relieve you of those little items." He took the bolt cutters and hacksaw from her and pleasantly asked, "Would you like your whipping now or after you come home this evening? I think ten good strokes should act as a deterrent."

"I'll take them this evening if you don"t mind. I have to keep up appearances at the office."

"Always sensible. I have to admire you." Natalie did not try again. She was never sure if it

was hopelessness or fear of the whip. That night when she returned to her penance she was taken instantly to the room of punishment. Janice was already locked in the pillory as a naked audience.

"I intend to whip you properly this time, Miss Stephenson. You evidently regard attention to your bottom as frivolous."

"No, honestly I don't! But – oh, very well, do whatever you wish."

The girl with neck and wrists locked in the pillory watched her mistress strip as naked as herself.

"What must I do now?" Natalie asked listlessly. Janice watched as the slender wrists were strapped to the bar, then raised to make their owner stand on her toes, stretched and vulnerable. Both girls were panting.

"An excellent posture for a girl to be whipped, Miss Stephenson."

"Yes, of course." She could think of nothing else to say.

"No riding crop this time – a proper whip."

"Yes, I understand."

"Your back has never been whipped. I intend to use it for the full ten to which you have been sentenced."

"Thank you."

It was so damned civilized. But, short of hysterics, Janice could think of little to say. If a girl did not want to plead for mercy, there was nothing else to do. She shifted helplessly in the pillory and watched her mistress whipped.

The man was insistent, as though seeking reassurance. "I hope you feel proper guilt, Miss Stephenson."

"Yes, I suppose so." Natalie's tone was far from happy. "I was trying to free Janice and defeat you. Call it the fortunes of war." The lash sliced around her slender waist. Instinctively, she kicked at nothing and pulled herself up from the floor by her strapped wrists. It was as though she must assure herself there was no escape. Janice wished she could close her ears to the sound from the whipped girl's lips. It was pitiful. The second stroke brought the same results, but this time Natalie asked in desperation, "Would you like to gag me – sir? I'm afraid I'm going to scream."

"No gag. Scream as you please."

"Please, sir, show me mercy. Please, not ten!" Cartwright struck again. Natalie screamed, writhing frantically. When she again hung quiescent and passive from the straps, Cartwright asked, "Going to try that silly game again?"

"No, sir, never. I should have had more sense."

"Are you going to try and free Janice in any other way?" There was a lengthy pause. The girl in the stocks listened breathlessly. Natalie's surrender was almost a whisper: "No, sir, I won't try again, not any way."

"I am capable of mercy," Cartwright drawled. "Just three more instead of seven."

"Thank you, sir! Oh, thank you!" Janice hated to see and hear her mistress so abject, but she knew she herself would show no more courage in like circumstances. Miserably, she watched the tensioning of of the tractioned torso as Natalie braced herself for the next stroke. Number four. It cut across her shoulders with a ringing crack followed instantly by her scream. Without inhibition she screamed her way through the next three until she hung sweating and panting, her feet restless against the pain. Her voice was a shamed whisper: "I'm sorry about the screams. It hurts so bad I can't bear it."

"Taught you a lesson?"

"Yes. Oh, yes!" Janice could guess the degree to which prudence dictated her mistress's surrender. It was useless to invite pain. She would be humble and accept humiliation for the seven days. Both of them were in the power of a force they could not control. Denver Cartwright had shown slight mercy, but there would be no escaping him. The yoke on Janice's neck and wrists did no more than chafe, but it seemed to weigh a ton. She could look sideways and see the padlock which locked her in thrall, but it might as well have been in the next state. Awkwardly, she tried to toss the hair from before her eyes.

Cartwright traced the six livid weals across the ivory back with a blunt male finger. He found an intense absorption in their cruel beauty and the manner in which their owner winced at his touch. "Hurt that bad?"

"Yes. I'm sorry I'm a sissy."

"Don't be. Just be thankful I didn't give you forty. If I lay them on you slowly, I think you could bear fifty without losing consciousness. Agree with me?"

"I don't know, sir." It was a small, pale admission. "This is my first experience of being whipped."

"You've laced into the girls you've owned?"

"Never with the same severity, sir." Natalie looked back over a bare shoulder. "My arms are a lot lighter than yours. And I've never even thought of fifty."

"Think of them now. I don't promise them, but they could happen if I don't get the kind of obedience I want."

"I'll remember that, sir."

"I'm going to free you now. Are you going to make a fuss?"

"No, I promise."

Cartwright lowered the tensioned arms and unbuckled the straps from reddened wrists. He casually performed the chore of again attaching the two girls by their ankles with the chain. Before turning his attention to the pillory he brusquely ordered, "Get down behind, little sweetheart, your head between her legs. Service her. Do a professional job. I enjoy watching."

Chain clinked. Instinctively, Janice widened the space between her legs as her whipped mistress passed behind her out of sight. Their tethering chain was amply long for whatever might be done, but it would be where she could not see it done. The pillory divided her. All she could see of her own nakedness was her hands.

"I want you to act naturally, Janice. Make the sounds and motions you would if no one watched. I'll be walking slowly around the pillory for the view. Mostly I'll be out of your range of vision."

The pilloried girl sensed his happiness. She could only guess at Natalie's frame of mind. The mistress would be doing something they adored, but the compulsion behind it and the presence of the male turned something beautiful into an ugly act – indecent, gross, a thing of shame. The helpless girl bit her lip as she felt Natalie's hands clasping her bent bottom for support, pulling it against her mouth, seeking comfort between the captive legs of her slave who she would now serve. Janice gasped as her lips were parted by a suddenly eager tongue. Blindly, she closed her eyes to forget the presence of a man. She moaned.

Denver Cartwright watched, enthralled. His captives blended themselves as one. In this act of cunnilingus they achieved a femaleness he had never before witnessed. He almost wished he had freed the younger girl from the grip of the stocks to give her loveliness a greater play, but her writhings against the discipline of the wooden yoke had an eroticism all their own. He was well content with this tableau of his own creation, doubly so with the humble role being played by Miss Natalie Stephenson. He would use her in a dozen shameful ways, and this was one. But he could not fail to notice the avidity with which she fed upon her love. No matter, there remained in store for her pain and tears enough.

Cartwright allowed his captives to clutch and moan away their ecstasy into quiescence. The mistress slipped into languor on the floor, and Janice's hips ceased to gyrate, her moans now silent. He watched their female contours with deep pleasure. He was a sensualist, alert to unusual beauty, enthralled by the curves and planes of femininity. It was with regret he unlocked the padlock and lifted the heavy yoke from Janice's bowed neck and passive wrists.

"Upstairs," he ordered, as he patted her bottom while she stretched her freed arms and neck in relief. "You know what to do."

They knew. This was only their second night with their new master, but a pattern had already manifested itself. They clattered their chains upstairs to his bedroom with its four poster king-size bed. With no more than a shrug of distaste, Natalie disposed her nudity upon the covers, stretching her limbs to the far corners. Janice stood wanly to one side and watched Cartwright tie her there, spread-eagle, helpless, exquisitely available. The ties on wrist and ankle were not cruel – she would be able to sleep – but they would keep her there for his convenience until morning. As a safety precaution he chained the opposite ankle to the bed, her other foot being already tethered to the standing girl.

"That's what they call having it handy!" Cartwright declared enthusiastically. Seating himself on the bed, he patted the widely exposed sex and patch of pubic hair. "Ready to be fucked, Miss Stephenson?"

"Whenever you wish, sir."

"No objections?"

"None, sir. I am obviously available for your use."

If Cartwright was piqued by a too ready surrender, he showed no sign of it. Janice stood by the bed, as distant as her ankle chain would permit, and watched her tied mistress being played with. The only motions Natalie made were irritable stirrings when male fingers were unkind to her breasts and pubic hair. Pinched nipples made her tense, ready to cry out in pain, but Cartwright always desisted before she conceded anguish. For the vagrant fingers she was a pleasurable plaything. For herself and her bound nudity it was a time of simple endurance. Janice watched the corded hands to see them clench or splay out their fingers under stress.

When Cartwright removed his clothes and possessed himself of the helpless nude, Janice had the choice of either watching the carnal act or turning in the opposite direction. Or

she could lie on the rug. Later she would be tossed a blanket for sleep, but that time had not come yet. She was well aware of Cartwright's enjoyment of her distress in watching him rape her mistress. She looked down at the hated shackles by which she was held prisoner. She longed for its key, but the keys were safe on the dresser far away where neither girl could reach them while their master slept.

There could be no denial of Denver Cartwright's skill in making love. He scorned Roger's brutal thrusts, imposing his mastery by the extraction of orgasm after orgasm from his unwilling partner. No matter how she tried, Natalie was unable to combat the betrayal of her flesh. She moaned over and over on her way to the familiar path of climax until she abandoned her efforts and writhed against her bonds as in a loved one's arms. Janice watched in desuetude, too fascinated by distress to turn away.

Janice Latimer supposed, in her role as a hostage, she could not complain of her treatment while her mistress was at work. On the first two days after Natalie's abortive effort to free her, Cartwright had contemptuously tied her with thin cord and left her on the bed. On the first occasion she was spread-eagle, and on the second hogtied. Both imposed an arduous afternoon, and his faith in his knots were abundantly proven by her inability to free herself. She was as tightly bound when he returned after five hours as when he had gone away and left her alone to fight his strictures. On the third day he fucked her.

From the start Janice was appointed as an unpaid domestic. Rising early, Cartwright freed her ankle of its shackle and replaced it with leg irons, effectively hobbling her but in no way stopping her ability to work. Laughing, he locked a collar and a small cowbell on her neck. If he failed to hear its cheerful betrayal of her presence, he went in search of her. Twice she had muffled its metal voice with a rag, and twice Natalie had been caned to pay for this delinquency, so Janice had given it up and now wore her betrayer as she might have worn a necklace. While the male violated his captive woman, Janice prepared breakfast so it would be ready for them after her freed mistress had bathed and dressed. She then cleaned house, after which she offered her person to be chained or bound as her master might desire. She was never given the faintest opportunity to escape.

On the third day it was different. Presenting herself for her day in bondage, Janice received instead a briefly humorous command: "Lie on your back on the rug, sweetheart, with your legs wide apart."

She stared back at his grin, not surprised or shocked. She was no simpering virgin, but viewed his command with distaste.

"That isn't part of our deal," she told him evenly. "I'm only a hostage."

"So?"

"Hostages are not supposed to be harmed."

"I'm not going to harm you. I told you to lie on your back."

"We both know what you intend to do to me."

"Is it that bad? Do you have a name for it?" He was laughing at her heaving breasts, but Janice remained steadfast. "It's you who have a name for it. You call it fucking. That word's as hateful as the act. If I must speak of it, I prefer to call it violation or ravishment."

Cartwright laughed at her seriousness, and said, "From what Victorian closet did you revive those two treasures of propriety? Do I smell mothballs?" He motioned with his head. "Get yourself down on the floor, girl."

"Please don't make me. You know how it is between Natalie and me. It's a double

violation."

"There's no screw as good as a lesbian fuck, sweetheart. Lay your pretty self down on that rug."

"Please, no! Please don't do it to me. It's a defilement." Janice looked at her master imploringly. "It would break Natalie's heart."

"How about we don't tell Natalie?" He leered at her distress. "It's not that big a deal, you know."

"Yes, I'll concede that. If I wasn't a lesbian, I'd probably be down on the rug right now. I know how expert you are with a girl. You can probably make me climax as many times as you want. But – oh, don't you understand?"

"What I understand is that you're trying to goad me into using force to salve your conscience so you can tell your mother how I beat you into it." He was right. They both knew it. Cornered, Janice pleaded. "If I do what you want, can we please not tell Natalie?"

"Okay, you win that one."

Already naked, she slithered to the rug, then grinned up at him ruefully, explaining, "I can't spread my legs. You've chained them together."

"Hump your ass up on a cushion. Bend your knees and bring your heels back. You'll be surprised."

Janice obeyed and was as surprised at the effectiveness of the position. It was easily possible for a girl with chained feet to be fucked by a male. The links between her ankles fell below the cushion, her knees bent and spread wide.

"I seem to be ready," she said disgustedly. "I suspect you've done this before. Go ahead and do whatever you want to do with me."

From the moment she was entered, Janice Latimer knew herself impaled by a master of sensuality. Denver Cartwright was good. She had witnessed him devastate Natalie, and now he conquered her as well. She knew not what his skill comprised, only its effects. The effects elicited from her the same moans and animal cries, the same writhings she had witnessed from her mistress. When he was done with her, she knew herself possessed by more than chains. She lay supine upon the rug, uncaring of her captivity.

"Thanks, kid. You really are a sweetheart." He knelt beside her, looking down at her damp nudity with affection. "Lie there and rest. We'll do it again in thirty minutes." She did not demur. In the grip of a pleasant lassitude, she lay as she was while Denver Cartwright did business on the phone, his voice a distant drone. A strange and exciting fire generated within her loins. Janice Latimer had given herself to other men, but had always retired in rejection of their ineptitude. Natalie Stephenson had opened up a whole new world of wonder for her. Now Cartwright had done the same, but she saw him as only her own feminine weakness. She would endure and obey him for what was left of the seven days. If she regretted his absence after that, well, so be it! Idly, she considered the seven days. It was a strange sentence both she and her mistress served together. Its brevity enabled the male to have his way with their bodies. If Cartwright had demanded a month or a year, they could not have borne it – they would have rebelled and taken the consequences – but seven days was not worth the scandal and the cost of rebellion. It was best they work out their strange penance. With his demand of only a single week, Cartwright had been shrewd, precisely gauging their tolerance of pain and captivity. Even the pain was only a punishment for disobedience. If they did as they were told, they were not much hurt.

But they had only Cartwright's word for the term of their servitude. When the seven days were done, he could demand more and more, on and on and on. He might even make real his laughing joke about those fifty lashes on Natalie's bare skin. Anything was possible with girls held in such bondage as they. Janice kicked irritably at her chain. That was real enough! Heavy metal links joined her ankles so she could walk only slowly and run not at all. Angrily, she expelled such thoughts from her mind. They were negative and unfounded. In a few more days their captivity would become a dream of the past.

The male stood looking down at her. "You know what to do," he told her evenly. "You've done wonderfully so far. Don't give me any hassle now."

It was as though he had read her mind and she read his. Hopefully, she asked, "Couldn't we do the same again?" She hesitated and then added, "You're terribly clever at it."

"You know what I intend to do with you."

"Yes, I know." She looked at him sadly. "I wish you wouldn't."

They gazed at each other, needing no words. At the end of a minute the captive girl turned over and disposed her person as he required. It was very simple. She was cutting a loss. Later, when Cartwright had tied her tightly to one of the posts of his bed and gone away, Janice wept. But she was not certain who the tears were for.

She would always look back on this experience as "the Seven Days." For Janice Latimer they were days of frustrating captivity. She never had a chance to escape the ropes, the cords, and the chains in which Cartwright kept her secure. Natalie Stephenson returned from the office daily to yield her body to whatever humiliation her master chose to impose. He was rarely deliberately cruel, but he was far from kind in his revenge. Natalie avoided thrashings by a meticulous observance of obedience which all three of them understood. She paid her penance nightly on the bed.

The seventh day was agony. Release was not mentioned. Their routine was unchanged. After her final violation of the night, Natalie went to the office and Janice clattered her way through her chores. When she was done, her waist was chained and tethered for the day while Denver Cartwright went about his affairs. He was a busy man. Janice suspected his two female prisoners were sometimes a nuisance. He snapped the padlocks on her chains, kissed her, and went away like an absent-minded husband. Janice dared not yet ask. It would be a mistake to push him. She longed for a talk with her mistress, but the two girls were never left alone together. She spent her day fingering links and trying hard to read.

It was not until she was being spread and bound on Denver Cartwright's bed that Natalie dared venture, "Isn't this our seventh day, sir?"

"Right." He tugged briskly at a rope around a wrist. "But days have nights, you know. When I've finished tying you, I'm going to fuck you but good. Tomorrow, when you come home from your office, I'll be gone. This is my last rope job on you."

Janice supposed it was as good as they could expect. Her ankle safely shackled, she stood and watched her mistress ravaged and defiled. Their master was unusually vigorous, pausing in his onslaughts within female loins to gloat. "Going to slap my face next time we meet?"

"No, sir, not ever."

The coupling was resumed, but was broken later by one more jibe: "Think I should give you those fifty strokes I mentioned? Make a nice farewell gift."

Two female hearts thudded desperately as the mistress answered, "If you wish, sir, whatever pleases you."

"Hmmm, not a bad answer." Cartwright resumed his thrusts.

Janice sank to the floor. Perhaps later he would remember her blanket. Through their connecting chain, she could feel Natalie's responses to their master's carnal revenge. She found it hard to sleep.

When, on the morning of the eighth day, it was time for Natalie Stephenson to go to the office, there was a moment of awkwardness. Cartwright was fully at ease, surveying his two girls with an amused regard.

"Well, I suppose this is our goodbye," the soiled lesbian said, as though not believing her own words.

"Come and kiss me," he said.

Natalie obeyed. Their mouths had coupled often enough in carnality, so what did this matter? She kissed her master for the last time, making it a sensuous salute.

Backing away, she said evenly, "Thank you for my lessons."

"You're more than welcome, Miss Stephenson."

Diffidently, she eyed her slave. "Janice's ankles are still shackled. Shouldn't you – ?"

"Sorry, I forgot. She wears them so well. Over here, sweetheart."

It was glorious to be totally free and to know their travail was at an end. Janice stood and glowed while she was kissed and hugged. A moment later she and Cartwright were alone. On the carpet her leg irons gleamed their testimony to past captivity. "You can put them back on now, sweetheart." Janice Latimer knew she had heard right, but the words made no sense. She gazed at Cartwright's masculine bulk in trepidation. "But it's over!" she protested. "I mean, why should I?"

"Because I want to talk to you, and I want you wearing those things while I'm doing it." Denver Cartwright paused and grinned amiably. "If you don't put them on, I'll do it for you. And don't start looking at doors and windows; you can't get away." Janice looked down at the gleaming links and solid anklets.

They were so much a thing she wanted to forget. But she knew she could not best this man. He could subdue her with ease, and perhaps this was no more than his final caprice.

Unhappily, she sat on the carpet and locked her own ankles back in their chains.

"Sensible girl. I like you. Now the next thing's the letter."

"What letter?" Janice felt dazed and frightened. "What are you doing with me, Mr. Cartwright?"

"Only decent to let your partner know she won't be seeing you any more. She'll expect you to have dinner waiting tonight."

"And so it will be. I'll make sure –"

"No, you won't, Janice. You'll tell your precious Miss Stephenson that I've chosen you and I'm taking you away."

The leg irons suddenly weighed a ton. Wretchedly, she protested, "But the deal! You

agreed –"

"Sweetheart," Cartwright began in a serious tone, "you don't realize – you're one of the most beautiful girls in the world."

"What's that got to do with it?"

"Don't ask silly questions. You know the answer." He repeated his amiable grin. "Just to compliment your footwear, go get me that thin riding crop. It's around here somewhere."

Refusal was on her lips, but the errand would give her time to collect her wits, now in sad disarray. The cowbell was still locked to her collar which no one had thought to remove. It clanked its mocking serenade on her shameful search.

When she returned and handed Cartwright the hated weapon, he said, "Good. Now we'll go to the desk and you write the letter."

"I've decided not to. It's too cruel."

Denver Cartwright thrashed her. She tried to run, but hobbled feet sent her sprawling on the floor. The crop sang in delight, licking at her nakedness, cutting her skin wherever her writhings offered a target until she heard herself pleading.

"All right, all right – I'll do it! Stop!"

Cartwright did not stop. The crop continued to bite at her hungrily. Beneath the lash, she looked up in piteous appeal.

"I said I'll do it. I will, I promise!" she pledged urgently. "I'll obey you – I'll obey you."

The whipping stopped. Janice's skin was a latticework of weals. She crouched humbly, sweating and panting. No man had previously whipped her. She wanted no more. The male voice came suavely.

"Obedience is the key, Janice. Give me that and I'll not mark you often. Do you understand why I thrash you?"

"Yes, I understand."

"Get up." He offered a hand. "We'll go and get you a drink. You're trembling."

"I'll write the letter. Don't whip me any more."

"Yes, of course." Cartwright was amused at cause and effect, and this girl in tearful repentance was infinitely sweet. With a firm hand on her bare arm he led Janice Latimer to her new destiny.

"I'm wondering how best to handle you," Cartwright mused, handing her a drink at the bar. "Here, drink this brandy. You're not used to being whipped that hard, are you?"

Perched nakedly upon a stool, her chained feet twined in its rungs, Janice accepted the glass and gulped its fiery contents avidly. She was still quivering from the lash, still frightened, too frightened to speak. She simply looked at her captor with wide, scared eyes.

"I'm not too badly fixed," Cartwright continued unhurriedly. "I own properties here and there. I'm taking you to one of them."

"You're kidnaping me?"

He shrugged. "Call it what you like. But there's a journey. One of the virtues of the place I've chosen is its distance. Get you away from this lesbian atmosphere."

"May I have another drink? It does help." She shivered. "Please don't whip me like that again without warning." He refilled her glass.

"I had to whip you once like that. You can understand why. Are you listening to what I'm saying?"

"Yes, of course. You're going to take me somewhere far away from Natalie."

"Right. It entails my private plane and getting you to it in public. I can cuff your hands behind your back before fastening the lid down. If you're claustrophobic, I can give you a shot in the arm and know you're out for the duration."

"Oh, no!" The negative burst from Janice's lips without volition. "Don't put me in a box. Oh, please!" Her appeal rose desperately. "I'll go anywhere you want willingly rather than that."

"And ask everyone you see for help?"

"Yes, I see your point. I suppose I'm a problem for you." Janice became deeply serious in her anxiety. "Isn't there something called a parole? I give you mine. I will take an oath or something not to try and escape. I'm terrified of being put in a box naked."

Her sincerity touched him. Cartwright understood it. He believed, too, that he understood this girl he had come to desire. It would be an exciting challenge to escort her through the airport, naked beneath a cloak, her arms handcuffed behind her back. But he tested her again.

"It's asking too much of you, sweetheart. Even with your promise I wouldn't blame you for calling out for help. There's a lot at stake for you, and no way are you in love with me."

He saw her wilt, resignation erasing the sparkle from her eyes.

"All right then, put me in your box," Janice said listlessly. "But do me a favor after you've handcuffed me – give me the needle before you put me in the box. In fact, I'd be terribly grateful if I never saw the box at all." Her head reared. "There's no danger of my regaining consciousness while I'm still locked inside, is there?"

"The buried alive phobia, eh?" Cartwright laughed. "Okay, you win. Give me a serious promise now and I'll let you walk to your fate worse than death."

Janice took a deep, thankful breath. The light returned to her eyes. Looking her companion straight in the eyes, she made her voice solemn: "I absolutely promise and give you my word I won't in any way try and escape during this journey." For measure she added, "I'll be completely obedient the whole time."

They both laughed. They had reached a strange rapport.

In the time that followed, Janice Latimer's bewildered mind churned over two absolutes: She had lost Natalie – maybe forever – and she had been kidnaped. Her conscience prodded her insistently, telling her that surely there was something she could do, that she would not walk through a crowded airport as a passive prisoner without asking for help. But she believed Cartwright would keep any promise he made, and she could do no less. She thrust conscience aside with thought of the darkness of the box. She had made the wisest choice.

But when the time came it was a choice not easy to sustain. In obedience to her master's command she had fixed her face and hair, and bathed. She was then relieved of shackles and collar. She aimed her back and offered her wrists to be handcuffed. With the tight closing of the metal bands upon her flesh she knew herself committed. She held herself erect, chin high, for the fastening of the cape around her throat. "I want you to know that I admire what you're doing." Cartwright's tone was gruff.

"I'm glad you do," Janice replied in a return to vivacity. "I feel like an absolute idiot. How safe is the clasp on the cape? I'd look cute standing like this in the middle of the airport."

"Safe enough, sweetheart. Come along." Once outside the apartment she was gripped by a sense of adventure. She had no idea where she was being taken and did not ask. Sunshine and fresh air worked their miracles. By the time they reached the airport and stepped from the taxi, Cartwright's calm flow of banter had soothed her. She discovered a delicious wickedness in being thus naked and helpless in a place so public. It was easy to meet the incurious gaze of officials and the public. Capes were not in fashion and the day was warm, so her attire drew cursory glances. But she smiled back and stalked serenely through the concourse with Cartwright's hand firmly on her arm. It was not until she mounted the steps of the private jet that she realized lost opportunity and closed her mind to it. She was a captive maiden being wafted away to a distant place. She was actually excited.

The two man crew pretended not to notice her. They were her master's men. Gaining altitude, they closed the door to the cockpit to leave the man and his captive girl alone in the commodious cabin. Cartwright took the cape from her shoulders.

"Naked and handcuffed, that's the way I want you," he said equably. "From now on things will be my way for my pleasure. But I do want you comfortable. Relax, you'll be well attended."

She was indeed well attended. The girl was a surprise, a coffee colored Negress in a pert uniform, no more than eighteen. The maiden evinced no surprise at nudity and handcuffs. Her attitude towards her employer and his prize was a mixture of familiarity and awed respect. She dispensed drinks, holding Janice's to her lips until it was gone.

"Don't you be scared none, honey child, you in good hands. I's called Patsy and I takes good care o' you. But I don't never sets you free." Grinning widely, she returned to her cubicle at the rear.

"Good kid," the master said, applauding. "Told you right where you stood with her at the start."

"She sure did – I'm a prisoner."

"We both knew that, sweetheart. What Patsy or the boys don't want is you asking for help. Asking for help from now on can be painful."

"I get whipped?"

"Right. You catch on quick. Maybe what you got this morning helped."

"I just thought of a beautifully sarcastic remark, but I bottled it up quick, so maybe it did help."

"Good! Now, sweetheart, aren't you curious?"

"Intensely."

"Then why no questions?"

"I'm scared of getting whipped."

"Oh, come off it. Am I that much of an ogre?" Cartwright bestowed his amiable grin. "For the first while I'll give you the benefit of the doubt over sarcasms and cute quips. But watch it."

"Yes, sir."

"And I'm not sure about that title. When you're in the doghouse I'll demand it, but for the rest of the time, like now, you can call me Denver."

Janice looked at him, surprised. "I'm not sure where that leaves me," she said slowly. "A companion or a slave?"

"Blend the two, kid, and you've got it." He made a gesture of deprecation. "You must know what men are by now. What most of us want in a girl is to be a human chameleon."

"I think I'd be safer as a slave, sir. May I be a slave?"

Cartwright gestured her pleasantry aside. "I'm taking you to an island," he told her seriously. "I own it. It's small, and the only people on it are my staff. We don't encourage casual callers. Oh, and it's situated in a warm ocean. That's all you need to know."

"I have to suppose it's somewhere in the Caribbean then. You must be filthy rich."

"Yes, I am." He smiled in retrospect. "When I bought it there was an old ruined fortress. I've had a lot of it rebuilt. Appropriately enough, the only parts not affected by decay were the dungeons. I've cleaned them up and replaced any rusty bars."

"And now you're going to put me in one of those?"

"I didn't say that, but they'd make a sensible change for you from being whipped. For misdemeanors, that is."

Janice examined the strong face. For the moment Denver Cartwright was a small boy immersed in a favorite game. "It sounds romantic," she ventured cautiously. "Like a pirate's hideaway. I suppose Bluebeard left me some chains? Or would irons be the right word?"

"Actually, he – or someone – did. And irons comes closest to describing them. They weigh a ton and were shockingly rusted. I got rid of most of them, but had the rest refurbished for you."

"For me? Really?"

"They were made for men. I had the shackle bands shrunk down to half size. They'll be snug on you now."

Janice was unsure. It was a fairy tale, with a wicked witch lurking in the shadows. She could shudder at the dungeons but the rest sounded idyllic.

"A whipping post and a pillory, I suppose?" she questioned.

"Oh, sure. I'd have had them made if there hadn't been any, but they were made of good oak, so there was no trouble whittling them down to your size."

"I don't know whether to believe any of this or not," Janice said forthrightly. "It all

sounds too good to be true." She twisted her wrists against the handcuffs as though to reassure herself she was still a prisoner. "Look, sir, now that we're way up in the air wouldn't you like to take these handcuffs off me? I mean, I can't jump out, you know."

"No. I like you as you are – naked, no hands. Open your legs wider. Don't ever keep them closed when I'm talking to you."

Janice blushed but obeyed.

"Does my pussy hold that much magic?"

"Yes, it does. I'm not alone in admiring a girl's sex, you know. It's a common male enjoyment. A lot of poor bastards never get a chance."

Janice nestled comfortably into the expensive upholstery, her joined arms hidden in the corner at her back. The seven days had inured her to being naked before a man. Goodness knows, he had used her body enough in shameful ways! It. was useless to be coy now when he was being halfway kind. Handcuffs didn't matter much. She was accustomed to them. She tried to envision life on a pirate island, but it was just too much to comprehend.

"Am I permitted to know how long you'll keep me prisoner?" she asked.

"No."

She tried again. "Do you want me to do work on this island? What will I do with myself, apart from trying to please you? Or will you keep me locked up?"

"Depends on how you behave. Try blending them, dear."

"I'll behave. I don't want any kind of punishment. I hate being punished – except by Natalie." She made a moan of resignation. "From what you tell me, I guess I'll never see Natalie again."

Cartwright allowed her reference to her mistress to pass as Patsy arrived with food. The tray was professional in its perfection. A table unfolded and plates were placed on it. Patsy took her place beside the the naked prisoner.

"If you allow me to have my hands to eat, I promise to give them back to you afterwards, sir," the captive pleaded.

"No. It amuses me to see Patsy feed you. Don't ask again."

Prudently, she ate and held her tongue.

Before long her master gave Patsy a command. "I want you to tell Miss Latimer how long you've belonged to me," he said in a conversational tone.

" 'Bout four years, Miz Latimer. I's so lucky."

"Tell her how often you get whipped – and why."

Patsy looked surprised at such a silly question. "Why, whenever I needs it," she explained patiently. "When I's naughty I get whipped right and proper. I forget to behave, so I gits my little ass whipped or cropped or caned or whatever. One time Miz Brigid, she hangs me up by my thumbs. I thought I'd die fo' sho'."

"Brigid is my housekeeper," Cartwright explained. "You won't like her."

"She ain't that bad," Patsy said generously. "She just mighty strict, that's all. Best do what she say."

"Tell her what you do for amusement, Patsy."

"Well, Miz Latimer, I work a lot, and I sleep a lot, and I swim. I gits myself fucked whenever I can. Mr. Cartwright, he's real kind 'bout that."

"I let one or two of the boys I employ give Patsy a time. Then there's the two men on this plane. Whenever they stay on the island, they enjoy what Patsy has to offer."

Patsy sighed, envisioning delight. "I's a lucky gal. 'Course, Mr. Cartwright, he fucks best of all." She giggled. "But I 'spect you knows that." Delivering another forkful of food between captive lips, she added comfortingly, "Don't you worry none 'bout being whipped and such. I only been whipped three times this week – so far. It ain't bad."

Janice looked from the smiling man to the cheerful girl. This bright luxury in which she sat was crazy. Dungeons and ancient chains awaited her. It was at once reassuring and terrifying.

Sensing bafflement, Patsy rose, bent over, and flipped up her tiny skirt to reveal a round and saucy bottom. Helpfully, she said, "See, Miz Latimer, I got this yesterday. It ain't no worse than a gal can put up with, and I sho' did ask for it."

The captive viewed the erotically beautiful exhibit askance. The young cheeks were crisscrossed by raised welts.

"Brigid put them on me with a cane," their owner said comfortably. "I got me a dozen strokes. Ain't they pretty?"

"Yes, they're beautiful." Janice searched for something to say but could think of nothing. Lamely, she added, "But I don't think I'd enjoy them the way you do."

"The little minx thrives on pain," Cartwright laughed. "Unless I've given her specific orders, I never interfere with Brigid's disciplines. What she does to you is between yourselves."

In a pensive mood, Janice ate the food the thrashed maiden daintily fed her. When the girl had departed with the tray, Janice voiced an irritant.

"My breasts seem to interest you, sir. You've been looking at them intently."

"Why not? They occupy a lot of the view. I adore beautiful things. That's why I've collected you." Cartwright used his foot to thrust the gap between her legs wider. "You don't seem to realize it, my dear, but you are a delectable delicacy."

"To hurt? To give pain to?"

"Pain will fall into its proper perspective after you've been on the island for awhile. It will be very much a part of your being, but you'll be surprised how easily you put it in its place."

"If my pain is your pleasure, that makes you a sadist, sir."

"Do you believe that of me?"

"Well, no, I don't."

He nodded sagely. "There's aesthetics about this business of owning a captive girl. It goes

far beyond keeping her naked and making her sit with her thighs apart. For instance, you are enhanced by having your arms fastened behind your back. It causes you to make all kinds of small motions you wouldn't otherwise reveal."

"Is all of it anything more than the power you feel in making me your prisoner – keeping me so helpless so I have to look to you for everything? Like I am now, sir."

"You know better than that."

She did know. She vividly remembered the delights of Natalie's cords and whips. She must by now realize the possession of one person by another was not exclusively for lesbians. This man's ownership of her body was far more positive.

Again she probed. "When I cry out under the lash, and when I writhe to escape or to ease pain, is it anything more for you than the prolongation of bringing me to orgasm?"

"Sure, that's in there somewhere."

"I've always believed that when a male brings a female to an explosive climax, he revels in victory."

"What's wrong with that?" He laughed at her seriousness. "Stop analyzing. You've been taken way out beyond suburban sex. Be grateful."

Janice stirred restlessly against her small metal bond, still trying to orient herself to this new world.

"What it all makes me is your plaything," she said intently. "A sort of pretty pet."

"That too, sweetheart. How far beyond that you progress is mostly up to you."

She shied away from the implication of affection or love. For females they were an ever present hazard. There were historical precedents for slavegirls falling in love with their masters. She looked at Cartwright as though seeing him for the first time. His business suit had gone, replaced by slacks and an open necked shirt. His features were alive with enjoyment. He had shed ten years. It would be hard to guess his age. If she had to be owned by a man, she certainly could have done much worse.

Beneath the surface, Janice Latimer was infuriated by her acceptance of the status quo. She should have been hysterical, screaming, kicking, accusing, uncooperative. The fact that she would then get herself whipped into submission, as had happened that morning, was not part of a rationale dictated by conscience. Conscience wanted her to fight a battle she must lose. Angrily, she tossed conscience aside. She would use what female guile she could to save her skin. There were enough stripes on it already. She would reject guilt if a part of what was happening gave her pleasure. Darling Natalie was gone. She must adjust herself to Cartwright. She looked from the window at the silver sparkle of blue water below and felt excitement rising. She examined words for what she supposed she had become: leman, concubine, mistress, whore, slut, slave, harlot, hetaera. She decided on the last. It had a touch of class.

"I can understand your feelings fluctuating," Cartwright said understandingly. "I expect they'll run the whole gamut everyday for awhile. In some ways you're getting a million dollar vacation, and I don't want you to leap into a state of euphoria."

"Euphoria! In handcuffs?" She sniffed disdainfully.

"Handcuffs don't matter," her master continued blandly. "But to start you off right, I'll give you the grand tour and introduce you around. Then, tomorrow, you'll receive a very

formal whipping in front of the entire population. We'll make a gala affair of it."

"Denver, no! Please don't! Denver –" Janice stopped, aghast at her outburst and use of his Christian name. Limply, her protest trailed away into abject apology. "I'm sorry. Oh, I'm so sorry, sir."

"Don't be.' Cartwright laughed delightedly at her confusion. "Anytime you feel like using my name, that's the time to do it."

"Thank you." She tried to smile. "It just slipped out. I'm glad you're not angry."

"Hell no, you're too precious. Now, I want you to get the right idea about getting whipped."

"You don't need to explain, Denver. I believe I understand. I made that protest out of pure shock."

"Damn it, I believe you do understand." Cartwright gazed at her in admiration. "Okay, I won't belabor the point. But understand this, Janice: There's nothing casual about what you're going to get. It will be fifty strokes."

Wide-eyed in disbelief, Janice repeated the word, "Fifty!"

"Sounds bad, I know, but I've got a thing about it. I have to get it out of my system on a girl of quality. Patsy won't do. I'd be giving you a welcome whipping anyway, so this kills two birds with one stone."

"But it might kill me – fifty?"

"Sounds impossible but it's not. Brigid will whip you. Her feelings would be hurt if she didn't. Her blows won't be as harsh as mine, and we'll use a moderate whip on you."

Janice contemplated her master through a long silence. Her distress was acute, but somehow she must adjust. A formal fifty lashes on her bare skin was, at the moment, altogether too abstract, beyond present comprehension.

Remembering Natalie's precept of bending with the wind, she tentatively asked, "Is there anything I can do, sir to avoid this punishment? It frightens me. I'll say or do anything you want."

"What I want is to see you tied up naked and given fifty strokes with a whip, sweetheart. It's that simple."

Janice sighed. The reality of what was to be done to her was elusive. It was too stupendous, too awful. She would put it in the closet with the bogeyman. But the reality she could grasp was that it would give this man intense joy to watch her being whipped. She wondered about her lack of resentment. Why didn't she hate him? She shrugged and put that in the closet with the rest.

"I leave Brigid in charge while I'm away."

"You wish me to obey her?"

"Yes. She'll have your welfare at heart, as well as your punishments."

"If I behave, I don't see why punishment must be inevitable."

"Try it out. Maybe you can beat the system."

"What you're saying is I'd better be very nice to Brigid, right?"

"Mmmm, yes. If you're good at buttering her up, she may give you the occasional lesbian night. She and Patsy do it all the time. They think I don't know." Cartwright paused, pondering. "If it happens with you, I don't want to know – okay?"

"Yes, sir."

It was all crazy.

6

The Master's Hand

Janice recalled some vagrant verse: "A sparkling jewel set in an azure sea." Cartwright's island was a small paradise surrounded by an infinity of water of a clarity and color beyond belief. They explored it in an hour.

"You're so lucky to own all of this, Denver."

"Well, you're here too, aren't you?"

"Yes, but as a prisoner." She held up handcuffed wrists. "Anyway, thanks for chaining me in front."

"I don't think you know what to do with them there. You're in less of a hassle with them behind your back. But never mind." His grin became boyish. "Want to see the fortress?"

"Of course. The part of it you've turned into a home leaves me breathless with more envy. Denver, it's super."

The local stone had no doubt dictated a pirate's choice of the island on which to build his stronghold. It was a granite-like rock, defying time. It caused the tiny fort to blend in with the island itself. Its battlements and halls were not impressive but its dungeons were.

"They probably kept prisoners for ransom," he mused. "That could explain the great amount of space. There's only one underground, though, and it's very dark. I suppose it was a punishment, sort of like modern solitary confinement."

"I'd feel solitary in any of them."

"But they're light and warm. There's a bit of view through the bars."

Janice shivered. "If you weren't chained to the far wall, I guess. Gosh, look at those massive iron rings!"

"The better to hold you with, my lady."

"Please don't joke – if you are joking." Janice gave him a sideways look. "Are you?"

"Never more serious in my life. You'd look sweet and pathetic."

They did not linger. Neither voiced the certain knowledge that Janice would, one day, be chained in one of the granite prisons.

"If that was for my benefit, I'm suitably impressed. I promise to behave." Janice looked around and found joy in all she saw. "But hasn't it occurred to you that the sea keeps me prisoner better than bars and stone and chains?"

"Not if you find a boat, sweetheart." Cartwright waved the subject away. "Come along and have dinner with Brigid."

It was just the three of them. Patsy served. Presumably, Brigid had prepared the meal beforehand. The woman was totally composed. She was neither black nor white. She was voluptuous and fiercely lovely.

"You are most welcome. Miss Latimer. I hope we can talk." The voice was educated, cultured, only slightly foreign.

"You'll be wondering, so I'll tell you now," Cartwright said. "Yes, Brigid does give me her body when I desire it."

"I am not Mr. Cartwright's mistress, only an intermittent concubine. I suspect this applies to many housekeepers."

She was calm, without strain. It was a comfortable relationship. Softly, the polite information continued. "You'll be wondering, too, about the dungeons, Miss Latimer. Yes, I've been a prisoner in them. And, yes, I've gone to the whipping post you saw. We are all equal here beneath our master's hand."

"Couldn't get a housekeeper like Brigid in the States," Cartwright said jovially. "Don't forget, you take orders from her when I'm not around."

"I understand you are to be publicly whipped tomorrow, Miss Latimer," Brigid said casually. "You'll find it a remarkable experience."

"I'm sure I will." The naked girl wished she could match her companion's casualness. "I'd be happy not to talk about it."

"Yes, of course, but you do have to be whipped. Your body is moderately marked now, is it not?"

She was saved from answering by her master turning the conversation in another direction. Her next travail came at bedtime. Cartwright dealt with it curtly.

"Come on, sweetheart – upstairs."

"It's a lovely room," Janice said upon arrival, gazing at its luxury. "Everything's so beautiful."

"Wondering what happens now?"

"Well, yes."

"We go to bed together, that's what happens." Cartwright chuckled. "And you get ravished."

"But I'm not sure –" She felt silly and virginal and tiny beside the huge four poster with its obvious rings and ropes. "I expect you to do that to me, of course, but do you want me spread out like you had Natalie, or will you tie me some other way?"

Her innocence intrigued, holding Denver Cartwright motionless in admiring delight.

"I hadn't intended on tying you at all," he admitted, amused.

"Oh, thank you!"

"But now that you mention it I can see that it's a wonderful idea. Funny I never thought of it."

Janice's heart sank. Or was he only kidding? She could never tell. Carefully, she expunged emotion from her voice. "Spread-eagle?"

"That would be nice."

Janice Latimer lay on her back upon the immensity of the bed. If she had kept quiet, she might have spent a more comfortable night, but that was only guessing. She spread her legs as far apart as they would go, then lifted her handcuffed hands.

"What about these?" she asked.

Cartwright took them from her wrists. For a few blissful moments she was free. Then she pointed her arms to the two top corners. She was suddenly ten times more naked.

"Ever been tied this way, sweetheart?"

"No, everything is new to me."

"You saw me tie the bitch. I won't stretch you. Best to leave you some motion."

"Thank you, sir."

"Why the title? You've been calling me Denver."

"I don't exactly have equal rights now, do I? I sure don't feel like I do."

Another chuckle. "Well, how do you feel?"

"Like a captive maiden being bound so her conqueror can rape her at his leisure."

"Why not one of your cute mothball words?"

"All right, Denver – tied to be fucked. How's that?"

"You're a surprising wench. I wouldn't have thought you had that one in you." Cartwright patted her left hand, now tied tightly to the bed, and moved across to her right. "I'm taking a bit of trouble over this. Just keep still."

It was easy to obey. The wide-open girl had the feeling of a small child well cared for – secure. The looping cords and the fingers on her flesh were comforting. She was possessed by a drowsy lassitude, beneath which her loins smoldered. It was delicious to have no will, to be wholly owned by someone else. Once brides might have felt as she did now on their wedding nights.

Rope noosed her ankle. It was delicious. With her hands already fastened, it was now useless to demur. Not that she intended to, but to have a man binding her with such care was a new dimension of sensation she found acutely pleasurable. When the last of the four knots was tight, she writhed and plunged at his command, tearing at his work with all her strength.

"It's no use, Denver," Janice said, panting. "I can never get out of this. I can never get

free. I'm at your mercy."

In the morning, when he untied her, Cartwright made his voice dispassionate. "You're worth ten of that bitch Natalie, sweetheart." When she failed to reply, he continued, "No handcuffs right now. You're free. Go and bathe. After breakfast Patsy will work on your hair and your face. I want you to walk to the post, completely free, looking as lovely as possible."

She understood. To have a sleek beauty walk of her own free will to the post to be bound would carry many times the erotic thrill as would a struggling female dragged there by force. She was in the hands of a master. At breakfast the three of them talked of anything except what was uppermost in their minds.

"What you done to get yourself a whole fifty?" Patsy asked as they seated themselves before the mirror in the bathroom. "I never got that many in my whole life. You goin' to be awful sore."

"I haven't done a thing, except be born a girl men love to see girls like you and me whipped."

"Yeah, I know. That man, he must love you." Patsy and Janice exchanged smiles in the mirror. "I always figger the more the master whips me, the more fuckin' I get after. Whippin' me makes him come hard like a rock. I bet it works the same with you."

"It's Brigid who's going to whip me."

"That figgers. She got a position here to keep up. She can be real mean."

"The master said she wouldn't whip me as hard as he would."

"That depends on how he feel and how she feel, Miz Latimer. A gal can't never tell how bad it's goin' to be. I don't think Brigid's mad at you yet, so maybe your fifty won't be so rough. But it's a powerful lot o' times for a gal to get her skin striped."

"What's the most you've ever had, Patsy?"

"Most strokes? I got me thirty one time. I was sure I was gittin' killed. Mostly now Brigid gives me six or a dozen. A girl can stand that real good."

"When do I have to go to the post?" she asked uncertainly.

"When I gits through with you, Miz Latimer. I ain't hurry-in'. You be standin' there naked and scared long enough."

"You mean it's just you and me at first? You fasten me?"

"You be fastened real good. The master, he buy stuff for that ol' post. He buy new stuff for all over. A lot of it been tried out on me."

"But, Patsy, can't you escape from the plane when you play stewardess? You could when it lands at the other end of the line."

"What I escape for?" Patsy sounded shocked. "Us gals got it good here. We get fed and fucked, and it's a real purty island. You just a bit upset right now 'bout them fifty strokes what's waitin' fo' you out there. Just don't think about 'em. You'll forget all about 'em in a couple of days."

"They'll mark me for weeks!"

"Well, maybe. I always got a few marks. But a gal gits so's she sorta proud of 'em. If I didn't have no whip marks on me, I'd feel like nobody loved me."

Janice sighed. She doubted she could ever match this moppet's enthusiasm for their captivity. If only she was to be given ten! There was something punitive and shaming about so many, as though she was a criminal. Her handcuffed hands rose to make tentative dabs at her hair. She knew Patsy's work on her was as near perfect as they were likely to achieve.

Unhappily, she said, "I'm ready, Patsy, you know I am – unless you can think up a good reason for delay."

"Guess it's time to go then, Miz Latimer." Patsy brightened. "Anyways, you gits rid o' them handcuffs fo' awhile. Seems like you has to walk along side o' me real willing like."

"Mr. Cartwright told me." Janice held out her locked hands and watched Patsy use her key. Gratefully, she rubbed her wrists. "It makes it more unreal and more shameful. I bet he'll be watching from somewhere."

There were no long walks on the island. This one to where girls were whipped in the small sunlit clearing did not take long. The post stood waiting, the severe solidity of its vertical lines now broken by a metal shackle high on either side. In the lovely cheerfulness of the open space they held a dread menace.

"They fo' yo' hands, Miz Latimer. Guess you knows that. You rub yo' tits up against the wood. I has to stand on this here box, Miz Latimer. I ain't that tall. These here shackles is real new and just girl size. They hold you fine, and they wide 'nuff so's they don't cut yo' skin when you struggles."

Janice drew in her breath sharply as her wrists were circled and snapped fast. They were tight, their chain short. She must now stand, a white statue in sharp contrast to the weathered wood.

"You bound to hop around a bit when Brigid laces into you, Miz Latimer. But it's best to hug that there post like you was in love with it. The harder you shoves them tits o' yours against that thing you fastened to, the safer they is. That there whip curls around and snaps a gal if it gits a chance."

"Thanks, Patsy. I'll try."

"You comfortable?"

"Yes, I suppose I am. I expect I'll get tired after awhile. But never mind, and thanks for everything."

"You says that like you 'spect to die. But don't you worry, you comes out the other side okay. I knows." Patsy kissed the nape of her captive's neck and sped away, leaving the girl who was about to be whipped in solitude.

It was lonely and daunting against the post. Despite the warm sun, Janice shivered. There was nothing she could do now but wait and endure the pain which would come when the waiting was over. Her condition was primitive yet strangely civilized. It could bear no label and she refused to seek one. She supposed herself the plaything of a man. Her pain would heat his loins. No doubt he would use her after her whipping was done. She wondered if by then she would hate him for her agony.

She rested her cheek against the warm wood and tried to dream of her beloved mistress, but Natalie Stephenson spelt guilt. What could she possibly think of a slavegirl who had

found pleasure in the arms of a man? It was an unthinkable infidelity she herself would not have dreamed possible a week ago. The fact that she was at all times bound and helpless did not seem to lessen her shame. The betrayal was in her mind. She had enjoyed what coercion had been thrust upon and within her body. Janice wished most ardently it was her mistress's whip she awaited now, a female whip to cleanse the stigma of the male. Should her mistress possess her ever again she would plead for such a cleansing and would no doubt be granted her request. She wondered idly if slavegirls were equipped with compensating mechanisms by which their affections were transferred from owner to owner as was their body by virtue of conquest or purchase. But what did it matter? She could never escape the island. She would never see Natalie again. She blinked back tears.

"Why do you cry, Miss Latimer? Ar you frightened?"

Brigid's approach had been silent. Janice came out of her reverie with a start.

"Sure, I'm frightened," she said. "But that wasn't why you saw tears. Those tears were for what I lost when I was brought here."

"Mmmm, we've all shed a few of those kind of tears. Huh – don't you get to thinking you're the only one who's been brought here and stood where you're standing now."

"You–?"

"Why not? I'm a woman. And I was a girl. My father made a lot of money and sent me to the best possible schools – I'm highly educated – but that didn't stop me from being kidnaped same as you."

"But you're – you're his –"

"Mr. Cartwright's mistress? Go ahead and say it. He's taken you to bed too, hasn't he?"

"Tied and helpless!"

"Sure, so was I."

They gazed at each other, sharing femaleness.

"But you're going to whip me – you!" Janice exclaimed, voicing her uppermost thought.

"Yes, because he wants me to. Maybe you'll whip a girl here someday. Maybe you'll whip me. Denver might get a charge out of that."

"But all this whipping – why?"

Brigid shrugged, amused. "A fact of life, that's all. It's useful in two ways: It keeps us girls in line, and it keeps the master potent. A female learns to live with it the way she does with her monthly period."

It was cruelly and logically simple, irrefutable.

Forthrightly, Janice asked, "When are you going to do it to me?"

"Whip you? Oh, you have to wait awhile for that. I used to think the waiting was the worst part but it's not really."

"But why have you come?"

"You're easy to talk to fixed the way you are, and I was curious about the way you'd handle this. But Denver's a good judge of females. You'll make out. Mind if I run my hands over you?"

"Would it matter if I did? Go ahead. Do you get your jollies from feeling the flesh you're going to mark?"

"Yes, I do. So would you. It's a unique situation. It'd be crazy not to sample. Oh, and I do have Denver's permission."

The touch of feminine fingers was sweet, even though their intent was not. They traced along her skin from beneath her raised armpits down to her knees and within the inside softness of her thighs. A demanding hand thrust itself within her heated cleft and palmed her sex. But there was no comment. Brigid was not vulgar. She must have considered what she found within the captive pubic bush as normal.

"It must give you a sensation of power," Janice mused glumly, "to know how you will mark what you now fondle."

"Do I fondle? I hadn't thought of it that way. But, yes, of course, you're right. I said our situation was unique and it is. By the way, you are a very gorgeous package of girl."

The loneliness closed in again when the hands had gone. With it now was the beginning of an ache in her raised arms. She shifted her nakedness as best she could but knew herself defeated. In a revolt against her condition, she tugged savagely at her wrists, but she was safely held. The captive girl rested her forehead against the post and closed her eyes.

There was little fanfare in their coming. The island populace was small, but they were all there, making an appearance as though by magic. A chair had been placed for Cartwright so he could sit and view her in profile. The pilots of the plane were off to one side on their own, sardonically amused. Patsy leaned against a palm tree. None were far distant from her pain. Denver Cartwright smiled and nodded at her in approval. He no doubt found her beautiful.

Janice Latimer knew herself lovely. She knew also she was terribly afraid. All her senses were acute and attuned and fearfully aware. But she had no thought of mercy or reprieve. Her master was within speaking distance but she would not plead. She could not analyze her acceptance of her imminent punishment as inevitable and not to be avoided. She had read of virgins tossed in volcanos or over cliffs or fed to monsters. Perhaps all became resigned in these last moments.

Brigid took the stage. She sauntered from the house, carrying the whip she would use on Janice's flesh as a badge of office. She was at all times a vividly commanding figure, and she was doubly so now. Her magnificent breasts were bare. She wore only a sheath of color cunningly contrived across her hips. Her arms were free for their task.

Cartwright gave her the same nod, the same smile. They understood each other. When his executioner took up her position behind the chained, naked girl, he said, in a voice clear to all, "Fifty!"

It hurt gorgeously, the sweep of thong across her nakedness. Leather lashed across bare feminine flesh. It was an unequal contest. But, with all its venom, the girl who bore it knew it was not the worst she might have received. It was bad but not lethal. The next stroke Brigid planted upon the captive's skin was the same – awful but bearable. Janice looked sideways at the seated man. Between them passed a message. It was not a reprieve but there was mercy there. She must still endure. The mercy of the man was limited. The third stroke elicited an anguished moan of pain but told her also of survival. She would not die beneath the lash; she would not lose consciousness. She would wish for oblivion, but it would not be

given to her. Janice Latimer clenched her teeth for number four, her small fists against their metal bands, her raised arms taut, her bare back quivering.

After the fifth there came a pause. When the blows ceased the whipped girl caught her breath and peeped questioningly at the man. Denver Cartwright was still there, still seated comfortably. He had lit a cigar while her back was being scored. He nodded affably, presumably pleased with her behavior. She had not yet screamed. Cautiously, the prisoner of the post continued her survey back over her bare shoulder. Brigid was still there. She still held the whip, coiling it back and forth lovingly. She, too, smiled reassuringly. It was all too unreal. With a sob of frustration, Janice buried her face against a pinioned arm. Her whipping resumed.

She counted the lashes silently, treasuring each agonizing cut as a miser counts his gold. When she had received each searing scald it was done. The pain stayed, but the punitive stroke could not harm her again. Six, seven eight! Janice wondered dully why she did not scream. But her screams were still there. They were all she had of herself to control. The bands around her wrists delivered her to others, but her screams were her own. If she cherished them, emitting only moans and gasps, she would have won a victory, an achievement her master would admire. Natalie's unseen presence whispered to yield nothing to the male. The blows did not pause at ten. Janice had expected they would, but her executioner would vouchsafe her no pattern on which she might pin hope.

The pause finally came after the thirteenth when she heard her moan turn to an audible whisper: "Please, not any more. Oh, please!"

"Only thirty-seven more, Miss Latimer."

She could not be sure of Brigid's voice. But whether it was comfort or sarcasm, it spoke of a number too terrible to contemplate, a panoply of pain she could not endure. She was only a girl whose vibrant flesh was at its peak of sensitivity. Even though her back might not be cut to ribbons it was still too much.

Urgently, beneath a raised arm, she pleaded, "I can't stand it. It's too many. Please not any more."

Her whipping resumed as though she had not spoken. Janice's flesh had spoken for her. She knew herself condemned. The shackles on her wrists made a mockery of mercy. For Janice Latimer there would be none. It was judged she could bear the fifty strokes and she must bear them. Mechanically, she counted to herself: fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, and so on. Unexpectedly, there came a pause at twenty.

She was drenched in sweat and felt shamed. She could feel the salty droplets trickle from beneath her armpits. Solicitously, Brigid wiped her dry with a soft towel. Her head was turned and brandy proffered to her lips.

The voice of her tormentor was strangely kind. "You are doing remarkably well, Miss Latimer," Brigid told her. "Everyone admires you." Then she added, with sarcasm, "I do hope you approve of my work."

"She's being kind to you, Janice. Haven't you guessed?" Cartwright's voice broke in from her other side.

She turned and was face to face with the man who had sentenced her to fifty strokes, the male who granted no reprieve.

He kissed her forehead gently while she muttered awkwardly, "Yes, I suppose she is. Thank you." She looked Denver Cartwright in the eyes and asked, "Please, no more? You could stop –"

The man placed a finger to her lips, enjoining silence, and said, "You know I won't stop it. Don't spoil things."

What could she spoil, other than to add screams to her writhings and moans? But she did not plead again. His voice had stilled her panic. Brigid's towel and fingers were busy following the weals on Janice's back. In chagrin the whipped girl realized the manner in which she had welded herself to the post, even separating her legs and thrusting her pubic mound against the wood as well as her breasts. Shamed, she backed away as much as she could. It was not far, but the towel followed her motions. She was in good hands. She met the male and female faces, and smiled weakly. "I'm going to resume whipping you now," Brigid said. Janice fought her screams by repeating, over and over, "Twenty, twenty, twenty . . . ." It meant she now had a stake in her punishment. As twenty-one and twenty-two followed, biting as savagely as had all the others, she knew an absurd elation at the approach of twenty-five. Her punishment would then be half over. If she could survive one half, then surely she could survive the rest. She counted feverishly. "And now your bottom, Miss Latimer. We must not forget your bottom."

It was only a brief pause and a different kind of pain. She knew not if it was better or worse, only that it was awful and she longed for it to stop. A shamed and hasty glance back showed her the thin and wicked length of a riding crop in Brigid's hand. It made a cruel sound as it swung through the air and inflicted an equally cruel pain. Her hips weaved against it. Her wounded bottom took on a life of its own, revolting within an absurdly small latitude against its pain. She fought the pain with useless motions, which only got her cut across her hips, and that hurt worse. In uneasy control she pressed her pubic hair hard against the post. The vertical timber holding her helpless had become almost a friend.

Twenty-nine, thirty, thirty-one . . . . Then came another pause and Brigid's query: "Like that better than your back, Miss Latimer?"

"I – I don't understand," Janice said. "It's all so awful. You're hurting me terribly."

"Good. That's the name of the game – to hurt you." Denver Cartwright was again at her side. He ran a hard male finger across the weals on one of her cheeks and laughed at her wince. "Do you realize that you only have nineteen more?"

"Yes, but they still frighten me. Oh, Denver!"

"Yes, sweetheart?"

"Oh, nothing. I'm being silly. Do you always have your sweethearts whipped like this?"

"Never you mind. It's happening to you, that's all you need to know. How's your bottom?"

"It's on fire – scalding."

"How's that other thing down there?"

"It's on fire too. I hadn't noticed until you mentioned it."

"Like hell you hadn't!" His hand sought her sex and he laughed at the result. "You're in marvelous shape. I'll have Brigid help out. We'll stay with that part of you for awhile; there's enough strokes left."

She had never felt so helpless. She had to just stand naked while they did as they pleased with her body. Janice had no illusions as to what would be done to her later. She knew she would be ravished by this man.

"You spread your legs now, Miss Latimer. Back away from the post as much as you can and stick your bottom way out. If you don't do this for us, you'll be tied that way."

It was hateful to be so obedient, but it would be more hateful still to be tied in such a manner. She supposed the command meant the inside of her thighs were to be whipped. It would be a hateful pain, a beastly stomach turning agony. Miserably, she spread her legs wide apart and backed away from the protection of the vertical wooden structure to which she was fastened. It was a very small journey but ample for Brigid's needs.

"Thank you, Miss Latimer. I'll use the whip again on you for this"

Brigid was so casually matter-of-fact! The first stroke within her secret place broken her down into anguished disarray. The pain of the thong had been too awful and in a place where no pain should be. Once more she found herself hugging the post. It took a great effort to back away once more.

"I'm sorry," she muttered, chagrined and hurt. "I really will try."

"As long as you get back into position, Miss Latimer."

The next stroke was number thirty-three. The first shock of its invasion of her sex by the thong was over. She counted stolidly with each wince and cringe. She made small shaming sounds as her innermost flesh was cut. The whip flicked at her thighs and up into her cleft until another pause at forty. Gratefully, she obeyed a concession.

"Stand as you wish now, Miss Latimer. You will not be whipped between your legs again."

Cartwright did not approach. He was talking casually to one of the staff. Brigid contented herself to using the towel on her still sweating victim. There was more brandy but no words. Janice panted her way to where the pain would take possession of her again. There was an air of finality but still ten strokes to go. The whipped girl found little comfort in anything.

Brigid now employed skill and venom. She slashed across and into each exposed armpit. Next came a curling cut above Janice's knees. The last blow was doubly hard to tense her in shock, then bring her back to a shuddering, panting reality of surcease.

It seemed natural to be carried to her master's bed in his arms. He took her to his bed to use while she still flinched from the wounds of the whip. He tossed her on the covers in savage pleasure, handcuffed her wrists and then stripped himself. The sounds they made were remarkably similar.

Janice awoke in the night. When her master had tired of her, she had turned onto her stomach, cradled her cheek against her locked hands. He slept soundly beside her on his back. It was then that she realized she was not chained. In his frenzy of possessing her Cartwright had forgotten her shackle. Her feet were free; she was not attached to the bed. She wore only the handcuffs, and she was so accustomed to their restraint she scarcely notice them any more. Had it not been for the discomfort of her whipped back and bottom she might have drifted back to sleep, but even the weight of the sheet was irksome on her whipped skin. Almost without volition she slipped her nakedness from the bed. Impulsively, she tiptoed to the door and went downstairs. Opening the door hesitantly, she made her way outside, uncertain where she would go or what she would do. But, in a desperate need to use this unexpected freedom, Janice Latimer sped into the night.

7

Bondage and Brigid

The night air was still warm and kindly, caressing Janice's wounds with a benign softness, bolstering her courage. It was heavily scented from the lush foliage and the sea. It reassured the errant girl. Janice drank it in gratefully, but knew herself nude in a strange and hostile place. She ran soundlessly towards the jetty.

There were boats: a dingy, rowboats, and a launch. Janice knew nothing of engines or motors. She would have chosen a rowboat, but with her handcuffed hands she could not use the two oars essential to their propulsion, and it was the same with the dingy. The latter was too small for the open sea anyway. This left the launch. She viewed its sleek bulk dubiously.

She could read its dials, and the controls were self-explanatory. There was a starter button. Before she pressed it she considered the sea. What lurked out there? Where was other land? Janice knew that if she considered hazards, she would return to bed. Resolutely, she thrust her thumb against the button.

The noise was frightening. For moments it shattered the night. Janice recoiled in horror but the die was cast.

She was about to try again when an amused voice enquired, "Having fun, Miss Latimer?"

It was one of the pilots.

In horror, she replied, "Well, yes, I don't know much about engines or boats. Could you get it started for me?"

"Sure, no problem."

He was standing in the companionway to the tiny cabin. Janice saw his sardonic and appreciative grin as he drank in her nakedness. She would now have to choose better lies or appeal to his mercy.

"You aim to go someplace?"

"I couldn't sleep. I thought a jaunt out and around the island would be nice."

"Ah! In handcuffs?"

"I'm afraid I forgot about them. They really don't bother me much."

"How about I take you for a ride?"

"I'd thought of being all alone – out there. If you wouldn't mind, and if you'd be kind enough to start the engine."

He laughed outright at her earnestness. "Please, Miss Latimer, do you expect me to believe any of that?"

"Not really," she admitted. "But I have to get away from here some way. Will you help me?"

"You're talking about escape?"

"Yes – I suppose so. Please?"

"Think I'm crazy? No way!"

"I'll let you use me if you'll help."

He laughed again. "Young Patsy gives me all I want. You don't have a thing to offer, Miss Latimer. I wouldn't take it if you did."

"You're condemning me to slavery."

"It's a damn comfortable slavery if you use it right."

"But you saw me whipped today. Do you call that comfort?"

"Probably won't happen again."

"It most likely will. If you turn me in, your master almost has to punish me. He'll punish me terribly."

"Then what do you suggest?"

"Let me go. Say nothing. With a little luck I can get back to bed unnoticed."

"No." He surveyed her with increased amusement. "You're a dreamer, Miss Latimer. After the racket you made somebody will be watching us, and I'd say your chances of getting back without discovery are close to nil."

"Let me try anyway. You've got nothing to lose."

"Only my job and Dean Cartwright's friendship. No, the best and only thing we both can do is take you back. That puts me in the clear. If you hadn't pushed that starter button, I could have said I found you sitting on the beach."

Janice sighed and asked bitterly, "Do you want to tie me or something to take me back?"

"Is there any need?"

"No. I can't outrun you, and I'm handcuffed. Why don't you grab my arm?"

"Look, I'm sorry."

"Yes, okay, I know. Shall we go now?"

Cartwright met them halfway. Janice stood, mortified, while her crime was reported. She had nothing to say.

"I missed the silly little bitch," Cartwright said. "Then someone phoned after she tried to start the engine. Thanks, Mike. I appreciate you bringing her back."

Alone, they surveyed each other: delinquent slavegirl and her master who seemed strangely without anger.

"Will you punish me horribly for what I've done?"

"Come back to bed," he said, taking her arm. "What I'm going to do to you right now you'll probably enjoy. And this time you'll get your ankle chained."

Janice Latimer enjoyed it so much she felt guilty.

Over breakfast Cartwright brought up the subject uppermost in his slavegirl's mind.

"I can't have you whipped again, not after yesterday," he said, breaking a piece of toast. "Of course, there is your front, but the idea does not please me. What I have to think of is something that won't please you."

"I won't say I'm sorry or make excuses," Janice said, trying to smile, "but I will ask you to believe that there was nothing personal in what I did. I mean, I don't hate you. It was simply a silly thing to do, and I did it."

"Fair enough. After we've eaten, you go find Patsy. Have her take you to Enrico. He'll know what to do."

Janice longed to ask questions but was frightened. Pensively, she buttered her toast. She was still handcuffed. They spoke of other things.

Enrico was some sort of foreman. Janice, standing naked and with chained hands for his approval, supposed he dealt in most things on the island, including delinquent girls. He took her away from the sea, inland to a field bright and promising with a growth she failed to recognize. At the beginning of one of the straight rows running the full length of the acreage was a sizable metal ball, and from it a chain and shackle. He locked the metal around her ankle and handed her a hoe.

"You hoe up each row nice on each side," he directed without enthusiasm. "You make sure you kill every weed. Today you do four row, tomorrow you do five. You not do – or you leave weeds behind – I punish. I punish you bad. Understand?"

"Yes, I understand. But I'm handcuffed!"

"I have no key. They not stop you work."

"But how can I walk along the rows with this weight on my foot?"

Enrico chuckled. He had probably been asked that question many times. His answer was simple: "When you finish hoe one place, you drag ball as far as you want and start another."

"It's hateful. I won't run away, I promise!"

"That right, you no run. You wear ball and chain."

"Oh, all right! But I don't see how I can possibly do all that work in that time. I'm not used –"

"You work real hard or you have bad night." Enrico shrugged and went away. Janice watched his retreating back and wanted to cry. It was so unfair. She was sure it would prove a hateful punishment beyond her strength. She looked across the many rows. It was a large field and she was alone. The ball to which she was chained mocked her silently. In fury she bent to lift it, but found its weight beyond her strength. Fearfully, she took a deep breath and a fresh stance. This time she got it off the ground and to where she could start her day of toil. She picked up the hoe. Before midday Janice was frightened. Her back hurt. She had not even finished the first row; she could never complete four. Looking back, she could see the tell-tale green of weeds she had missed, but the immense weight of her ball forbid retracing her steps. Punishment loomed more and more surely on the horizon. At noon Patsy, bringing bread, fruit, and water, was little help.

"I ain't doin' nothin' crazy like tryin' to escape," she mourned. "So I don't never get this

here punishment. Looks awful mis'rable to me, Miz Latimer. I just plain don't know what they do to you come evening. Ain't no way you gettin' four rows done."

"Patsy, I'm frightened. What would you do if you were chained like this?"

"I'd cry like crazy and make lots o' fuss, Miz Latimer, but there ain't no one here to see. Mr. Cartwright, he don't come, so what's the use? With them handcuffs and that there chain, looks to me like you in a bad spot."

"Patsy, could you ask Mr. Cartwright to come and see me?"

"Guess I could. Don't mean he'll come, though." But Denver Cartwright did come, sauntering, amused, and curious.

"Patsy tells me you'd like to see me, Miss Latimer." The tears came. She could not stop them. It would have been nice to shed them on a male shoulder, but he prudently stood beyond the span of her chain. However, when it became evident her grief was beyond control, he stepped within reach and took her in his arms. Janice put her joined hands over his head and behind his neck. She sobbed gratefully, wetting his shirt with her tears. "Is it that bad, sweetheart?"

"You know it is. It's awful. I can never do it, and I'm going to be punished," she sobbed.

He patted her bare shoulder and asked, "Don't you think you deserve something? Do you want me to let you off scot-free?"

"Yes, please. You could?"

Cartwright held her at arm's length, laughing at her tear-stained desolation. "Enrico won't kill you, you know."

"He'll think up something beastly just to please you. He as good as said he would. I'd think having to work with this hoe while I'm handcuffed and chained ought to be enough for any girl – even me," she sniffed unhappily. "And I wish you'd stop calling me Miss Latimer; my name is Janice."

"Makes a nice contrast, though – the formal address for the naked slave."

"Everything has to work out your way, to be erotic and amusing. I bet you enjoy seeing me work out here like this, with a ball and chain on my ankle." She sniffed again. "If you keep me here doing this, it won't be long before I'm not beautiful any more. I'll get baked black, and I'll get callused, and –"

Cartwright patted her shoulder paternally, and played with her hair, now damp from her labor and the sun.

"Look," he said patiently, "I can't let you get away with things. You have to learn obedience, the sort of obedience that doesn't use a bit of freedom to attempt escape. That was plain dumb."

"All right, I'm dumb. Please take me away from this field."

"That would be me surrendering, not you. I do own you – remember?"

"Then have me whipped or something. I want out of this."

"Didn't that fifty strokes teach you a thing?"

"If you hadn't whipped me like that, I wouldn't have tried to escape."

"Bullshit!"

"Well, it's true," Janice said, nestling closer to the man. "If you hadn't had me whipped, you wouldn't have got all hot and excited and forgotten my shackle."

Cartwright disengaged himself from her clinging, and, laughing, said, "So it's all my fault, eh? That's so typically female."

"Well, I am female, you know. What else do you expect?" She eyed him hopefully.

"Sweetheart, we're fabulous together in bed, and there's something between us that's good, but I can't let you cozen me. You'll stay here the day, and you'll work your best. If your best doesn't please Enrico, you'll take his punishment. Understand?"

Janice did not answer. She was dabbing at her tears with handcuffed hands. She shrugged and looked up at him pathetically.

"And I don't want that whipped dog look either." Cartwright thrust her hands away, grasped her head, and kissed her lips. "You need discipline. One day I'll have you trained, but you're not trained yet."

Cartwright patted her woebegone cheek and strode away. She tried to follow, but her ankle was instantly snubbed by its chain. She stood in desolation, watching his retreating back.

Janice Latimer worked savagely throughout the afternoon, her mind a maelstrom of hope and despair. She disregarded the protest of her aching back and dragged her grim ball from place to place. She tried not to think of Enrico and the row she would never get to hoe. She considered sitting down and flatly refusing to work, but she deemed it wise to do her best and thus give both her masters an excuse for leniency. By the time she beheld Enrico's approach she was utterly exhausted and there remained more than a row she had not touched. With the sun low in the sky, she stood and awaited execution.

"You don't do so good, Miss Latimer." Enrico looked back at the peeping bits of live green in the rows she had completed. "And what you do is damn poor job."

"I did the best I could. Honest, I did. It was cruel to put me out here."

He unlocked her shackle and grasped her arm. "You come."

Halfway across the field, she wanly asked, "Am I going to be punished?"

"What you think?" His tone was sardonic.

She knew what to think, and her flesh cringed. This man was impersonal, like a machine.

Bluntly, she asked, "Does Mr. Cartwright know what you're going to do to me?"

"That don't matter. You behave."

The shed was a grim place. It contained only two things,

and Janice Latimer liked neither. Enrico wasted no time.'

"You sit on bench," he commanded, thrusting her forward.

Trembling, she did as she was told. The bench was hard and low. In front of it stood the heavy wooden stocks for her feet. Without hope, she watched Enrico lift the upper yoke and motion for her next move.

"You put ankles in holes, Miss Latimer," he told her.

Instinctively, she pulled her bare feet back and demanded, "You're not going to keep me locked in this thing all night!"

"You prefer stand in pillory? Can do."

Janice looked at the other hateful structure and shrank from what it threatened.

"No. Oh, no! I'm sorry." She gave her attention to what he held in readiness for her compliance. "But this – the holes are so far apart!"

"So you cannot hide cunt."

She was exhausted and beyond argument. She placed a reluctant ankle in each slot. To do so she had to edge forward and stretch indecently wide. The yoke was then lowered snugly. A huge hasp sought its place, and a padlock snapped. Janice Latimer was a prisoner without hope of escape. She would sit as she was until someone chose to unlock her.

"I'm thirsty and hungry!" she exclaimed indignantly. "I've been –"

"I bring bread and water and apple."

"And how can I possibly sleep?"

"You sleep real good. You see."

Janice made no complaint about her widely exposed sex. She made no attempt to cover it with her hands. Let the silly bastard look. It would do him no good. She drank her water, and ate the chunk of bread and the apple.

"How do you suggest I sleep?" she asked coldly.

"You just lean a bit."

"With my legs this far apart? Can't I have them closer together?"

Janice flushed and kept silent. In spite of Enrico being what he was, she was sorry to see him go. In the twilight of the shed her loneliness was total. She wept again. Later, she experimented with postures. The bench was unkind to her whipped bottom, but she could find no comfort for her flesh. She rested her elbows on her separated knees, laid her head in her manacled hands, and fell asleep. Exhaustion was her friend.

It was an uneasy night. By morning every bit of her nakedness screamed for release. It came, after a long while, in the person of Patsy. The pert maid viewed Janice's plight with interest.

"You got a real nice cunt, Miz Latimer."

"Patsy, can you get me out of this thing?"

"I bet you all stiff and stuck to th' seat. I bet you don't wanna go back out there to that ball an' chain, huh?"

"Of course I don't. Oh, Patsy, stop asking silly questions. Can you get me free?"

Patsy produced keys, and answered, "Sho' can, Miz Latimer. " She paused and cocked an eyebrow. "You gonna act sensible?"

"Yes, I'll do whatever you want. I promise."

It was good to get her feet back, but she found herself almost too stiff to move. Patsy laughingly pulled her erect.

"Yo' cunt go back in place now. You leans to walk again."

The two girls made their way to the fortress and the familiar luxury of the bathroom.

"You mean I'm not to be punished any more?" Janice asked hopefully as she was lathered and laved by tender hands.

"I don't say nothin' like that. You best forgit about that punishment. After I make you real purty, I get yo' breakfast."

Knowing herself beautiful again was a boot for her morale. The hot coffee bolstered her courage and her hope. Breakfast over, she asked bluntly, "I don't have to go back to the field, do I?"

"You maybe wish you did, Miz Latimer. What I gotta do with you ain't all that good."

Janice followed apathetically and found their destination no surprise. She looked around the grim stone dungeon and through the heavy iron grating to a view of the sea.

"Well, it's not the worst of them, is it? How long do I have to be locked in here?"

"We ain't through yet, Miz Latimer. You gotta wear these."

Janice looked at the chains in disgust. She might have known! She had a dungeon with a view, but it carried a price tag.

"All that pile of junk?" she asked drearily. "Okay, tell me how and where to stand."

First her feet were joined, the metal shiny and new, seemingly made to fit her measurements. Then her friendly handcuffs were taken from her and replaced with the heavy metal to match her feet. There were quite a lot of links, but they were added weight rather than additional freedom. Another band of metal constricted her waist as a shining belt. At its back was a ring, but the ring was not used. Then she was collared by one more shining circlet. From it a less heavy chain ran to a ring in the stone. Its pile of links suggested it might allow her access to most of the prison chamber. It all weighed a great deal and spoke of an implacable incarceration. She looked at Patsy questioningly.

"You can't move much, Miz Latimer, but I don't 'spose you needs to. That stuff awful heavy, ain't it?"

"It's brutal, and it's just to punish me, I know it is!"

"Guess you right." Patsy picked up the discarded handcuffs and looked sad. "I gotta go now. Bye."

Janice stood and listened to the thud of bolts and the snap of the lock. She was ten times a prisoner, without hope, escape only a silly dream. She clattered her chains to the window and looked out through the latticework of iron. She could see little but rock and ocean, but

it was better than the dismal gloom of those other dungeons she had been shown. Compared to them, it was bright and cheerful. She wondered why.

Her wondering was answered by her master himself. Cartwright came after she had tested her chains and the hard bench for hours of loneliness. Mostly she stood by the bars like a caged bird.

The thud of bolts reversed told her of a visitor. Cartwright entered, smiling and amused, and kicked the door shut. He took the only seat, leaving his captive to stand before him in her chains.

"You look very lovely in that pose," he told her. "Seems to me I've seen a picture somewhere –"

"Probably in your mind. You've used me to make it real."

"Okay, maybe that's it. How do you feel?" Janice lifted her chained hands for him to get their full effect, and said, "Helpless . . . hopeless."

"Oh, come now! That bad?"

"Yes, that bad. I'm only a girl, but you've got me naked and loaded with enough chain to hold a herd of elephants." She allowed the weight of the chains to slowly fall, dragging down her unresisting hands. "But thanks for the view; it's nice."

They assessed each other. Cartwright beheld a dream come true, and Janice saw a male force holding the key to their chains. Somewhere in this man was pity she could draw on if she had but the skill.

"Don't try and weasel me, sweetheart."

His prisoner flushed; he had read her mind. Boldly, she said, "I suppose it does a lot for you, sitting while I stand, and having me naked and chained."

"Of course. It's a classic situation."

"Ah, yes. And a whipped back. I fulfill all your fantasies."

"You do indeed, and we've only just started."

"Am I sentenced to this place and these chains for a certain term?"

Cartwright laughed at her soberness. "Boy, are we formal! Haven't really thought about how long I should keep you here. How about a month?"

Tears welled in her eyes. To flick them away meant a telltale clatter with her chain, so Janice just blinked them back. She shrugged, and said, "I suppose you'll do what you want with me."

"But you think a month is a long time?"

"I know you're playing with me. I don't want to be chained like this in here at all."

"Sooner be tied to a palm tree, out in the breeze?"

She looked at his smile sharply. The vision he evoked was romantically attractive, but no doubt the ropes would be too tight, and he was only fooling anyway, having fun with her disquiet.

"Yes," she said slowly, "I think I'd prefer that. Do it to me."

"You giving orders, kid?"

Janice Latimer clattered to her master, fell to her knees, and buried her face in his lap, her chain pulling gently but insistently at her collar. Cartwright pulled the chain up to give her slack, playing with the links with one hand while fingering her hair with the other.

Her words came, muffled and forlorn. "I can't say anything right. I can't do a thing. I'm always in the wrong and being punished. Can't you see how difficult you make things for me?"

His fingers were busy with her hair and her collar. It was tremendously comforting. She grasped his thigh with chained hands so that the male could look down and see a naked girl seeming to pray.

"I'm not any meaner than you make me," he said gently. "You're a very sweet girl who's out of her depth and at odds with herself."

"All right, do what you want with me. I give up."

Janice wanted the moment to last forever. In the human contact she found peace. She had been so much alone. She nestled luxuriously, totally forgetting that the male thing by which she was so often impaled was hidden only inches from her lips.

Their silent communion went on until Cartwright dryly asked, "Want this to go on forever?"

"Yes." Janice put her heart into her answer. "Oh, yes!"

"Then why did you try to steal that boat and get away?"

The captive girl rattled her chains hopelessly. "I simply don't know. I can't even promise I won't do it again if you give me a better chance. I suppose that's the wrong answer. Go ahead and punish me."

"You are being punished."

"I'm sorry, I forgot." She lifted her head and knelt back on her heels. "I'm so mixed up!"

"Have you figured out what you're going to do with yourself in here for thirty days?"

"No, I'm not even going to try."

Cartwright's gaze became intent. "You're a natural submissive. Look at you now, kneeling there in your chains. You fall into these postures naturally. You're tremendously appealing."

"I suppose that's a compliment, but I used to kneel for Natalie too. You're right, though, I do have the trait. I'm sure there are other girls –"

"But they don't cling to their independence the way you do. They don't argue."

"I'm not independent. Look at the way I have to touch you, and I'm not independent in bed, am I?"

"But what about your arguing?"

"I expect you'll whip it out of me, or chain me up for it, or something. Have I been arguing now?"

"You haven't been saying any 'yes, sirs' that I've noticed."

"I'm not sure you've given me a lead. Try me out."

"How'd you like Patsy to whip your breasts?"

It took all her courage, but Janice smiled up and said a hearty, "Yes, sir!"

"Hmmm, not bad. What about being tied to that palm tree?"

"Yes, sir!"

Cartwright chuckled. "I can't take those too seriously, but you sure put zing into them. Practice up a bit. I enjoy punishing you, but I don't want you to be doing it all the time. Here, bend over my knee."

Janice's collar and chain fell to the floor with a clatter. She gasped in pleasure and surprise. Obedient to his order, she sat upright and held out her chained hands. When the shackles fell to the stone, to be followed by those on her feet, she stood joyfully and said in dazed wonder, "But they've only been locked on me for a few hours."

"I want you to sample the amenities, sweetheart." He grinned as her hands sought the metal band around her middle. "That stays on you, Janice. It sets off your assets. Besides, it might be useful."

She questioned nothing. Once more she was on her knees, hugging him. Her voice was tremulous: "Thank you, Denver! Oh, thanks a million! I can't tell you how I hated those things."

"Good. But they're always waiting, you know."

"Is my punishment over? Am I forgiven?"

"Hell no, you eager kitten. Come, take my hand."

They gathered rope and cord, which Cartwright made her carry. They walked along the beach. Freed from the dungeon and safe out in the sunlight, Janice was in a state of euphoria. Impulsively, she clasped her master in grateful arms. They kissed, and their kiss became passion.

"Let's do it, Denver, here on the sand in the sun."

The happily wanton girl was halfway down to the sand when the male laughed and dragged her back up.

"You're still being punished," he reminded her. "This way. I see the ideal tree."

It stood in dappled sunlight, a young and slender palm with a beach and ocean view.

"Just girl size," Cartwright said approvingly. "Get your back against it and put your hands behind the trunk."

It was gorgeous! It was wonderful! It was so much better than the dungeon or the field that she longed to sing.

"I'm grateful for what you're doing with me, sir," she said soberly, hiding her joy.

"Why the 'sir'?"

"It seemed appropriate. I think I'm intoxicated with freedom."

"Damn it, girl, you're not free, and you're going to be even less so."

"I don't care. It feels like freedom. Tie me as tight as you like."

"Giving me permission?"

"Sorry, it slipped out. I'll rephrase it if you wish."

They laughed their way through her binding. At the end of it Janice was as much a part of the tree as its bark. Testing the ropes, she exclaimed, "Denver, I can only move my head!"

"I can rope your neck too."

"No thanks – never mind." Smiling, she struggled with all her young strength, and said, "You've done a wonderful job. Honest, I can't do anything."

"What are you so pleased about, girl?"

"I don't know. It's more of my silliness, I suppose. Kiss me before you go."

Cartwright made her say please and ask for it prettily. He kissed his captive with savage lust, ending in tenderness. Janice watched him stride away down the beach until he was out of sight. With his departure, the sun seemed only a little less bright.

Janice assessed her plight. She did not know why she preferred immobility against a palm tree to what else had been done to her but it was so. Ropes crisscrossed her shoulders. Strictures were above and below her breasts, protruding them and admonishing her with each breath. Her metal belt was bound tightly to the tree. Her bound knees and ankles completed her ensemble. She could not move, literally, except for her toes, fingers, and head, but they did not count. Her true helplessness lay in her crossed wrists corded behind the sapling's narrow trunk. She could never get loose – never! She did not try. Perhaps she would try later when she wanted something to do.

Her euphoria lingered. She had been forgiven two punishments and taken on to a third. Cartwright was not insensitive, though. Even though he had sentenced her to punishments and was punishing her still, he had shown her a tolerant affection within the limitation of his ownership of her body and her revolt against that possession. She had to realize that he was a man accustomed to the ownership of girls. Probably he had forgotten their yearning for identity and the hold on them of another life. These were things to be dealt with in their training by the inflictions of punishments. It was simple. Patsy and Brigid were living proof. They were happy on the island, as she herself could be if she tried. But she was not Patsy or Brigid. She was difficult, wasn't she? It was a big question mark from which Janice Latimer shied away. Instead, she invented a fantasy to suit her condition. She became a pirate's prize, and after he had used her cruelly, he passed her on to his crew. She was being raped for the sixteenth time when her reverie was broken by a female voice.

"You look real pleased with yourself – considering." Brigid had crept up on her by way of a path through the trees. "I was inventing the most outrageous dream."

"Getting yourself raped, eh? I've done that too." They gazed at each other. Janice

became aware of her engorged breasts. She looked down at them, embarrassed, and apologetically told Brigid, "I'm afraid I'm tied very tight."

"How did you weasel out of your other punishments?"

"I think our master felt sorry for me."

"That's horse-shit, girl, and you know it. You gave him a snow job both times. You've got a gift for being what he wants."

"I wouldn't have thought that. I mean, I spend all my time being punished."

"If you'd stuck it out with that hoe in the field, you'd be through with your punishment by tonight," Brigid grunted in correction. "More probably tomorrow morning."

"But I will be now."

"Did the master tell you that, Miss Latimer?"

"Well, not exactly," the tied girl said anxiously. "Please don't be formal with me; call me Janice."

"You sure you're getting loose this evening – Janice?"

The punished nude forced a laugh. "Not really, but none of us on this island are sure of anything, are we?"

Brigid shrugged the question away and asked another: "Do you want me to give you a little pleasure?"

Aware of vulnerability, the captive hedged. "Thanks, but it's not possible. I'm tied too tight."

"I can manage."

"Well, thank you, but I don't think we should."

Brigid was looking at her oddly, and her tone became faintly offended. "You got anything to say about it, Miss Latimer?"

"No, I suppose I haven't. I haven't anything to say about anything, have I?"

"That's right. I can do what I like with you. What are you blushing for?"

"Well, I'm naked, and I'm helpless, and you've just said something to make me know how helpless and naked I am." The bound girl smiled placatingly. "You have me at a terrible disadvantage."

Brigid laughed. "That's so old fashioned. You need someone to take advantage of you. You don't know anything."

First she was blindfolded with Brigid's scarf. The darkness should have been scary but it was not. She was kissed by female lips, hot and voluptuous, and kissed back passionately. After a momentary pause, tight breasts were thrusting against her own. Janice felt her nipples rear. The kissing resumed. Musk enveloped them.

After a long time Brigid's voice came husky and vibrant: "You know any men who kiss like we do?"

"No – oh, no, darling."

"I'll not let you loose."

"I don't want to be freed." In her darkness, it was like speaking to a distant planet. "Keep me tied, please."

"You've got the hots now for sure, Janice."

"Yes!"

The talking stopped. Janice was panting, ropes biting as her breasts heaved. She shuddered in a new ecstasy as fingertips found her nipples. They were magic fingers, working their will upon her with a wicked wisdom.

After a few minutes the fingers ceased their work, and the husky voice asked, "You want me to stop?"

Cessation was intolerable. Janice was afire, her breasts pleadingly vainly. She surged against her bindings but did not move. "No! Oh, please don't stop!"

The fingers crept back. The bound nudity relapsed into moans. Out in the darkness was a witchery such as she had never known, beyond her control. Janice was not aware she fought the bonds, but she strained against them in a futile effort to gain more of the fingers working their will upon her nipples. It seemed impossible for such a transcendency of sensitivity to be centered in the buds of flesh upon her breasts. The bound nakedness was now beyond reasoning and cared for nothing except that the hands should never stop.

The fingers were suddenly gone, paying no heed to Janice's moaned protest. They were busy now with rope. When the bonds at ankle and knee fell away and free legs thrust apart, there came instantly the lips and tongue, as though Brigid herself was starved for what she found. Still in darkness, still safely tied and helpless, the captive girl writhed within the clutch of cord, her small female cries rising to crescendo after crescendo as she was inundated by glory. An hour later her legs were again bound as they had been when Cartwright left her at the tree. When the blindfold was whisked from her eyes, she blinked in the sunlight as Brigid stepped back and surveyed her prize.

"You belong to me now, Miss Latimer."

"Yes, of course. Oh, Brigid!"

"You'll be my slave."

"I want to be."

Brigid laughed. "You think you want to be, but I am a cruel mistress. I'll give you pleasure only as it pleases me. You'll shed some tears." Brigid paused, surveying the captive nudity with satisfaction. "I'm not offering you something, I'm telling you. You can't escape."

"But I don't want to escape."

"You will. I told you – I'm cruel."

Puzzlement intruded on bliss. The girl bound to the palm tree, bemused, asked, "But what about our master? He won't allow–"

"The master doesn't have to tell you everything, pretty pussy. He told me when to untie

you. After that you're mine until he comes back."

Janice cleared her mind. Cartwright's island was thrusting shock after shock at her in quick succession.

"But why would he not say goodbye to me?" the captive girl asked.

"Probably hates to part with you. I'll hate to part with you when he returns. You're the prettiest pussy ever. You have the sweetest taste."

"Untie me so I can go and say goodbye to him."

"I'll send Patsy with water for you later." Astonished, the captive of the palm tree watched Brigid disappear back into the tress. Later! Patsy would come later? There was a message there. It meant she was not going to be untied. For a minute she stirred against the ropes, but soon surrendered to lassitude. Brigid had drained her. She was listlessly and unreasonably happy. Something would happen. It might even be something nice. The sound of the surf was soothing. Gently, her head inclined forward into sleep. The rest of her was captive to the tree and could not move. "Gosh, you was asleep, Miz Latimer," Patsy said, intrigued. "How you manage to sleep all tied up that way?"

"I don't know, Patsy. I'm surprised myself. What time is it?"

"I ain't s'posed to tell you."

"Oh, all right. Where's Mr. Cartwright?"

"He's gone. He tell me to say goodbye and be a good girl with Brigid. You sho' musta slept if you didn't hear th' plane."

Janice drank the water proffered by the dusky hand. "Don't I get fed?" she asked wryly. "Just a chunk o' dry old bread, Miz Latimer."

"I'm still being punished? Oh, never mind."

"Might be best you eat it. You liable to git hungry."

"I'm going to be left like this all night?" Janice asked in sudden conviction. "I am, aren't I?"

" 'Fraid so, Miz Latimer." With forced heartiness, Patsy added, "It ain't so bad if you don't believe in ghosts and such."

"You mean they've tied you this way before?"

"Oh, sho'! Like to scared me to death. I couldn't get loose no way, and they tol' me 'bout this here creature that crawls up outta the sea lookin' fo' gals like me."

"That's nonsense."

"Well, maybe, but it gits awful real when a gal's been tied fo' hours and hours, and she looks out there at all that water." Patsy shuddered. "I could feel him lookin' at me and lickin' his chops."

"Patsy, you ought to have more sense."

"It gits real spooky 'gainst that tree after dark. You see if it don't. Then too they tells me 'bout the other monster that roams the island and nobody sees him 'cept the gal he eats."

"That's all rubbish."

"I 'spect it is, Miz Latimer, but when a gal's out here all alone, and there ain't no way she can git loose from them ropes, it gits awful real long 'bout midnight."

"You didn't sleep all night?"

"Gosh no, not with all them ghosts and things, and the ropes git to hurtin' too."

Despite reason, Janice shuddered. "Stop! You're getting me scared too. Okay, I'll eat the bread."

A sympathetic hand fed her carefully. Munching the food of penitence, Janice asked, "Patsy, can I go behind a bush and relieve myself? I've been tied this way for hours and hours."

"I know, it's awful. I ain't s'posed to untie you, but I do and you goes behind that bush, will you let me tie you back the way you is now?"

"Of course I will. Patsy, I'd be so grateful."

"I'm takin' an awful chance, but I know how it is."

"I'd love to walk around a bit first, but if you're nervous, we'll do it all in a hurry."

It was glorious to step away from the tree and stretch her limbs. "You're a dear, Patsy. Thank you. Okay, okay, I'll hurry." She went behind the privacy of the foliage.

When she returned, Patsy was as naked as she herself, her voice shy but demanding. "I wanted you so bad, Miz Latimer. You so pretty. You want the two o' us – we should do it?"

They became a tangle of youthful, scented flesh in a sweet carnival of carnality. They giggled their way between each other's thighs and used their seeking tongues. They had been lost to the world a long time when Brigid's voice bit at them harshly.

"Get up, you little bitches!"

They stood before her, two penitents trembling. It did not occur to either girl to fight or run away. They were captives of the island, and the island would never allow them to escape.

"You, girl," Brigid said, glaring at the frightened maid, "run back and get me some ropes. You know what to bring. Take your clothes, come back naked – and hurry!" She turned to Janice. "Get yourself back against that tree."

The ropes now were tied deliberately unkind. Somehow Cartwright had infused affection into them when he bound her to the tree, but that was not the case with Brigid. She tugged and pulled Janice's strictures with a vicious determination. When she crossed the captive wrists behind the tree and bound them brutally, Janice gasped. "Brigid, they're too tight!" the bound girl yelped.

"You can put up with it."

Janice was frightened, feeling like a small girl being dealt with by an angry parent.

Janice said no more of the rope, but she pleaded, "It's all my fault. I persuaded Patsy to untie me. I'm sorry."

"And you'll be a lot sorrier, little pussycat. I'll make sure of that. As for Patsy, the little mink knows the rules."

"Please don't punish her because of me."

"Shut up. Or would you like to be gagged?" The delinquent girl lapsed into sulky silence. Testing her new tie, she knew it was far more brutal than Denver Cartwright's. Brigid had added a refinement of her own, a rope between the thighs cutting deep into her cunt, welding her bottom to the tree. When Patsy returned, she was thrust against a second tree and similarly strictured. The maid uttered no words. She was resigned, aware of her sin. With both girls bound, there remained rope to spare. Brigid used it to tie their necks as she had tied their bodies and limbs. A number of loops loosely circled them, collaring them to the tree, and then was cinched and drawn to the maximum snugness allowing them to breathe. Each girl knew total immobility, and from a female hand. Neither of them demured. They were frightened of Brigid's fury. Before she left, Brigid clamped a shining metal clip on the left nipple of each girl. They glinted evilly on each roped breast, like beetles gorging of maiden blood. Two girlish gasps of pain acknowledged their placement, but neither breast moved.

"Brigid, don't leave these things on us all night!" Patsy wailed. "They're just too cruel."

"Something to remember me by."

The naked maid waited until she was sure Brigid was halfway back to the house before she rolled her eyes in the direction of her companion in distress and moaned.

"I hates these things! They never stop bitin' at a gal. She didn't need to clip our tits along with tyin' us up so damn tight. Can you move, Miz Latimer?"

"Not an inch."

"Shit, I should have known better!"

"So should I. Patsy, what will she do to us?"

"Somethin' mis'rable. Can't never tell. You already been whipped pretty bad. Bein' tied here this way ought to be enough. We gonna hate it worse and worse, but it ain't likely she'll let it go at that. Oh, damn, my tit hurts!"

Janice's nipple hurt too with a beastly steady burn she could do nothing about. It was like being nibbled by some small creature of the night. Dusk had fallen, and the darkness loomed interminably.

"Is whipping us her favorite punishment?" Janice asked dismally.

"It's everybody's fav'rite, Miz Latimer," Patsy observed sagely. "But a gal only got so much skin, and the master likes to keep the whippin' for when he's around. She'll think up somethin' else fo' us."

The two girls fell silent in their punishment, absorbing pain. Sometimes one of them whimpered in the dark against the beetle burning on her tit and the cut of the cord. They hurt everywhere and could not move. Their roped necks were a needless addition to their dolor; they chafed and constricted and were like an avenging hand around their throat.

The night, the beach, and the place where they were bound became beautiful beneath the stars. The surf rolled on the sand, and the spray was luminescent on the water. Despite her predicament, Janice drank it in, appreciating its wonder, but it was different for Patsy.

"You hear somethin', Miz Latimer?"

"Only night sounds. Try and sleep."

"I can't git no sleep the way this clip's eatin' at my tit."

"Well, we can't get them off, Patsy."

"What you's sayin' is we gotta put up with 'em. Well, I guess we do have to, but ain't no way I can sleep. Can you see somethin' black out there beyond the breakers?"

"It's probably seaweed. Stop worrying."

Patsy wept. Her sobbing was a small, sad sound in the night. Janice wanted to cry too, but, roped as she was and unable to move her head, the impracticality of tears held her in check. She wished she could comfort her companion, but what was there to say? They were both in trouble and their trouble was likely to get worse. Release from their present bondage would grant only a temporary respite. A grim visaged Brigid would lead them to their next travail.

The night passed slowly. They slept fitfully. By the time Brigid returned, they were numb with pain, and their breasts burned steadily without hope. Brigid laughed at their gasps and moans as she plucked the clips from their buds. When they were untied, they sank to the sand gratefully, rubbing wealed flesh with hands that had lost feeling. Both girls were too hurt and dispirited to fight. Chuckling at their condition, Brigid looped each neck with rope and joined the two together with a span of a few feet for their trudge back to whatever punishment she had in store.

"Going to behave, both of you?"

"Yes, Brigid. Please don't tie us again – not yet."

They walked back along the beach: two naked girls, linked by their necks, and a woman, clothed and carrying a whip she had no need to use.

Reaching the fortress, Brigid patted their bottoms and commanded, "Go feed yourselves, have a bath together, make yourselves beautiful, and then report to me in my office." She grinned. "But I don't want any clothes on either of you."

The girls gloried in their short reprieve, not knowing when they might enjoy such amenities again. They worked on each other's hair. When they presented themselves in the office, they were a pair of immaculately lovely nudes.

"You're a couple of idiots," Brigid reprimanded.

"Yes, Brigid."

"Look, you can argue if you want. All I demand of you is obedience. Got that?"

"Yes, Brigid."

"My, my, your night against those trees did you both a world of good." She surveyed them possessively. "Patsy, go as you are and find someone to fasten you to the whipping post. I'll deal with you later. Run along."

The two girls exchanged sympathetic glances. Gloomily, Patsy departed to her punishment. It would be simple and painful.

Brigid turned her attention to the remaining delinquent. "What am I going to do with you, Janice?"

"I don't know. Why don't you have me whipped too?"

"You're marked enough, and I'm not supposed to weal your front. How about some good heavy chains all alone in one of the darker dungeons?"

"I'd sooner be whipped, Brigid, than have that done to me. I'd go crazy in one of those places all alone, loaded down with irons. Honest!"

"Hmmm, picky, aren't you?"

"Well, you did ask. I'm afraid I'm not terribly well versed in ways to punish a girl like me. I'd far sooner be tied on that tree than locked in a dungeon."

"Well, well." Brigid eyed the palpitating delinquent speculatively. "Enjoy what I did to you yesterday?"

"You know I did. It was wonderful. I've got no words –"

"Want it again?"

"Oh, yes – yes, yes, yes!"

"Willing to pay for it?"

"I'd pay anything, but I don't have any money. I'm naked."

"So I noticed. A beautiful nakedness too. You have something I value more than money. Want me to quote you a price?"

"Oh, yes – please."

"I suspend you by your wrists for a day with your toes off the floor."

"I accept."

Thinking of it afterwards, Janice wondered at her state of mind. But right then it seemed a small price to pay for such glory. Her consciousness refused to dwell on it, seeing only the shining reward.

Brigid chuckled at her avid compliance. "I can leave it an open offer if you like. Just come and ask for it anytime – and pay the price."

"Thank you. Oh, that's so wonderful!"

They gazed at each other, captor and captive. There was nothing more to say. They were in complete accord.

"We'll use my bedroom, Janice. Come along."

Like everything on the island, the room and its accommodations were large and luxurious. It contained only one anomaly: ropes from the ceiling and a bar. The bar had a wide, soft strap at each end, two feet apart.

Janice gazed at them in surprise, then laughed and accused,

"You knew I'd say yes."

"Of course I knew it, pussycat."

The captive placed her wrists within the loops. The leather felt good, costly, and luxurious, like everything else on the island. Shivering deliciously, she watched Brigid buckle them tight – very tight.

"It's best to have them very snug for the time you'll hang by them, Janice. They'll cause you less distress."

"Of course, I understand. Thank you."

"Ready?"

The simple word raced her pulse. She was already helpless, but would soon be doubly so. She wondered if Brigid would allow her to retract her acquiescence should she want to. But she did not want to. Janice's loins were already aflame with desire.

"You asked for it, pussycat."

"Yes." She emitted a long, drawn out sigh. "Yes, I'm okay. I'm fine."

Janice recognized the pleasantries as absurd. But, for her, they sounded so right. For the moment, the bands around her wrists were not hard to bear. They were marvelously contrived. She hung in passive suspension, refusing to think beyond the moment.

"Want the blindfold?"

"Oh, yes, please."

Janice greeted darkness like an old friend. Beneath Brigid's scarf it was a darkness without terror, potent with promise. No sooner did it possess her than she could detect her own scent. She was shamed.

"I – I'm so sorry, but I can't help it," she apologized in a guilty whisper.

"Don't be sorry, pussycat. You smell delicious. I'm not exactly sterile myself. Smell me."

"Oh, yes, this is so wonderful!"

It was then that it began. The second time for anything is usually a disappointment, but this was not. It was doubly intoxicating because of Janice's vulnerability. Previously, the palm tree had exerted its control, but now she swung free, every inch of her available to Brigid's magic fingers and avid mouth. Janice moaned from the start, suspended in dark witchery, wanting it never to end.

The two females blended their musk in an ever increasing pungency – the mistress intent on her work, her slavegirl seemingly suffering the agonies of an erotic communion almost too pleasurable to bear. Again and again the suspended nudity was brought to climax. Repeatedly, she breathed her plea of "more, please more" until the final explosion had wracked her nakedness into submissive acquiescence. When Janice Latimer opened her eyes, she was alone.

It is strange to hang naked in the center of another woman's bedroom. Janice sensed the strangeness of her situation. She and Brigid were infinitely privileged to make it happen. She was still under the opiate of sensuality, but her shoulders were beginning to complain,

and her wrists gave her their first message of distress. She could not shrug but did so mentally. She had called the tune so now she must pay the piper. Brigid had spoken of a day. It seemed like a long time.

Hanging in suspension is not an ideal way for a girl to dispose of a day. Time passes with a cruel sloth, especially when the girl is not allowed a clock. Janice had been so depleted by Brigid's witchery that she no longer possessed hot loins from which to draw sustenance. It would take time for her glands to regenerate. In the meantime, pain took over where eroticism had stopped. After what seemed like hours she was wanly asking herself how good a bargain she had made.

Brigid took her time before returning. She took in every detail of her suspended possession before idly saying, "I let the little so-and-so stand for awhile, but I've just been whipping her. I gave her only fifteen. She's actually a good kid. She's crying lovely tears now, still shackled. Do her good."

Janice could picture the scene and vicariously share the cuts across the naked back, but she knew that Patsy would cope. She might even cope better than she herself was coping now.

"Sorry you made the deal, pussycat?"

"Yes."

Brigid smiled wisely. "It's inevitable that you would be. We both knew you wouldn't like the price. Maybe next time you'd sooner pay it first and have your pleasure later?"

"There won't be any next time."

Brigid's merriment was genuine and unrestrained. "You don't really believe that, do you?"

"Well, yes – for right now." The suspended girl rubbed her cheek against a bare raised arm. "I'm hurting quite a lot, you know. I don't suppose I'm anywhere near my time to be let down?"

"Right, you're not. But I'm going to tell you where you're at." Brigid drank in the hanging loveliness with appreciative eyes. "You know, sweet pussy, you come close to being the most beautiful thing I've ever seen – the way you are right now, I mean."

"Thank you, but I still hurt."

"Does this help?" Thoughtfully, Brigid pressed a fingertip upon each of the suspended nipples and held them there.

It was all the superlatives in the dictionary could provide, plus flashes of fire, earthquakes, an exploding sun, and an unsuspected incandescence searing within her loins. The suspended nudity sprang into an instant sentience of vivid life.

Janice moaned in a wild paean of pure lust. "Yes! Yes – oohhhh, yes!"

The fingertips were withdrawn. "Okay, sweet pussy. I was just curious."

"But you're not going to leave me!" Janice's exclamation of dismay was agonized. Her eyes widened, her bare feet pedaled an unseen bicycle.

"I'm not going to just stand and look at you. I've got things to do."

"But you can't possibly leave me now that you've touched me! Brigid, you don't know what you do to me. You mustn't go, you mustn't!"

"Look who's talking! Little miss pussycat's hanging up by her wrists and not enjoying herself."

"I'm – I'm sorry, but it's the effect you have on me. Please don't go."

"I expect that's a compliment. But, you know, you've become simply a palpitating cunt."

"Ohhh – oh, no!" Janice's protest was anguished. "I'm not really like this, honest I'm not. But when you touch me – I can't explain!" Her plaint changed to a wail: "And I'm so helpless! I just hang and hang and hang!"

"You asked for it."

"I know I did, and I'm sorry."

"Sorry for being a poor sport?"

"I suppose so. Brigid – do it to me again, please?"

"Suppose I do – you willing to pay again?"

"Oh, of course, anything. But please hurry!"

"You little idiot, you're still paying for the last one and not enjoying –"

"Don't pay any attention to my moans. Just do it to me!"

"Very well. Suppose we let you name the price you think it's worth?"

"But I've already named it: anything! Whip me, put me in the pillory, whatever you want."

"Sweetheart, I could take advantage of you now, but I'm not going to. Au revoir!"

The suspended nude hung in disarray, her mind in a state of confusion. Brigid was right, of course. But what of the raging fire within her sex? It was burning fiercely. If she had possessed her hands, she could have quenched it, but she had no hands. She moaned in frustration and deliberately hurt her wrists with ineffectual writhings.

"My, my, what a temper!"

Brigid was back, savoring possession while she could. She laughed at the pouting lips and thrashing legs, now stilled by her entrance.

"You're really burning up, aren't you, sweetness?"

"Yes. It's all your fault. I'm in all kinds of agony."

"Mostly from your pussy?"

"I suppose so. Go ahead and say I'm a carnal bitch or wanton or whatever."

"Well, are you?"

"I don't think so, but I don't seem to control –"

"Okay, then, which do you prefer – to be released, or to hang as you are with my fingers on your tits?"

"Your fingers! But that's not a fair choice."

"Want the blindfold again?"

"Yes. Oh, Brigid, make it quick, please – quick!"

The scarf put Janice back into darkness, and the magical fingers took her once more to Nirvana. Therein she knew fierce joys and great happiness. It went on and on, milking her of lust. When it was over and the scarf removed, Brigid was standing back and gazing at her suspended slavegirl.

"You're still hanging there, pussycat," Brigid teased the girl.

"Yes. Don't pay attention to my beefs. And thank you." Then, after a pause, she asked, "What must I pay?"

"It's on the house, sweetheart. Like I said, you're still hanging."

It was true. She was still suspended, suffering a punishment. She had forgotten what it was for. Or was she still paying for joy? Brigid had gone. Carefully, Janice eliminated all motion. Motion hurt, and she guessed she had far to go before release.

Everything was always different. On the island nothing repeated itself. You were always shocked and cast adrift on a new sea of pain or sensuality. It was so now. Janice's desuetude was gone. She was a girl fulfilled and content. That she should hang for hours yet in payment for her sins seemed only natural. She would not complain. Besides, she had been given a bonus as a gift without penalty. She dwelled upon it in memory. She was a lucky girl. Cartwright's island was a magical place. Her wrists burned, and her shoulders ached horribly, but still she smiled. "Hung there long enough, pussycat?" She had actually fallen asleep. Or had she lost consciousness? Janice blinked at the woman by whom she was now owned, the woman who gave her happiness and pain. The bitch!

"I fell asleep," Janice said apologetically. "And it wasn't that I've not been hurting. I am hurting."

"And so you should be."

"Am I – I mean, are you going to put my feet back on the floor?"

"Yes, it's time. Besides, I have other things for you." Released, she became a pathetic bundle on the rug. Brandy helped. Janice savored her new freedom. It was like a miracle.

A key was pressed into her hand, and her mistress told her, "Go down and release Patsy. She'll be glad to see you. Then both of you eat and bathe and pretty yourselves, and report to my office."

The released girl hesitated. "Thank you for letting me down."

"You've done your time, pussycat."

"Well then, thank you for those – other things. Brigid, you' re – you' re – "

"Yes, I know I am." The older girl laughed at Janice's sincerity.

"Brigid, why do you call me pussycat?"

"Because your pussy has the best flavor I've ever tasted." Brigid slapped Janice's wealed bottom. "Now run along."

Janice ran, glorying in the freedom of movement. She cherished no thought of escape. The island held her. Or was it the island? Was not Brigid's power over her a new force to shape her thinking? She thrust that speculation aside as she came within sight of the pathetic young nudity standing with raised arms against the hated post. Patsy's back blazed acknowledgement of the fifteen strokes which had marked her graphically enough to be counted.

"How come you free and got the key, Miz Latimer?" Patsy was anxious and in no mood for giving fresh offense. "I don't wanna git striped no more."

Janice embraced the bare warm beauty of the girl, telling her what little there was to tell, leading her to the house in a reversal of their usual roles. But she did not speak of her pact with Brigid. Only with Brigid did it make sense. If someone else knew, she would feel shamed.

"I 'spect we's in for trouble," Patsy opined after they had eaten and were headed for their bath. "Brigid always likes a gal to look real purty to git herself punished."

"I simply don't know what she has in mind," Janice admitted. "But I'm not handcuffed, and I'm enjoying a bit of freedom. Come along. I'll be your lady's maid."

Patsy surrendered to euphoria. She bent submissively in the bath to have her whipped back soaped and sponged down by gentle hands. She did the same for Janice, upon whom the fifty strokes were still fresh, proclaiming her slavery. It was a pair of bright and shining young women who presented themselves at the housekeeper's office. Brigid eyed them shrewdly in approval as she accepted the return of the key.

Her voice was dryly amused as she asked, "Expecting to get your bottoms sliced?"

"If that's what you want, Brigid," Janice replied.

The housekeeper laughed at their docility. "Come along, I'll show you what I want."

They ended up in Brigid's bedroom. The ropes were gone, but now there were two chains and two shackles from a heavy ring sunk in the floor, a ring the carpet could easily hide.

"Both of you lock a shackle on the other's right ankle," Brigid ordered.

Timidly, they obeyed. The locks clicked within the snug bands. Janice sighed. Once more she was chained. Her freedom had been brief.

"I'm headed for my bath. Be sure you're here when I get back."

The mistress departed, laughing to herself. The two nude girls stood uncertainly. They kicked at their chained ankles and the links responded. There were a lot of links; their chains were long, but not long enough to reach the door or allow them to reach the key Brigid had hung on a hook upon the most distant wall. They looked at each other and shrugged.

8

Whipped Mistress

Janice shook her head in disgust and bafflement. She had been doing this on and off for what seemed like eternity. When the upper yoke of the public pillory had closed down upon her wrists and embraced her throat, she entered into a shaming and tiring confinement that made no sense. Her mind was still nursing its grievance.

"But, Brigid, what have I done?"

"Not a thing, pussycat. You don't have to 'do' something to be punished on this island. You know that."

"But it's not fair!"

"Life isn't fair, sweetheart. You ought to know that too."

"Well, then, do something to me in private. Don't leave me in this thing where everyone can see everything I've got."

"Get your pretty self into position, pussycat."

Miserably, she obeyed. The moment Brigid lowered the slotted beam onto her waiting wrists and neck, it was like the knell of doom. She would stand nakedly exposed in it for a long time.

"You've got a gift for punishment, pussycat. You always look beautiful."

"Thank you. But I don't suppose that will make standing here any easier."

"Shows you off nicely. The passers-by can choose which half of you they want to look at."

"How long do I have to stand like this?"

"It likely depends on my digestion, pet. If I get to not feeling so good, you'll be there for a long time. I told you – and I bet Patsy has too – I'm mean."

"No, you're not. I think you're just bored. The master leaves us girls here for you to play with, so you simply play with us. If it hurts, that's our hard luck."

"Hmmmm, not bad, dear. I'll leave you to think up some more polite ways of telling me I'm a sadist. Oh, and by the way, young Patsy is not being punished. She's not on your social level. She's a servant, so she has work to do. You belong to the privileged class, so you get punished."

"I don't feel privileged. Brigid, be a darling and let me out of this horrible thing."

"What would I do with you then?"

"I don't think you have to 'do' anything. Just keep me handcuffed or something."

"This is the 'or something' bit. Goodbye, pussycat."

"Brigid! Oh, Brigid!"

But it was useless. Brigid had gone, and Janice stood naked and alone. She sighed and wondered what Cartwright would say or do if he came back and found her like this. Probably all he would do would be to pat her bottom and laugh.

The sun had shifted appreciably as her back had increasingly ached. Islanders had come to look. Sometimes they commented to each other on her female attributes. But no one dared touch her. She was the property of the master and the plaything of his housekeeper. Still, they enjoyed her visually while she stood for their edification.

It had been a week since she and Patsy had stood, with their ankles chained, while their mistress bathed. Comprehension had not been slow to dawn.

"I bet we gits to eat her," Patsy whispered. "Best we does a good job or she git real mad."

"Both of us?"

"Sure. She got tits up front. Ain't short o' places for our tongues. 'Sides, she'll change us off and keep us goin' most o' th' night. We is in fo' some real hard work."

Patsy had been right. The naked Brigid had possessed a startling figure – curved, muscular, and firm.

"You both know what to do," she told her two captive girls as she disposed herself across the bed. "Your chains are long enough. I'll thrash either one of you if your tongue doesn't please me."

Their tongues had proved equal to their task. Patsy was expert, and Janice was thankful for her slavery to Natalie. She had suspected they had passed the test with honors. The mistress had done nothing for either of them. But when she finally slept, Janice and Patsy had slid to the rug in whispered mischief and given each other delight. Morning had found three naked females sprawled where the sleep of exhaustion had overtaken them.

That was six days past. The girl in the pillory shifted her weight tiredly from foot to foot and thought back through each of the six days. But she found no logic to her captivity. She was still forced to wear the metal circlet around her waist. The key to her belt was with Cartwright, and he was gone. Along with handcuffs, it was her only clothing. With their master absent, the slavegirl's only duty was to amuse Brigid, and Brigid had been capricious and unpredictable.

"How would you like a night on the island, pussycat?"

"But I'm already on the island."

"Don't be a smart ass. I mean, for a whole night you have your freedom, do what you like, go where you please."

"In these?" Janice asked, raising her handcuffed wrists.

"Why not? You always say you don't notice them."

True, the handcuffs mattered little and her belt even less. "But what would I do? All there would be for me would be to try to escape, and then you'd punish me horribly."

"I couldn't if you really got away."

"I'm not going to try. The only other thing I could do is to find a man. I expect Enrico would be glad to fuck me."

"He's got a woman; she'd tear your hair out. Why don't you ramble and explore? I'd have thought you'd enjoy that."

"Not with a whip hanging over my head."

"Okay, I'll promise not to whip you, no matter how idiotic you behave."

Janice had gone on her starlight ramble reluctantly but with little choice. It had led her to the incident with the boat and the fury of frustration. The boat had become discernible on the silver water at the far end of the island. She had cried out, but her voice was absorbed by the immensity of the scene. Frantically, she had looked around for something with which to attract attention, but there was nothing. It was then that she saw the large rock. Climbing halfway up it, Janice stood, exhibiting her nakedness in sharp contrast to its darkness, waving her joined hands.

It was a tense and fearful time until the boat had turned and headed directly for the shore where she stood. She had been seen, she thought, and would soon be rescued.

It had been, and still remained, incomprehensible. The dark profile of the vessel had grown larger and larger as it approached. She could discern movement on the deck; more than one person was aboard. She believed she was being examined through a telescope; there was light enough. She waved enthusiastically and called again, but her voice was drowned out by the surf. After a couple of minutes she could hear the boat's motor revving up. It turned and headed out to sea, resuming its course. She stood on the rock and watched as it disappeared out of sight. It was a mystery. She cried herself to sleep beneath a palm tree on the beach. She told no one about the boat.

On the fourth day she had shamed herself. Brigid had generated an erotic flame within her belly. Denied the comfort of Patsy, Janice had become increasingly aware of her libido. Brigid dispensed no favors but sensed her need.

"You're feeling horny," Brigid accused laughingly. "And you wonder why I call you pussycat."

Janice pouted. "Well, why not? I expect it's the climate."

"Do you want to spend some more time in pain?" They faced each other, dispensing with pretense.

"Yes, why not? That is, you'd like to."

"You know how it hurts, and how you'll hate it."

"I know – and thanks for the warning – but I'm incurable." It had been simply done. Janice was soon suspended, her toes dangling inches above the bedroom rug. She gazed at her mistress in bright-eyed anticipation.

"Pussycat, you are absurd."

"Yes, I know. The pain probably serves me right."

"That's all there is for today. I'm teaching you a lesson."

"But you promised! You told me anytime –" Janice was aghast. "Oh, Brigid, I feel so ashamed!"

"Good. Keep on feeling that way. But you'll do it better alone."

The moment had been one to remember. She had been lured into a day of increasing pain, and there was nothing she could do about it. She dared not make harsh accusations; she was far too vulnerable. She would have to be polite even though seething with anger, humiliation, and, above all, disappointment at not being taken into Brigid's magic world. Hanging like this, she would come to repent her surrender to her glands. Once more she would say it served her right, but she did so without grace. Suspension can do strange things to a girl. After endless hours she can become light-headed and see visions. Her pained parts become numb. Her only thought is that sometime it must end. It was in this state that the scarf was slipped over Janice's eyes and tied tight.

"I made a contract with you pussycat," the feminine voice whispered. "I'll live up to it." The fingers found her nipples.

The girl in the pillory sighed at the vivid memory. She wished she could change places with that other girl she had been. Suspension was worse than standing in the pillory, but its reward made it infinitely preferable.

Suddenly she aware of footsteps, which triggered a memory. A moment later she was being kissed by Natalie Stephenson.

"That son of a bitch wasn't hard to track," Natalie said angrily. "Darling, where's the key to this thing you're in?"

"Brigid has it."

"Damn! I didn't expect to find you locked up. I could have dealt with handcuffs or a chain. Brief me – quick."

Janice briefed her. At the end of her explanation, she mourned, "Brigid will never give you the key. I just know she won't."

"We'll see about that, pet. Don't panic. I came in a boat. There are two men on it ready to fight."

Natalie strode grimly away, watched by a pair of anxious captive eyes. Angrily, the captive girl tugged and pulled at Cartwright's pillory. She was tired of the role fate had plagued her with – to be a helpless plaything at the disposal of others.

The yoked captive tried to content herself with the assurance that nothing was likely to happen immediately. There would be talk before Natalie returned with the key. Janice stirred restlessly within her wooden prison. After awhile she stopped pretending.

It was Cartwright who approached a small clearing. He was alone and appeared pleased. He kissed his captive warmly and patted her bottom.

"Damn it, I forgot the key," he apologized. "But you won't mind a little longer, will you?"

"Where's Natalie?"

"What?" He professed surprise. "Oh, that damn woman! Goddamn nuisance, isn't she?"

"What have you done with her?"

"Brigid has her. They'll be along soon. She has an appointment. "

"But what's happened? Oh, Denver!"

"She and I have been down to the wharf." Cartwright beamed broadly. "She explained

to her men about the holiday she's taking with us. She sent them away. They are coming back to fetch her in a week."

The captive face lit up. "A holiday! Here? Oh, that's wonderful!" Then, soberly, by instinct, Janice Latimer said flatly, "I don't believe it."

"We did have to explain to your lesbian friend that you would be whipped steadily until she agreed to accept our invitation. She saw our point. Remarkably logical for a woman."

"Why a single week?" she asked bitterly. "Why not forever, same as me?"

"Because she'd be missed in a way you never were. If she vanished, there'd be those who'd come looking. But for only a week, and with an arrangement made by her own lips, nobody will question that. After her, uh, visit, we'll send your lesbian home a sadder and wiser woman, and probably a bit tender in spots."

"Will I go with her, Denver?"

"You know better than that. She'll carry away with her a vision of you being whipped every time she makes a fuss. She can find herself another little popsy to nibble on."

"You've thought of everything – sir," Janice said bitterly.

"Seems to me a nice arrangement I may allow her a final feed on your cunt the last day. But no delights for her, of course. She is an irritating creature."

"She's not! She's sweet. It's the way you treat her. Let her go, please! I'll be so well behaved, I promise."

"You will anyway, dear girl." Cartwright had become smug. "This arrangement enables me to play you off against each other. I'm an absolute bastard, what the English would call a cad. But if you put on a sulky act, her bottom will get cropped along with yours. Do I make myself clear?"

"Yes, perfectly clear. And you are a cad – sir!" Janice was in despair and careless with her words. Now she was nagged by memory and gazed up at her smiling master. "You said Natalie had an appointment. What – ?"

"Do you really have to ask, dear girl? It's with the whipping post, of course. We're giving her an introductory thrashing. Ah, here they come now!"

Natalie Stephenson was walking unwillingly in their direction under the compulsion of Brigid's hand in her hair. Her arms were behind her back, presumably handcuffed. Reaching the center of the clearing, Brigid released her hold. The new captive stood, glaring, defiant, panting, arms tugging at locked wrists.

"Free her hands, Brigid."

When this was done, Natalie Stephenson stood, rubbing chafed wrists, her eyes wary. Catching Janice's pitying regard, she grinned wryly and shrugged hopelessly.

"Remove all clothing, please, Miss Stephenson."

Natalie turned on the male in fierce anger. "Can't you grow up?" Her voice trembled in fury. "You're like a little boy reaching puberty – your absurd obsession with seeing girls naked!"

"You're probably right. Remove your clothes."

"Drop dead!"

The man and the lesbian confronted each other in unequal contest. Brigid was carrying a whip and a riding crop. Ostentatiously, she walked behind the pillory to where Janice's wealed back and bottom offered themselves in helpless innocence.

"Brigid will now whip Miss Latimer until you comply," the master said suavely.

The captured woman looked around in desperation, but she knew herself defeated by the island. Her proud arrogance visibly drooped. Disgustedly, her fingers reached for the fastening of her dress. When she was naked, she faced her tormentor and taunted, "There, little boy, have your look at a naked woman. I hope you enjoy it."

"You are quite superb. Magnificent breasts and bush."

"Thank you." Natalie's voice dripped acid. "Would you care to place your hand on one of my private parts?"

"I would prefer you to arrange yourself at the whipping post."

"That again!" The naked woman looked at the vertical pillar and its shackles in distaste. "You should consult a psychiatrist and tell him about pulling the wings off flies as a boy."

"Get over there in position."

Woefully, the girl held by the pillory watched her former mistress make the short walk to the waiting wood. After a moment's hesitation she raised her arms. Brigid was there instantly, snapping the shackles on rebellious wrists.

"I'm naked and helpless. This really must appeal to your big male ego."

"Oh, indeed it does! How many strokes would you deem appropriate on your delicious pelt?"

"Oh, stop teasing your cock and get on with it. Whip me! You'll do it anyway, regardless of anything I say."

"But I enjoy a preliminary chat before your skin is marked. I refuse to forego it because of your bad temper."

"Look, I've fulfilled my part of the bargain; I'm standing at this post. You should get Janice out of that pillory now!"

Cartwright cocked an eyebrow, considering. "You're right," he agreed. "Brigid, look after her."

For several moments release felt so good Janice forgot all else. But while she was still rubbing her chafed skin she was abruptly turned around and her wrists handcuffed behind her back. She then ran to the chained nakedness at the post, kissing former mistress in a desire to reassure.

"Darling, oh, darling, I'm so sorry!"

"Get back here," Cartwright ordered her. "Janice, behave yourself or you'll go back to the pillory. I want you to stand and watch this lesbian get her ass cropped."

Abjectly, the slavegirl obeyed the male. She stepped well back from the post to watch her

beloved be whipped.

"Crop her ass first, Brigid. Make the bitch hop!"

It was cruel, yet beautiful. The smooth, unmarked skin yielded its scarlet lines, and the lush lips emitted choked sounds of agony. Sardonically, Cartwright clapped his hands in applause.

"Harder, Brigid. Let her really have it."

An anguished face looked back over a bare shoulder. "No! Oh, please stop!" Natalie's voice strove for a reasoning tone. "I don't pretend to be brave. I'm just a woman! Please! I can't possibly stand harder strokes. You're killing me now."

"Harder!"

Natalie Stephenson clenched her shackled hands and thrust her forehead against the post. The crop sang a new and vicious note. The slavegirl stood desolate, wincing in vicarious agony at each splatting impact on her mistress's flesh.

Later Cartwright lay in his bed and said to his slavegirl, "A damn satisfying day, Janice. Come here, I'll change your cuffs from back to front. If we're going to make love –"

"You want me to make love to you!" Janice was not entirely displeased. "I thought you'd been raping Natalie."

"Don't underrate me, sweetheart. Rape is simply its own reward, and the bitch isn't that good a lay anyway. On the other hand, you're special. I told you – come here!"

Janice proffered herself to be chained and stood pensively while it was done.

"Natalie's my mistress, and I adore her, but now. Now you've got her tied up or something, and you and I are going to make love. I'm sort of lost."

"She's safe in the dungeon."

"Which one?" Her demand was urgent.

"Oh, don't worry, it's the one with the window. The bitch can have a good look at the freedom she doesn't have."

"Is she loaded down with all those chains?"

"Not all of them, pet. You're still wearing the belt. See, you forgot all about it. That tiny waist of yours doesn't even know it's there."

Janice flushed. He was right about the metal around her middle. It had become a part of her, just like the handcuffs.

"Why are you so mean to her? She's not a bitch, and she's never done you any harm. All she wants is me."

"Whoever takes you does me harm. You are mine."

The chained girl knew she was his. There was no doubt of it. Slowly, she suggested, "Denver, I've come to know I'm your property. I don't fight it any more. Let me tell Natalie, and then you send her home."

"She goes home at the end of her seven days. I'm going to make her smart, teach her a lesson. You know what I think of lesbians – and I don't even think you are one."

"Denver, I wish I knew."

"Well, if you are, I'll whip it out of you."

"Are you going to try and whip it out of Natalie too? That was a terrible whipping you had Brigid give her today."

"It did her some good. Did you notice her towards the end?"

"The poor dear was so hurt she'd have said or done anything. Please don't try and cure her of being a lesbian. It's not possible. You can break her down with pain, but it won't prove a thing." Janice paused, then broke into irrelevance. "Denver, when you go away, please don't leave me under Brigid's authority."

"What did she do to you?"

"Nothing you wouldn't approve of, I guess. You gave her carte blanche, didn't you? But there's a witchery about her."

"You're right, there is. It amuses me the way she can handle girls." He looked up sharply. "But there's something you're not telling me. Okay, out with it!"

"Well, she's as much a lesbian as Natalie, but you don't punish her even when –"

"No, she isn't. She just uses her sex as part of her stock-in-trade. I take it she ate your cunt and made you eat hers?"

"Well, yes, she did. Do I – ?"

"No, you don't get punished. But if I don't leave you in her care, who else is there? Surely not Patsy!"

"You don't have to leave me in anyone's care." Janice pouted. "You've got me housebroken. Leave me handcuffed and let me have the run of the island. I'll be here when you return. The island will keep me safe for you."

Cartwright eyed her keenly. "Well, well! So you think you've graduated?"

"If I turn my back on Natalie and don't think of her any more, isn't it the least you can do?"

"Sweetheart, I've told you before, I don't make deals. You'll do what you're told."

"All right then! I don't want to spend half my life wandering this island and looking at coconuts, or lying tied up on Brigid's bed. So why not marry me and take me along with you when you come and go?" She made a pretty grimace. "I won't complain about wearing handcuffs, if that pleases you."

"I'll be damned!" Cartwright looked up at her in admiration. "You really are something! You positive all this isn't an attempt to get that lesbian cunt off the hook?"

"I know you well enough to know I can't do that. You'll torture her for the time you've said, but don't make me watch. Let me stay liking you. Don't allow her and me to see each other again. I'll write her a letter explaining. Then, after you've sent her away, marry me. I promise I'll be a good wife."

"You're a damn lovely slave. Get down on the bed and spread your legs. I've listened to enough of this nonsense."

Janice obeyed. Inwardly, she sighed. At least he had not punished her for her temerity. She reached up her joined hands to draw him close.

Janice had become wise to her master's moods and gauging how far she could carry audacity. Over breakfast the next morning, she asked lightly, "What does Natalie have to suffer today?"

"You're going to watch it, sweetheart."

"I guessed that."

"Ramble around until you find her." He grinned in secret knowledge. "Shouldn't be too difficult. I have things to do this morning, but I'll be dropping in from time to time."

"You don't trust me?"

"No sense dangling temptation in front of your nose and then punishing you for yielding to it."

"You wouldn't have minded a week ago. I must have been promoted."

"Be grateful, sweetheart. Drop the sarcasms."

It was not hard to find the island's punished visitor. Janice discovered her in one of the ancient fortress's empty rooms, a bare stone compartment without a door. She was a hanging nude, a noosed thumb at each end of a two-foot bar on which her toes could support only a part of her weight. Her face was lined by stress.

Beholding her slavegirl's shocked comprehension, the mistress moaned weakly, "A grown woman's thumbs won't take all her weight, not without permanent damage. He's a crafty bastard."

"Oh, darling!" It was a useless exclamation, but it was all Janice had. She tugged angrily at her hands cuffed behind her back. They were useless. She could do nothing to help. She repeated her words: "Oh, darling!"

"You can't help me, pet. Don't feel guilty. The son of a bitch thinks of everything."

"Does it hurt terribly?"

"Not as much as the whip yesterday, but I'll bet it will last longer."

"Mistress, if I crouch down in front of your legs, you can step on on my back and rest."

"Don't you dare! That lousy man will check. If he found us like that, we'd both be in deep trouble."

"But I feel so helpless!"

"Sure, you do. He fixed you that way."

"Mistress, you look so wonderfully gorgeous!"

"Most girls do when they're hung up." Natalie pursed her lips. "You used to when I hung

you up in our apartment. Not that you don't anyway. I suppose that's why Cartwright wants you. Does he make you service him – sexually, I mean?"

"Yes."

"That figures. Don't feel guilty, precious. He whipped you cruelly to break you down. The marks were the first thing I saw on you when I found you in the pillory."

"Fifty strokes. I thought I'd die." A silence fell, broken only by Natalie Stephenson's labored breathing. Awed by the beauty she beheld, Janice now observed a thing she had not at first noticed: Her mistress' Venus mound was snugly encased in metal, a shield-shaped piece held in place by thin wires indented deeply within Natalie's flesh. It was an unobtrusive infliction, but would keep her lips from where they inevitably would have gone. Janice went swiftly to the back, but the wire was twisted deep and sealed with lead. Even if she had possessed her hands, she could have done nothing. She completed her circle, standing on tiptoe to rub breasts and kiss willing lips.

"Natalie dear, that hateful thing he's got wired on you – does it hurt?"

"Of course it hurts, silly, but not more than I can stand. The shield over my pussy is okay. It's the wires that hurt." The punished mistress grimaced. "That man hates lesbians."

"I'll go and talk to him. It's horrible!"

"No, don't! Come back!" The command caught Janice halfway to the door. "He says if you make a nuisance of yourself on my account, he'll do something beastly to my nipples too – some sort of clips."

Janice wailed. "But that means there's nothing I can do for you! I have to watch you suffer!"

"That's right, but don't take on so. I'll get through the day somehow."

"But there's more to come – five or six more days! Darling, he can't possibly torture you like this –"

"Want to bet?" Cartwright was in a genial mood. He kissed the nape of his slavegirl's neck and patted her bare bottom paternally. "I see you found her okay. Was it her sealed cunt you were mourning?"

"Take it off her, Denver." She gazed at her master piteously. "The wires are hurting her. If you'll take it off, I'll promise not to touch her there. I promise!"

"I like it. It stays on. I've got one for you too but not now." His grin encompassed them both. "I've just had an inspiration."

"I'm sure I won't like it," Natalie said.

"It's really simple, Miss Stephenson: Every time I come to town I'll drop by your apartment and fuck you."

"You're being ridiculous and offensive!"

"If you high-hat me on these occasions, our little sweetheart here will get the whipping of her life when I get back here."

The suspended nude tensed. Forgetting pain and indignity, Natalie became vehement.

"You're insane! You can't hold on to Janice. The police, the authorities –"

"When they search my island, Janice won't be found. I'll have her safely hidden away."

"You bastard!"

"Janice is here for keeps, Miss Stephenson. Get used to the idea. You can easily pick up another willing tongue." Cartwright tilted his captive's chin up to stare her former mistress in the face. "But I'm a kindly man. I'll bring you here for a weekend sometimes. If you refuse to come, it will mean Janice gets whipped the same as if you contact the police or refuse to spread your legs for me."

"You son of a bitch!"

"That's a demotion from bastard. If you weren't suffering already, I'd whip you for it."

"Haven't you even a streak of decency? Janice would be whipped to death!"

"By you, Miss Stephenson, not by me. I think you'll obey me, and I don't think you'll go to the police. Janice's pretty skin will be quite safe on all counts."

"Don't worry, darling," she said to Janice. "I'll do whatever he wants. If he whips you – and he probably will – it won't be because of me. He's whip happy, as well as completely insane."

"What, no gratitude for the visiting privileges, Miss Stephenson, courtesy of my private jet! Being fucked is surely a minor matter. While it happens you can think of my male organ as a female tongue. It may even be habit-forming."

"Have your fun, Cartwright." Natalie sniffed angrily. "There seems to be nothing I can do about it."

"Well, that's all nicely settled." Denver Cartwright beamed impartially. "I'll leave you two girls alone. I'm sure you have lots to talk about."

When he was gone, Janice nestled close to her fellow captive, rubbing her cheek gently against bare skin and the curve of breasts. There seemed to be nothing to say. A man owned them both.

"The lousy bastard!" The suspended woman put a wealth of bitterness into her exclamation, then followed it with, "The dirty son of a bitch! He's got us! Oh, damn!"

Janice said nothing.

In the morning she awoke to an empty bed. It was an amused Brigid who unlocked her shackle and handed her the note in Cartwright's scrawled handwriting:

"Sweetheart: Got a radio signal. Imperative I leave on business. Maybe a week. Have taken the bitch with me."

The still handcuffed girl could not repress relief. This was better for Natalie – for herself.

Uncertainly, she looked up at the amused housekeeper and said, "Just you and me alone again?"

"There are others on the island, pussycat."

"Yes, but it's you I have to obey."

"Not now, pussycat. You've weaseled around the master. You stay handcuffed. Otherwise, you're free. I don't get to whip your little ass unless you act damn foolish. Otherwise, we're just two females on an island."

They gazed at each other in wry acceptance. Cartwright's hand was heavy on them both. Janice looked down at handcuffed wrists. They did not matter. She was not exactly sure what did matter, but she sensed a small victory.

"You're lost, sweetheart. You'd be happier if you were still scared of me. Come on down, I'll give you breakfast."

Hot coffee worked its usual magic. Impulsively, Janice declared, "I'm going to walk around the island. Is it okay?"

"Don't ask me. You're your own boss. Run along."

The beach welcomed the naked girl's eager steps. The island was idyllic, but there was something oddly wrong. Her freedom was only make-believe, and she wasn't sure whether or not she wanted freedom anyway. Freedom promised to be lonely. She wanted Cartwright. She wanted Natalie. She wanted Patsy and Brigid. Her light footsteps on the sand appeared to be taking her away from all of them. She felt a panicky relief when she turned at the furthermost point and headed back to the other side. Her steps quickened under a compulsion she could not control. Guiltily, she knew she had no wish to control it.

Brigid greeted her sardonically. "You must have run, pussycat."

"Well, no, but it was lonely. Up at the far end I could almost believe I was marooned." She clinked her handcuffs and looked at them admiringly. "I got the strangest feelings."

"And you've got something in mind?"

"Well, yes, it appears I have pain to spend." She focused on the wise, dark eyes. "Are you buying?"

"Yes."

"It won't get us into trouble with the master, will it?"

"Not if we don't tell him."

"I won't if you won't."

Laughing, they walked hand in hand to the bedroom and the rope.

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THONG SONG

BY F. E. CAMPBELL

As is usual with this author, his heroine is never bored. She is taken from prison to prison. Sometimes her prison is grim, sometimes gorgeous, but there is never a chance of escape. Janice Latimer spends days, weeks, and months in the bound or chained frustration of "so near and yet so far."

This is a story of three captivities, all capricious, sometimes cruel. The influence of three powerful personalities upon her temperament and libido are diverse and unexpected. The Janice Latimer who existed before the opening page of this book bears little resemblance to the radiant slave of the later sequences.

Through deprivation and punishment, the baffled girl feels her way towards a goal she only dimly understands. The there is paved by pillory, by rope and chain, by straps, and by dungeons! At its end there stands the implacable vertical timbar of the whipping post, its shackles waiting for her wrists. It views her with the cynicism of the centuries in which it has stood and listened to the screams of girls. Even her wildest writhings can move it not a single inch. In its own inanimate way the whipping post is as inflexible as are the men and women who punish and imprison the girl they come to love.

This is the story of a maiden torn by adorations she cannot control. She is always captive, possessing only a wish and not a will. As is to be expected from this writer's maidens, Janice Latimer imposes an infinite appeal.

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