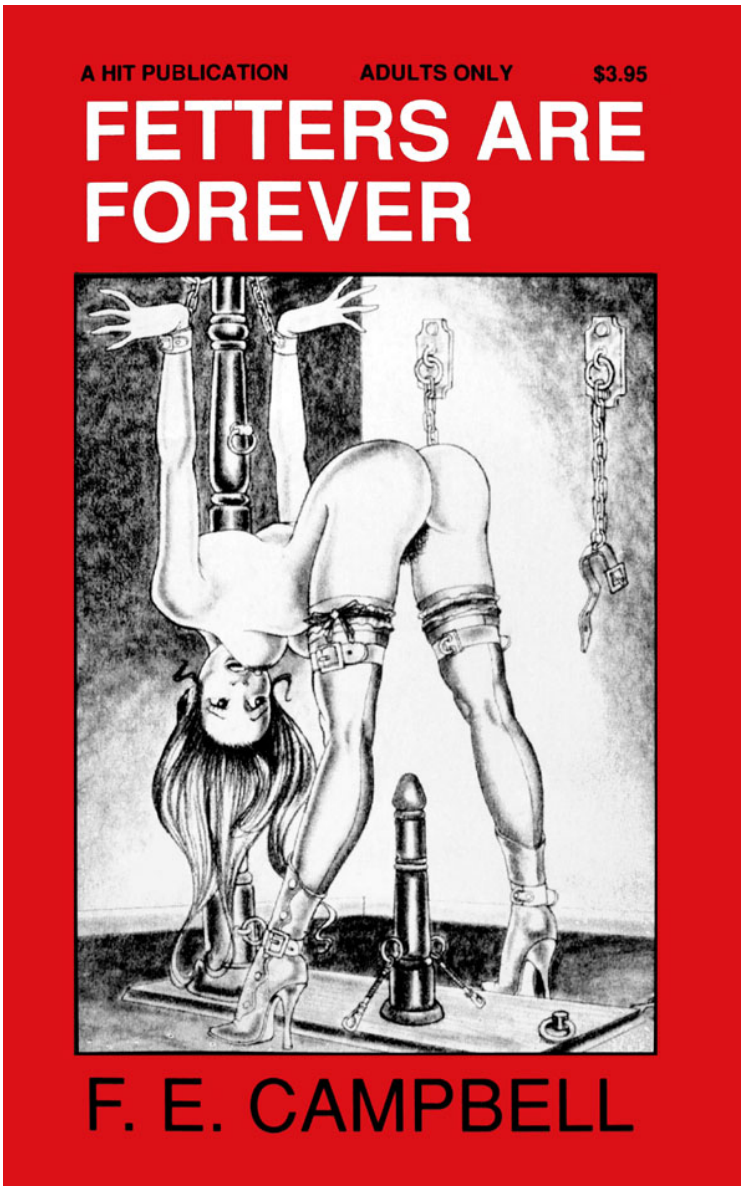


Fetters Are Forever

by F. E. Campbell

A HIT Book

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Pretty Girl Punished

Melody and I walk in single file, the padlocked chain from neck to neck keeps us under perfect control. Melody's nakedness forms my principle view, and I wonder how that glorious virgin back of her's will look tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. Mine has borne stripes for so long they do not matter. I look constantly at Melody's crossed hands and bound wrists. She's so sweet, she does not struggle, innocently her fingers accept their condition as captive to the cords. Looking at Melody's back and Melody's tied hands, I see also my own for we are similarly bound. Sometimes one of us will stumble or take a false step and thus snub our three foot length of tethering chain to jerk at both necks, but this we do not mind. We love each other.

Our two guards who marched us back to servitude laughing, delighted in telling us of punishments to come, we were runaways and could expect the worst. But now they feel sorry for us and strive to console and reassure, offering the possibility of Lenore's forgiveness of our sin. We do not believe a word of it.

They are intrigued by the lovely silver ring around my throat above the chain. They insist again and again on my recounting the agonies it imposes when I run a step too far from my enslavement to the Estate. They finger it in curiosity with loving hands, assuring me I will have to wear it all my life. It will never allow me to go a single step beyond what Lenore will choose. They had heard of the ring but had never previously seen one. They cheerfully admit to an erotic longing to be thus ringed themselves since they have neither intent nor wish to escape. A ring like this is an almost living bond between the girl who wears it and her mistress. Melody assures them they don't know when they are well off.

Our ponygirl escort do not wear the harness of a guard as do I. Melody had counselled against taking it with us when we ran away. But I was strangely loath to part with it. The tight clutch of it's straps gently and insistently imposed an erotic thrill while at the same time endowing me with authority over any other girl save those who wore the harness too. Ruefully I wondered if my status as a Guard would survive this latest of my run-away exploits. Almost certainly they would take the harness away from me when I was whipped. I had no doubt whatever that I would be whipped, it was the least I could expect and would probably be only one of many punishments I must bear. My heart bled for Melody, the poor darling was so innocent of guilt.

I had many times been made more helpless than now. Tied wrists and a chain

around my neck was nothing new. But the circumstances under which I was thus bound imposed a fearful impotence. To have had freedom within my grasp but be defeated by an electric impulse from a silver ring around my neck was bitter gall. Lenore had been playing with me all the time, knowing I would run but curious to see how and when. Then she set her infernal gadget to reduce me to a helpless mass of torment at a range of miles, she had let me make my own trap and walk into it. I don't suppose she had figured on Melody running with me to guide me to the secret road. I felt bad about Melody and the punishment waiting for her because she was my friend.

I wondered if Lenore would allow me to retain possession of Melody and Nona, Celie and Inga - or whether they would be taken from me along with my leather harness. I could plead Melody's innocence by affirming my ownership, telling of a fictional compulsion I had placed upon the poor girl to lead me to freedom. Lenore probably would not buy it but I could try.

I twisted at bound hands in bitter frustration. I thought of Bill Trafford, my Master. It had been he, rather than freedom, I sought in flight. Now I would never see him again. He could not come to me on the Estate and the ring around my throat made certain I would not go to him. Melody and these two girl who were leading us as prisoners found it so easy to be happy with the Estate, but they had been born there and I had not. Once again I cursed my tendency to rebellion, it would cost me dear.

Lenore's farmstead greeted us with unconcern. Ponies who had seen Melody and I led across the yard, bound and connected by our shameful chain, only smiled and nodded as though knowing this the inevitable end of too much freedom. We evidently no longer rated the house but were taken directly to the stables where the girl in charge told me my other ponies were harnessed to the mistress' buggy and were either hard at work or hitched to a post. We were taken to a concrete slab and there hosed down and laughingly toweled dry. She then said she had a single vacant stall at the far end of the row, as far from my beloved team as we could get. We were then lovingly kissed by our two girl escort who assured us they had thoroughly enjoyed bringing us back to be ponies the way we were supposed to be. They kissed us several times, assuring us we shouldn't worry about punishment that might not happen. We could see the stable girl did not believe them any more than we did. They went away to other duties and we were invited to walk in behind the bars and to hear the fateful clang and locking of the iron bar door. Melody and I were still joined by the locked chain upon our necks and our hands still tied behind our backs. I felt positive we were in deep disgrace. When we asked the stable girl she said she knew nothing about it but had been told to keep us safe. Melody and I exchanged knowing glances and sat down on the straw, jerking our necks as we did so and not even chuckling.

"You may be right, darling," Melody admitted soberly. "I've come by a bad feeling. I think the girls all know something they won't tell us. Oh, darling, I'm so terribly sorry!"

We were tired. We were tense and strung taut in anxiety. We made love. Afterwards we slept.

The royal summons. The formal trial and formal punishment did not take place. Nothing happened that night nor the following morning. We asked a lot of questions of the stable girl and those she locked in the cage beside our own but all we got were shrugs and sympathy. To some of the younger girls our bound hands and chained necks were a curiosity. The Estate had little need of such Gothic demonstrations of disapproval. Almost all their girl ponies adored their work and adored their Mistresses. To them, escape was an abstract term with little meaning.

Melody and I agreed Lenore was going to make us sweat it out. She would keep us locked and almost helpless in the stall to conjure up visions of terrible punishments, visions which got steadily more drastic as time went by. I asked the stable girl if we could be taken to where the other three were in the most distant stall or if she would bring them to us so we could talk. The request was refused. We were indeed in deep disgrace.

Lenore, our mistress, came to us in the afternoon of the second day. One moment we were alone, the next she was leaning negligently against our bars, clasping two of them at the level of her head, and gazing at our helpless nudities and stricken features with an amusement we did not share.

"You look like a couple of dying ducks, darlings," she said with obvious enjoyment. "What a pair of idiots you turned out to be. I'm ashamed of you."

We shared her shame. Melody and I knelt side by side, our heads bowed, not so much in shame but because we were trying to think of something to say. Even our smallest move evoked an audible response from the metal links between our necks.

"Cat got your tongues?" Lenore inquired pleasantly.

I raised my head and looked her in the eye. "We're frightened," I told her simply. "We hope you won't punish us terribly but we think you will."

"That's good thinking, Sybil my dear. I promote you to being a guard, I give you all sorts of freedom and then you run away from me. What do you say to a hundred lashes?"

I flinched. Melody flinched, too. Our chain game a sympathetic tinkle. Our trouble was you could never tell with Lenore, she might be fooling or deadly serious!

"What about Melody?" I ventured.

"Never you mind Melody, I'll deal with Melody. I don't want to hear a sob story about you ordering her to accompany you on your suicide mission. Melody knows better." She turned her attention to my fellow prisoner. "How does a hundred lashes

appeal to you, Melody?"

"They frighten me, Mistress. But if that is your wish . . ."

"Gosh, you're a couple of contented cows!" Lenore exclaimed disgustedly. "Before we talk about punishments, I'm going to soften you up a bit. I'm a great believer in humiliation."

Our mistress stuck her head out of the door and called the stable girl. It took only a few minutes to harness Nona and Celie to a buggy and to tether Melody and I so we must walk behind. Lenore climbed alone into the seat, flapped the reins and snapped the whip at both her ponies. We started off on the most shameful walk Melody and I had ever taken.

It was not all walking. From time to time the pony team broke into a gentle trot and we were forced to do the same. But we did it awkwardly and fearfully, knowing the hazard of a fall with our necks chained as they still were. We followed behind the buggy, breathless and in burning humiliation as it traversed the main streets and went back and forth in the business section of the Estate. Lenore was making an example of us and it was easy to discern the shocked speculation in the eyes of the youthful teenagers who were not yet ponies themselves. I'm sure we were an excellent object lesson to them all.

Melody and I were a pair of tired and dispirited young women by the time we got back to the farmstead. Our mistress delivered the equipment to the stable girl and walked haughtily away without a backward glance while Melody and I stood still tethered to the buggy we had followed most of the afternoon. The stable girl put the team away and then hosed us down with a merciless cold jet before she unlocked the chain upon our necks. She put Melody back into the stall and locked her in. She told me curtly to attend my mistress in her room and not to stray along the way. I know she was annoyed at our mistress' choice of me in whatever was about to happen. I could have cared less.

There have been many things said about 'walking the last mile.' That's how it felt as, naked and with my hands still bound behind my back, I crossed the familiar ground in relative freedom. I had my feet, I could run. But when the thought crossed my mind, I cast it angrily aside. My mistress had a more potent hold on me than any chain. I made my way through the house and up the stairs and through the familiar door. Every bit of me was trembling.

Lenore Livingstone was preening herself before the big mirror. She was as naked as I. Seeing her thus made me wonder why I ran away. Without turning she said, crossly, "You look deplorable, darling, do go and have a proper bath and fix that hair." She turned and grinned.

"Come to think of it, since you're a bit handicapped, I'll have a bath with you and do all the things myself. Damn it, I have to be nuts!"

It was pure ecstasy. Lenore's hands were pure magic as were her lips. She soon had me well and truly soaped and quivering like a leaf. I knew she adored my body and was savoring every curve and hollow as she plied the bar of scented soap over my body. It filled me with renewed hope of reprieve. While frictioning my puss she inquired casually, "Why did you run away, sweetheart?"

A dozen lies crowded my tongue but I spoke truth. "Because I wanted Bill Trafford," I said simply. "I suppose I wanted freedom, too. But for me the two are the same." I mused pensively before adding, "I love you terribly, Mistress. I'm a real mess."

Lenore laughed, pleased, over my jumbled confession. She was soaping my breasts and giving them far more attention than needful in just the same manner as she had dealt with my sexual mound. Lenore had me, and she knew it, and was going to make the most of it. And the most of me! All I was was a naked girl with her hands tied tight behind her back. Meekly I asked, "Can you still love me after what I've done?"

"Of course I can, darling! But I have to punish you for the good of your soul. I can't possibly let slip by all these attempts to escape. I'm sure you agree?"

"Yes, Mistress. But please be merciful. I'll never escape again or try to."

"Indeed you won't! Not with that lovely silver ring around your throat. Did it hurt terribly?"

"More than I can possibly tell you. Oh, Lenore, it was awful! Please don't ever push that button again. I promise I'll be a good girl and behave myself. If somebody offered me a chance to escape right now, I'd spit on them."

As Lenore busied herself with my hair, I sat meekly upon the low stool and wondered if I was being played with or if this affectionate attention was for real. My hands were still tied but there was little meaning in that. She had often kept my hands tied in days long past. I well understood her conviction that a girl with hands tied tight behind her back was doubly attractive to a girl without bonds. My mistress and I understood each other. I could only hope that understanding would help me escape from the hundred lashes.

"On to the bed with you, darling, and don't think I'm trusting you a single inch." Lenore held up the tiny silver gadget of bitter memory. "Remember these?"

Thumbcuffs! I remembered them all too well. Puzzled, I exclaimed, "But, Lenore, my hands are tied, you don't need those too."

"They're not for your hands, silly little idiot!" she told me severely. "Put your feet together, they're for you two big toes. You ought to remember that, too."

Unhappily I put my feet together and watched while my toe big toes were bitten and locked within the clutch of the beastly little thing, which looked so innocent yet was so deadly. Lenore pushed the circlets down until they hurt. "There, darling, you're safe for the night. I can sleep for the night without wondering if you'll be there when I awake. You'll notice your legs are close together and they'll stay that way. Tonight the pleasures will be all mine."

I loved Lenore in truth. She had replaced Marjory Monet who was even now working out her six month's sentence of hard labor in the fields, with evening bringing fresh lashes upon her back. Or wherever else it pleased the overseer to impact the thong. Once I might have complained of helplessness. Between Lenore's long, slender legs I was pretty much like a gaffed fish, my hands behind my back, my feet painfully joined by the hateful little cuffs. I flopped and floundered but always reached my goal. This was not for first time I had rendered tribute without benefit of arms or legs to a demanding mistress. I knew the drill! I was also most anxious to please for, by so doing, I might lessen the lashes tomorrow would place across my back.

In the aftermath of Lenore's first orgasm we talked. It was girl talk, pillow talk, the most intimate of feminine exchanges.

"You do have to be punished, darling, please don't think you can butter me up," Lenore said. "But I'm in no hurry to mark your skin. Or poor Melody's either. I'm looking ahead a bit. In a trifle under six months Marjory Monet will be released form servitude. We all love the silly girl and the Council has decided to reinstate her when she's finished her sentence. We're giving her a very bad time. When she is once more clothed in her former authority will you wish to belong to her again?"

"I don't know . . . Oh, Lenore, please don't ask. Six months seems forever."

"Poor, mixed up darling! On top of Marjory Monet there's still Bill Trafford. You're still in love with him?"

"Yes I am. Please don't whip me for it."

"You're a horny little mink, Sybil my dear. You're a one man girl but you can adore any woman who has the power to make you helpless and to own you. I own you now. If I sold you to some desirable female tomorrow, you would fall in love with her?"

"I . . . I . . . I don't know, Mistress. I never knew a thing about being a lesbian until I was kidnapped and brought here."

"Are we back on that theme?" Lenore exclaimed irritably. "One simple little kidnapping and you harp upon it as if it were a big thing! We don't call it kidnapping − we call it sequestering. Would you like me to whip you a little now to

sharpen your understanding?"

Lenore held all the cards, I held nothing! She cut at me three times with the leather thong and I absorbed the pain helplessly upon her bed. If any girl knew what it was like to be owned, I knew it now!

"Feel better now, darling?"

"Yes, Mistress, thank you. I'm sorry I'm such a bore. It's hurting terribly, in case you're wondering."

"Speaking of Melody, I'm having her locked in with the other three members of her team. You've lost possession of all four. The gift is canceled."

It was no more than I had expected. But the official announcement left me more isolated than ever before. My present and my future were vested with this woman who I had just served and would serve again. Lenore was quite different from Marjory Monet but between their legs with my face buried in their fur, they could have been the same. They even tasted the same. I wondered about myself in my easy acceptance of both or either. Was I that submissive! I contented myself by blaming it on my hands bound so tightly behind my back. And my feet so painfully joined by the small steel jaws biting my big toes. Without being ordered, I once more lowered myself into the breach, oblivion came easily within Lenore's musk.

When I awoke it was bright day and I was alone. The bathroom door beckoned but when I tried to stand my toes protested. They were still joined by the metal thumbcuffs, I could not walk. And with my hands tied behind my back I could not even crawl. I had a choice between siting on the rug and sliding my bottom forward, inch by inch, or of standing erect and attempting to hop. I chose the hop, knowing it would be painful on my toes. But I figured that if I fell I could start again. Lenore was making sure I knew myself her prisoner.

It was Celie who brought my food. She had permission to untie my hands so I could eat but had no key to the cuffs upon my toes. Evidently I was not to be trusted. She told me Melody had been returned to the team and once more shared the communal stall. At the moment she was harnessed with Nona to the buggy and was propelling our mistress about her affairs. Woefully she told me Melody was to be punished but knew not how or when. When I drained the last drop of coffee, Celie mournfully informed me she must tie my hands again. The instructions had been strict, she dared not disobey.

It is a most gorgeous feeling to be untied after being bound for a long, long time. But, at the other end of the scale, it is a defeating and desolate thing to be bound again so soon. A girl almost wishes she had not been untied at all, her disappointment is so great. I stood dejectedly and put my arms behind my back and made no complaint while Celie tugged the cords within my still-indented skin and mercilessly tightened knots. Bitterly I expressed wonder by I had been born with

arms since I so seldom got to use them. Celie kissed me and took the tray leaving me as helpless as before.

Bitterly I wondered if I had been promoted. I had not been taken to the stable stall and the harness of a guard was still strapped tight upon my flesh. I was still in my mistress' house but that might mean no more than that she desired to use me in the coming night. In this solitary idleness the ghosts of care and apprehension filled the room. I would be whipped! I would be split asunder upon the horse! I would be suspended by my wrists for hours and perhaps for days . . .? The fearful list of ways by which a girl is given pain drifted relentlessly before my mind. Most daunting of all was my knowledge of my own guilt, I didn't have leg to stand on or a defense to offer. I was a pony who had tried to run from the Estate!

When Lenore returned at five, she blissfully told me of Melody's punishment to be administered the following day. Poor, dear Melody would be suspended from her ankles upside down, feet far apart, free hands just able to reach the ground. Her free hands would enhance her ability to struggle beneath the lash, no doubt making her punishment more entertaining for those who watched. She would then be whipped twenty times between her legs. Thinking of it made me want to cry. "I suppose you're wondering about your own punishment, darling?" My mistress' query was deliberately casual. "Yes."

"I'll make it interesting, Sybil my dear. I'm going to give you a choice. One hundred strokes with a whip from your knees to your neck while you are strung out on the triangle. It's severe but you'll survive, girls always do survive." She laughed at my evident dismay. "Or you can chose to sit upon the horse a whole afternoon. It won't be an easy seat like that thing Marjory had you on, my horse has sharp edges. The nice thing about the horse, darling, is you'll be fixed so you can't fall off. Will you take time to consider or will you give me your answer before dinner?"

"I'll sit on the horse, Mistress."

"My, my, was that a snap decision, Sybil dear?"

"Yes, it was. If I stop to think about either one I'd never make a choice, they're both so awful. I guess I chose the horse because no girl could every take a hundred strokes. I'm sure you had guessed which one I would chose."

Lenore kissed me and patted my wan cheek. "Your a sensible girl, darling, and I do admire sensible girls. I'm almost inclined to give you thirty minutes off for good behavior. Would you like that?"

"Thank you."

"That wasn't very gracious but I'll take it as an unqualified approval. And now my pretty captive maiden, would you like to get your hands and feet back so we can have a civilized meal?"

I was almost shocked into pleasure. "Oh yes, please, Mistress. You've had me helpless like this for so long!"

"Are you complaining, darling?"

"No. I expect I deserve it."

"You're so delightfully frank about these things, Sybil my dear. And you're so very marvelous in bed, like being muzzled by a sleek and lovely seal who never can get enough of me. Any girl servicing a woman should be robbed of hands and feet, it adds something."

Lenore Livingstone possessed or traded in so many ponies I was never certain which would be next. Dinner had been prepared and was now served by a pair of lovely girl I had not seen before. They looked at me sympathetically as though this was ancient Rome and, when the meal was done, I had a date with a hungry lion.

"We've had word about Bill Trafford, darling." My latest owner was eyeing my shrewdly. "He's gone back into the brokerage business. He does well at it and we had to offer a lot of money to get him to come here. He's a success type who always does well. Did you prefer him in bed to your other owners?"

"Of course I did, Mistress. He's male and I'm female."

She laughed. "Nothing queer about our Sybil, eh?" she scoffed. "I'd have tried him out myself but I never managed to get past that polite facade of his. He is the best mannered man I ever met."

"I adored him," I admitted frankly. "He was the reason I ran away this last time. Before it had always been for freedom. Now, when you punish me tomorrow, I'll have earned my pain by loving him."

"Heavens girl, you'll have me in tears. But it won't get you a single minute less on that lovely horse I have waiting for you." She paused in thought. "Men should be abolished. They cause us females nothing but misery. Try the salad, darling."

We talked. The ponies listened but never batted an eye. I managed to steer the conversation around to Marjory Monet. "Will you really make her endure the whole six month sentence?" I asked doubtfully.

"I've wondered about that, darling," Lenore admitted soberly. "I always liked Marjory and I'm not a bit sure she was much more cruel to her ponies than a good many others, Council members included. Look at how cruel I'm going to be to you tomorrow."

"But what you're doing to me is a punishment!"

"We could say the same for dear Marjory. She went overboard, of course, and often the things she did were purely out of caprice. But even her ponies loved her. They were desolated by her six month sentence. I'll talk about her to the other Council members."

"Could I see her?"

Lenore laughed. "Damn it, girl, you love Bill Trafford, you love Marjory, I sometimes think you love me. You're a positive bundle of affection. I'm sure I'll feel guilty about what I'm having done to you. But, yes, I'll arrange for you to spend some time with Marjory. Sometime after you've kept your date with my horse."

"You're so sweet, and everyone on the Estate has been so kind to me I feel an absolute little bitch," I said sadly. "If only I hadn't been tied in that marketplace so Bill could buy me. I would probably have become a good and obedient pony. Had Mary Maber, the woman who discovered me on the beach, been allowed to keep me, I wouldn't have been whipped half as much or been nearly as rebellious. Mary Maber was just what I needed in those first few days but exposing me in the market place killed that dead."

"You're savoring nostalgia, Sybil. Snap out of it. Tell me, did Bill Trafford ever whip you?"

"Yes. There was one time he caned my bottom so bad I was purple for weeks. That was before we realized . . ."

"That you were in love, eh? You silly little goose with your overactive glands. The longer I live on the Estate the more I realize we have created the perfect society. Maiden love is simply a matter of secretions."

I had a terrible feeling Lenore was right. Every since I had officially become a pony I had been impressed with the happiness of these girls forced into a sort of benevolent enslavement by a custom, the origins of which I did not know. But Melody and the rest of that four pony team had been radiantly happy until I had thrown a wet blanket over the whole lovely arrangement. They had adored their master and served him according to his need, wanting and expecting nothing more. For those four girls behind his iron bars in his stable, the world had been totally satisfying. I remember their telling me their hope the Council would extent their period of service from twenty-five to twenty-seven years of age. Even then I had suspected they wanted to be kept in their glorious captivity for life.

"How many will witness my punishment tomorrow?" I asked in a return to reality.

"Do you want an audience, darling?"

"Well, no, not really. I expect what I really want is a lot of ponies feeling sorry for

me and maybe a few women over twenty-five, too."

Lenore laughed delightedly. "What you're really wanting and trying to say, darling, is you want to make a statement. You won't be able to talk because I'll have you gagged. But what you're thinking is that if enough hearts bleed on your behalf the system might be changed. Am I right?"

"I suppose so, Mistress."

Lenore tinkled laughter. "Poor little slavegirl!" she consoled. "Will it surprise you to know I went through all these agonies myself? When I was fifteen I became a pony girl and for ten years I served my time most happily." She paused in retrospect. "But I wasn't always a good girl. And when I was waiting to be punished my mind followed all the channels yours does now. Don't think I've never felt what you feel now."

"Then, Mistress, please don't tie my hands or lock my toes after dinner," I pleaded. "Please let me make love to you with everything I have on this last night before I'm punished?"

Once more the silver laughter. "Darling girl, you presume you are going to spend the night with me! Instead it shall be in your stall in the stable. Dear Melody, who has her own punishment to think of, will share my bed tonight. I will bind her hands and lock the thumbcuffs on her toes just as I have done with you. I will see if she performs as well!"

Once again I longed to cry. I did and said everything wrong. I had failed to appreciate the happiness I found between Lenore's legs. Now it was taken from me! I tried to think of things to say but there simply weren't any. I was a pony who displeased her owner and would be treated accordingly. I remembered something in the scriptures about the laws of Medes and the Persians. I faced something like that. Miserably I asked, "Will you watch my punishment tomorrow, Mistress?"

"I may drop in from time to time to make sure you are suffering enough."

So that was that! Still unbound, and without a word of protest after the dessert, I allowed a pony to take my hand and lead me to the stable. I wondered if life with Lenore would always be like this!

She told me her name was Tess. She did not have to tell me how distressed she was over what she had to do. Sympathy oozed from her as she lead me to the vacant end stall and guided me within. Under the watching eye of ponies whose evening we had interrupted I was dealt with this final night before my punishment. I gazed back at them through the bars but my mind registered nothing. I was in a daze of rejection. Instead of Lenore's lovely bed I would sleep upon the straw. I was a pony, and everything done to me now would emphasis this fact.

"I'm afraid I have to tie you up, dear," Tess said with visible regret. "It won't be a bit nice and I'm terribly sorry."

"Go ahead," I told her valiantly. "Tie me up all you like. Be sure it meets with our Mistress' approval. How do you want me?"

"Well, it always starts with your hands behind your back, doesn't it, dear. Would you mind?"

Sure I minded! But what the hell! I turned my naked back to the little sweetheart and yielded my arms. She proved unexpectedly expert with the cords and a minute later I could not have separated my wrists with even hours of struggle. "You're really clever with that," I confided unhappily. "But you've really made it tight . . . Please, Tess, don't make all of the tie quite that rough."

It was rough, as I should have known it would be! Gentle hands eased me face down upon the straw then tied my ankles and my knees as they had tied my wrists, almost cruelly. Tess was expert. It had all the aspects of a very routine binding of a naked girl to render her helpless and inhibit any notions of escape she might harbor in her mind. There was something I hoped for to the last but did not mention it. As if reading my mind, Tess told me sadly, "There's one more thing, darling, our Mistress insists on your elbows. I really am sorry but I have no choice."

Since I was being put to bed, bound elbows and out thrust breasts were the last thing I desired but Tess produced a strap and buckle the exact length required for maiden elbows. She fitted it over my elbows and tugged it tight to leave me, after a couple of minutes, completely trussed and totally helpless. I hurt a little everywhere the cords bit or the strap confined but that was the name of the game. When Tess doubtfully asked if I was comfy I replied that I supposed I was, a statement that I was later to regret. She kissed me warmly and went away, locking the door of what the Estate called a "stall" but which to me had always been a cage.

Tess had used the right words when she said she would tie me up. She had done just that in a very conventional way except for my elbows. My strapped elbows were pure punishment whereas the rest of my bindings were simply to immobilize me and tell me I'd been a very bad girl. For a little while I flopped around exploring possibilities but there weren't any possibilities! I was tied securely tight and would stay tied tight until some came with willing fingers or a knife. The stall next door was empty or I would have asked its occupant to reach between the bars and loose my knots. My night was very well planned.

It hurt. Each cord was an admonishment to smarten up and behave. Had it not been for the strap around my elbows I could have taken the bondage in resignation. But the strap was a demon, never giving me a break, reminding me constantly of Melody in our mistress' bed while I lay hurting in the straw. It was impossible to find any degree of comfort with the leather biting my arms and thrusting out my breasts. For a little while I wept in pain and self-pity. I could well imaging no one

would come near until morning. There would be no chance for me to plead or receive mercy. I was reduced to a tied up bundle of naked girl with nothing much to think about except the punishment ahead.

I tried to erase visions of the horse from my mind. I knew it would be bad, much worse than the beating I had gotten on the bottoms of my feet from Marjory which contributed to her fall from grace. Somewhere on the farmstead the hateful thing was waiting. I endowed it with life so it could laugh with glee as it burrowed deep within my private place. I would have nothing of privacy when the girls had fastened me . . . Nothing!

I wiggled around until my tied arms buried themselves in straw then went to sleep.

The amazing thing about the Estate was the genuine affection the ponies felt for each other. They were also damned happy with the solitary exception of ME. Most had never been punished or ever would be. To them the troubles I endured were abstract, relating only to deviant behavior. It was that way in the morning when two of them came to release me and to lovingly message my indented skin. It felt so good to be free of my night's bondage I actually cried. Freedom for my hands was short lived, only long enough for me to eat breakfast and brush my hair. As usual, the pony was sorry for what she must then do.

"Darling, I have to tie your hands again, it's orders. I feel an absolute bitch."

I shrugged. Tied hands were a small thing compared to what was waiting. I did the familiar turn around and crossed my wrists behind my back. I did everything but tying them. The pony laughed, "I could almost believe you like your hands tied, Sybil dear. That's all, just your hands."

She stayed with me a while, both of us sprawled out on the straw, talking about everything except what filled our minds. Visions of the horse were constantly before my eyes. "When do I get taken to the . . . You know what?" I asked.

"At one o'clock. You have to sit on it until six. If I had to sit on that thing for five hours, I'd die." She looked at me with admiration.

"I think you're terribly brave, Sybil, I'd be hysterical if it were happening to me."

"I was once compelled to watch a girl fastened on the beastly thing and have been shivering ever since. I've been a pony over five years without being punished." She kissed me impulsively. "You must try to remember, darling, no pony ever gets punished unless she does or says silly things. You really should stop trying to escape."

Before the pony left she fetched a bridle and bit which I eyed with dismay. "They don't want you to talk, darling, so you'd best be wearing this when they come for you. You won't be getting any lunch. It's not a good idea to have lunch when you're

going to sit on the horse for hours and hours."

It was no use complaining. I opened my mouth and thrust my tongue within the waiting clamp. My pony's fingers busied themselves with straps and snaps. And then the awful buckle which imprisoned my head and mouth with frighten security. I looked at the pony and tried to smile but it failed to come with my mouth forced and held in an unnatural position by the bit and bridle rings. This time she kissed my nipples before she went away.

I spent the rest of the morning leaning against the bars, staring at a limited and boring view of stable walls. I was the only pony in the stable, the rest were out doing their duties or training or exercise, most in harness. I wondered what Marjory Monet's reaction had been to laboring outdoors with a ball and chain locked fast upon her ankle. That iron ball was the simplest way of keeping a girl where you wanted but was wickedly demeaning. Poor Marjory! She had been such a beautiful mistress.

When they came for me, I was trembling. Tess and another pony, obviously interested, each took one of my arms in formal convict fashion and led me to the shed wherein naughty girls were punished. They respected my bitted silence and led me to my fate without a word. There were lots of windows in the shed, there was nothing dark or dungeonlike. Had it been used for something else it would have been a pleasant place. Once inside I gasped. There was the horse in all its hatefulness. But it was not alone, an identical machine for maiden pain was also there. And this one boasted a beauty. Sitting astride, bound taut as a bowstring, was the silent loveliness of a naked girl. Her hands were bound behind her back and raised to that point in which she was properly positioned on the wickedness of the planks. She was firmly blindfolded and wore the bridle and bit the same as me. It was easy to tell she was aware of visitors because she rose her head a few moments to listen. Then she let her head fall back down in a move that said volumes about weariness and pain and hopelessness. From the start I had known her name. It was Marjory Monet.

2

Lessons from Lenore

The shock of seeing my former mistress was severe. Instinctively, I made a move to go to her but the pony hands restrained me. I was forced to stand to gaze upon all that loveliness cruelly wracked, twisted and spread as I soon would also be. My heart went out for my former mistress. For me, riding this horse would be punishment, for Marjory Monet it would be torture.

Neither of us could speak and she could not see. I pictured the world of darkness in which she bore her pain. I longed to go to her but that longing was not to be. I was

guided carefully around her stressed nakedness. I was compelled to gaze upon that part of her upon which she bore her weight, it was crushed and distorted as the wood bit hard into her defenseless crotch. I was willing to bet that had I been able to touch the ropes anchoring her feet, I would find them as taut as bowstrings, they had been pulled that tight. Silently I was now led to the horse without a rider.

I was as ready as I would ever be. My ponies lifted me astride and one of them steadied me as the other swiftly noosed my ankles and raised my arms high enough behind my back to hold me as desired. The guiding hands fell away and I gasped in agony as the plank's edge viciously dug into my tender flesh. The ropes upon my feet were suddenly pulled tight to drag my legs out to either side. I was now officially 'horsed.'

At first it is an absolutely sickening pain, it turns the stomach and shoots arrows of agony in all directions. I would have cried aloud my protests but I could not speak. I shook my bridled head in mute negation. I could see. I watched in silent misery as the two girls tightened my outstretched legs until they had them as taut as had been done to Marjory. They made careful adjustments with my raised arms, adjustments designed to place my pussy squarely on the plank's edge and keep it there. By the time they were finished and nodded satisfaction with their work I was as firmly a fixture on the horse as Marjory was on her's. But we were two riders going nowhere. Nowhere except a journey into pain. I turned wide, hurt eyes upon my ponies. But, as though by prearranged signal, they came up to me, one on each side, and planted a kiss upon the nipples of my taunt breasts. That first gentle kiss turned into a harder kiss and then they were tonguing my nipples and sucking them. A shiver of shock jolted my body. They fed upon me busily. I could not move. Even though I could utter no word I managed equine sounds with my bit and the creak of leather as I shook my head in the only expression I could make.

Marjory had been doing the same since I arrived, it was out only communion. My ponies ceased the teasing of my breast but only after the tide of excitement had risen close to climax. They straightened up to eye me levelly.

"We're sorry, darling, so terribly sorry," they said with a terrible sincerity. "We can not bear to see you like this, it's best we go." They turned and fled.

The loneliness was also a punishment. I stole a sideways glance at my mistress to behold a mirror of myself. Our restraints were identical, forbidding any movement save the head. Now, no matter how great my distress, there was none to see and none to care. And none to help. I was on my own, my naked sex crushed cruelly upon an unyielding edge. I wept and watched my tears splatter on the thing I rode.

Each minute was an hour, each hour a day. After an endless succession of each in which I shared my moans with those of Marjory, Lenore Livingstone came to visit her foolish pony who had tried to escape. After a close inspection of my suffering she fingered the silver band around my neck.

"Isn't it wonderful, darling! Without this you might have truly got a way. But this silver necklace brought you back to sit upon the horse and learn your lesson. You are so very beautiful like that, darling, so very beautiful . . ."

I felt sure I was far from beautiful but could not say so. I thought of the expression 'chaffing at the bit' and supposed it applied to me. The metal in my mouth defeated every sound except strangled moans and groans.

Lenore's fingertips began to probe and test every part of me the horse put under stress. She was intrigued by my armpits and wracked shoulders. She played with my nipples and my breasts, and then her hand strayed lower to assess what the horse was doing to my rib cage and stomach. She was defeated in what she would have most liked to do, I was sitting on it, so she contented herself by plucking a few of my pubic hairs and then testing the tension in my legs. She was delighted with every bit of me. At the end she tilted my strapped chin and bitted mouth to gaze deep into my eyes.

"You have been riding for an hour, darling. How the time does fly!" Playfully she pinched my nipples and left me again alone.

One hour! I had pitifully hoped for more. The four remaining hours stretched out as an eternity paved with pain. The edge of the plank on which I sat was burrowing deep within my being, or so it seemed! I could not imagine I could escape from this ordeal without injury. The burn of pain was constant and relentless like a live thing flaming away at my body. I pitied my mistress on the other horse. Robbed of sight, she must be wondering who I was and why I shared her punishment. Looking at the distortion of body and limbs I understood Lenore's reference to beauty. It was a strange and bizarre point of view, but it was there! I think perhaps girls are always beautiful, no matter what you do to them.

When Lenore came again, she announced the passing of the second hour. An eternity later she announced the passing of the third. I was too concerned with my pains to pass judgment upon her motives. Perhaps she came only to gloat but she used her lips and fingertips upon me in such ways and with such skill, I was forced to believe there was also love. And it came to my fevered mind how much a part of the females of The Estate love truly was. I was being tortured, by that time I could use no other name for my bizarre punishment. But I was being tortured with love and a tremendous feminine interest in a sister's suffering. Nothing on the estate would be the same as elsewhere. With each of Lenore's visits my heart and my agony showed clearly in my eyes but brought me no reprieve. When The Estate punished a girl it did so as mercilessly as did the inquisitors of Spain.

When Lenore visited me at the end of the fourth hour, I was far gone in agony, listless and in a daze of hopelessness. I was now certain the horse possessed me and would keep me on its back forever. The closer I got to the end of my sentence, the less I believed in it. I think it was so with Marjory Monet. Her head moved little now but hung in bowed defeat and total submission. This naked loveliness,

stretched and rent asunder on the horse was not the glorious mistress of my memory. My heart bled for her as Lenore's quiet voice filtered through the mists of pain.

"Thank you, darling, only one more hour. That is if I hold strictly to the sentence." She tinkled laughter. "But I am tempted to extend it. You are far too beautiful as you are to spoil the pose by returning you to normal. You would not begrudge me a few more hours of delight, would you dear?"

I could not answer her question with either a nod or shake of my bridled head. I could only painfully gaze up in despair then let it fall forward in defeat. When Lenore Livingstone left me at the fourth hour I was willing to believe I would sit on and on in agony the whole night through. And yet Lenore loved me, I knew she did!

It was the two ponies who dismounted me at the end of my sentence. I screamed into my gag as my pussy was carefully peeled from the wood on which it had rested far too long. For a little while I could not use my legs, five hours in a split compelled the cheerful ponies to hold me erect while circulation restored and muscles unlocked. They left my wrists crossed and tight tied as if it were natural and normal for a girl to be thus. I did not care.

When I was able to walk they led me out into the evening but left my darling mistress spread out upon the horse as she had been all afternoon, the bit still in her mouth. My bit was still in my mouth and prevented me from asking her fate.

The ponies fed me, they bathed me, insisting I remain seated in the steaming tub to ease the muscle pains and very sore pussy. The private parts were swollen and throbbing. They laughingly took turns cupping it in their hands and assuring me it was without injury. They took a lot of trouble making me pretty and restoring me to a close state to normalcy. Then they laid me on Lenore's bed, locked my big toes in the thumbcuffs, and laughingly told me I was a lucky girl to be the chosen maiden for that night. When they left I fell instantly asleep.

It must have been close to midnight when Lenore unlocked my toes, spread my legs wide apart and fed upon me in an eager curiosity to explore tortured flesh. I knew also she was being kind and found myself the recipient of an erotic experience so intense as to bring me to orgasm after orgasm. It certainly assured me the poor little sex thing between my legs still worked and could still be grateful for attention.

When her tongue and lips were tired, she locked my toes again and told me laughingly to resume my pony's duties to its mistress.

My guards harness was taken from me, leaving my skin prettily marked where it had been so tight so long. The other five ponies were stark naked and I was now the same. Their wrists were handcuffed behind their backs and soon my own wrists were untied and replaced in handcuffs without a moment of freedom in the transition. None of us were bridled but bits were tight strapped in maiden mouths

in inhibit conversation. My companions took the whole thing as a matter of course in the way the Estate ponies always did. They smiled at me and rubbed bare shoulders to show me I was welcome. As always the whole damned thing was nuts!

It had been explained to me that ponies who did not daily pull a buggy through the streets were apt to get soft. This matter was profitably dealt with by harnessing us to a plow and having us tug and strain to pull it around and around a field. In case the manual humiliation sparked rebellion, our ankles were heavily chained by a far longer span of links than need be – our feet were needed for our toil. But if we tried to run we would surely trip and fall. I was annoyed with myself for accepting these leg irons without complaint. The other five scarcely noticed what was happening to them.

Next came the harness. The broad leather straps circled our waists and were buckled above and below our breasts, and were buckled tight to form a safe anchorage for the broader leathers across our shoulders from which we were attached to the implement we must drag. On that plow a bored pony sat and cracked a whip. She was evidently not in need of exercise.

We were fastened in tandem, two and two and two. I had seen the whip and therefore watched the others and did as they did with a practiced precision which told of a previous acquaintance with this quaint and demeaning exercise. Without arms I thrust my shoulder manfully against its leather, bending well forward with the strain and wondering at the inert resistance of the plow. If a girl was soft this labor would condition her for sure!

It was boring, it was tiring, and it made us sweat. It was a warm, still day and the smell of sweat and female musk hung heavy in the air. The pony beside me grinned and wrinkled her nose but I knew it aroused her the same way it aroused me. The pony seated on the plow knew us all by name, names she snapped at us from time to time if our efforts lagged. The admonition was usually followed by the cut of her whip across our back. These commands caused us to work in unison as a well-trained team. I thought of Lenore and wondered what I had done to deserve this. It was not a punishment but was certainly no way I would chose to spend a day.

Pushing our bare shoulders hard into the soft leather of the harness, we made our slow circuit of the field. Our chained feet hindered nothing, our steps, straining and heaving, were slow enough to allow the chain to drag in the dirt and our bare feet to avoid treading on it. I understood now why Lenore had so many ponies, with all the land she owned she needed them. There were no horses and no tractors, just girls! The Estate was an utterly female place.

When our work day was done, we were hosed down, dried, and then put behind bars in a stable stall. We were relieved of our bridle and handcuffs but our feet remained chained as indication we would do the same work tomorrow. We slumped gratefully upon the straw and surveyed each other with wry grins. My companion's name was Isabel and, like most ponies, she was a sweetheart.

Innocently Isabel told me that, had our performance on the plow been below that expected, our knees would have been buckled tight together and padlocked for the night to deny us pleasure. But we were lucky and the chains we wore wouldn't bother us at all.

She was a delightful creature, serving the sixth year of her ten year term and admitting frankly she wouldn't know what to do with herself when she reached the age of twenty-five. She seemed to think any other existence on the Estate would be an absolute bore. By her standards I expect she was right.

Ruefully, I considered myself. Since that day I awoke upon the sand I had certainly never been bored. If I have failed to find joy in being a pony, it was probably my own fault. The rest of them were happy, I should be happy too. But Originals carry the burden of their former, unremembered life. It makes us discontented. If only we could remember we might be glad to be on the Estate in the sunshine and the sisterhood of love. It is the not knowing that defeats. I took the opportunity to ask Isabel to ask why it is Originals are the way we are.

"Mama told me they drug you, darling," she said seriously and without concern. "They make you prisoner and then inject something into your vein with a needle. None of us ponies know much about it because we were born here and didn't need it. Does it really bother you that much?"

"I suppose so, I tried to escape three times. And I'm always getting myself whipped for something or the other. I suppose you know what Lenore had done to me yesterday?"

"Oh, sure, we pick up all the gossip, and you've been talked about a lot." She gazed at me sympathetically. "That horse thing is terrible, isn't it? I knew a girl who had to sit on it for a long time and she told me about it. She was all red and swollen. May I look at your's, darling?"

I exhibited my punished sex without concern. I was becoming as uninhibited as all the other ponies. My day pulling the plow must have been beneficial, for neither Isabel nor I could find much to get excited about. We were stopped from too much excitation at that point by the arrival of our food.

"My mother was an Original," Isabel informed me casually as we ate. "The drug finally wore off with her and she could remember. But she didn't remember anything that sounded as if I would enjoy it. I've never had the least desire to escape and neither has Mama. The Council offered her another injection if memories bothered her. But she's been happy on the Estate so there wasn't any need."

Isabel eyed me thoughtfully. "I suppose you know all about men?"

"I know it's wonderful when they hold you and sleep with you," I said dejectedly.

"There's a drug for that, too," she said as if discussing a cake mix. "All us girls get it when we're very young and it's one of the first things they do to an Original." She giggled. "They must have forgotten you, and it's a pity they did. If you had that shot, you wouldn't be bothered by Bill Trafford."

"I liked being bothered by Bill Trafford."

"Yes, Mama's told me about it. But all it's gotten you is a lot of punishments and Mr. Trafford's had to leave the Estate. We were all sorry to see him go. We didn't want him shoving his what's-it into us but he was a very nice man." She sighed, "Shall we make love now or later?"

I got in one more question, "The whole population here is Lesbian, is there an injection for that, too, or is it the climate?"

"Mama couldn't tell me that. She thinks it's because we're all very much together and because of our service as ponies. She says that a girl who's been a pony becomes a sort of erotic symbol, far more enticing than if she had just grown up in the ordinary way. Looking at you now, darling, I could eat you alive . . . Sexually, that is." She chuckled. "That bread and water and the apple we got for supper goes along with pulling the plow. They want us really lean by the time we move on to our next job."

I said I thought it would be lovely if we now made love.

For all I knew Lenore had forgotten me. My days with Isabel, dragging the plow, slipped away one by one without variation in what I called our slavery and Isabel referred to as "the labor stint" all ponies must perform for varying lengths of time. Isabel was a mine of information.

"I wish you could meet Mama, darling, you'd have so much to talk about," she said one evening as she sat upon our straw and ate our apple. "They have visitor's day for us ponies, you know. It's a sort of tea party on the lawn that our mothers can come to once a month so we can catch up on the gossip, talk about what to do with myself when I'm not a pony any more."

"You mean you're all free to mingle and walk around?"

"Pretty much, we're mostly the way you and I are now, our ankles chained with chains so we can walk but not run. Mama thinks it's cute."

"Do you?"

"Darling, I don't even notice any more. A pony gets so she feels naked if she isn't restrained one way or another. You ought to be getting that way by now yourself."

Isabel was right. The chains had ceased to bother me. It was the same with the handcuffs. When they were locked on me in the morning and taken from me in the evening I could'nt have cared less. I wondered if I was being given a drug I didn't know about.

"But do all mother's approve of their daughters being naked and prisoners for all that time?" I asked innocently.

"Why wouldn't they, darling! They were ponies themselves, and there's been quite a few cases where a girl who's twenty-six has asked to go back and be a pony again. There's a sort of fulfillment in it. Haven't you felt that lovely exhilaration when you're running at a smart clip harnessed to the buggy?"

"I don't get harnessed to a buggy all that often," I told her dismally. "I'm forever in disgrace for one thing or another."

"Well, okay, but I expect you will before long. But don't you get that same lovely feeling when the six of us all harnessed to the plow have got our second wind and are all tugging away like crazy and knowing we're in the most wonderful physical condition a girl can be? I do!"

I conceded the slight euphoria. I had noticed it myself but put it down to being in peak physical condition with everything working in high gear. I knew I would get a greater thrill if I owned a part of the crop which would grow in that soil. I still couldn't see us six girls and that plow as anything but slavery, and said so bluntly.

"You mustn't use that awful word, Sybil dear." Isabel was visibly shocked. "Mama used to use it but she's cured herself. The word slavery is strictly forbidden and a pony can be punished for using it. It's a terribly unkind word to use when everyone's so kind to us."

There it was again, that cultural barrier! I let it go. We would feel better about ourselves as ponies than as slaves. I took another tangent. "But, Isabel, what about that day when you're suddenly fifteen and someone comes to take you away or your mother leads you off? You'll be sold in the market. Aren't there tears and heartbreak?"

Isabel shrugged. "Sometimes I guess. I know I cried a little but I was so damned excited about being a pony I soon dried up. It was Mama who took me to the market, checked me in, kissed me, and then left me to be sold. You've been sold several times, Sybil. Don't you have a nice feeling to be all naked and tied so people can prod you and guess at how good a pony you'll make? And when it comes to seeing how much money you're worth . . . ! Well . . . Lenore Livingstone bought me right away first thing and I've been here every since. She takes me to bed with her about once every six weeks."

I found the subject of Mama difficult to drop. "I know most ponies don't get

punished much, but there's some like me who get punished quite a lot. How does the mother feel when she knows her daughter is being whipped?"

"She's ashamed, of course!" Isabel looked at me as though I was dense. "It's the spoiled brats who get themselves whipped. Their mama is probably secretly grateful their owner whips them in a way they never got around to."

"If I was a mother I'd go right up the wall if I knew my daughter was being nakedly whipped or sat upon the horse or something horrible like that," I vowed heatedly. "Isn't there even one of them who complains?"

Isabel laughed at my indignation. "Gosh, no! They're glad of their daughter's punishment, unless its really something trivial. And they're invited to come and watch their daughter whipped but mostly they don't come. Once in a while there will be a mama who not only attends the ceremony but whips her bad daughter herself." She laughed at my concern. "There just aren't any general rules."

I dropped the subject. I was trying to think up another useful questions when Isabel giggled. "I just remembered, Sybil dear, there's something coming up you may wish to ask to see. It's a thirty year old woman who's five years past the retirement age for ponies but her mother is so disgusted by her behavior she has asked the Council to have her daughter properly whipped. It will be done here so as to be out of sight of her neighbors. If you would like to watch, make application to the stable pony, she'll fix it for you."

Once more I was ashamed over the tide of lust which swept my loins. A thirty year old woman to be whipped before the gaze of a dozen interested ponies! There had to be something unique about such an incident. "But why would a thirty year old woman consent to such treatment?" I asked. "I'm damned if I would."

"She doesn't have a choice, darling. Her mother tells her about the request to the Council and gives her a choice. She can go voluntarily to be whipped or the Council will send ponies to take her forcibly. It's very simple."

"But she's been wearing clothes for five years! Then, suddenly, to be stripped naked . . .?"

"Well, darling, a girl can't really be whipped with her clothes on, can she? You do have to be reasonable about these things."

I let it go at that.

I should have left well enough alone but the thought of that woman and her mama was something I could not forget. I was frankly curious as to how the girl, or woman, would act. It is not often thirty year olds pay much attention to mama. But the following morning I made my format request to the stable girl of the day. Permission came easily. I wondered if it was Lenore who approved it. I attended the

function in what, for me, had become routine restraint. Hands handcuffed behind my back, and the field shackles on my ankles. The long chain made a lot of noise but I had learned to walk without tripping. The restrains told me clearly I was an escapee and not to be trusted. I wondered if I would ever live it down.

The Estate made no big deal of Mama's request. The naughty daughter would receive her stripes in one of the empty sheds in a manner most discrete. As I clinked and clanked my metallic passage to obtain a good seat for the event, I was joined by only three ponies and a couple of guards. I looked at their harness with envy and wondered if Lenore would ever allow me to wear it again.

There was nothing fancy, no whipping post or pillory. But a stout trapeze bar had been fixed and lowered to where straps could be buckled on protesting wrists. One of the guards carried a whip and the other a cane. Even without the fanfare the thirty year old would get a well-marked skin. I shivered and wondered why I lacked enough sense to stay away.

Someone told me the girl's name, it was Chrissy. It was not long before Chrissy and her mama made their appearance. I suppose if the Estate had consented to give you a good whipping, the least a girl could do was be on time! Chrissy looked around and was obviously grateful for the few who attended. Her mother's lips were a thin, straight line. Mama propelled her delinquent daughter then joined the rest of us. Chrissy knew the drill, there was no doubt of that. She had seen the trapeze and knew the purpose of it. She was escorted by the two guards to the bar. She bestowed an angry glance at the instruments of pain they held and her resolution failed.

"I'm damned if I will!" she ejaculated for all to hear. "I'm not a pony any more, you can whip someone else. I'm going home!" She turned and fled.

The guards caught her easily. Chrissy was a large women, well muscular and one I would not have wished to tangle with. She had magnificent breasts jutting from her chest like cannon. Had strength been the deciding factor, Chrissy would have gone home. But the guards were skilled and soon had the poor girl face down on the floor. One held her down while the other fitted leg irons on. Chrissy visibly wilted as the metal circled her ankles. The guards helped her to her feet where she stood to kick and snug viciously the restraints from which she had no hope of easement. She glared at mama.

"Mother, don't let them! Tell them it's all a mistake. Please take me home."

The two guards were, as usual, kind. They did not handle her roughly but still she was forced back to the bar and asked sweetly, "Please take your clothes off, Chrissy."

"Drop dead!" Chrissy was panting hard and much preoccupied with shackled feet. Clothed as she still was and at the mature age of thirty, I could understand her feelings. She was about to be whipped but what she would suffer most was the

scolding shame and humiliation of a return to something juvenile. She looked around as if searching for help but, finding none, leapt once more for the door only to fall flat upon her face.

The guards exchanged a glance and a shrug. They had done their best for Chrissy, but if Chrissy insisted on being difficult . . . Within two minutes they had her wrists firmly strapped at each end of the trapeze and raised to a level slightly above her head.

"We can't undress her without tearing something," the guards pointed out sadly. "If only she wasn't being so difficult . . . !"

"Tear all you want, my dears," said Mama from the audience. "Really, I am shocked by her behavior."

The guards stripped poor Chrissy with what I could guess was a good deal of zest. A naked Chrissy was a more impressive sight than clothed. Chrissy was magnificent, her statuesque proportions a delightful invitation to both cane and whip. Once more I shivered, suspecting Chrissy was in for a bad time.

The Chrissy's of this world have a built-in mechanism absolving them from guilt. Chrissy obviously felt herself ill-used and told her mother so in no uncertain terms. "Mama, this has gone far enough. It's not decent and shouldn't be allowed. Tell them to set me free. Let me get dressed and go home. Mother, pleaseeeeeeeee . . . !"

"Get on with whipping her, I can't stand here all day," said Mama in no uncertain tones.

Chrissy wilted. Authority was not on her side. She could expect no mercy from the guards. Oh, they might kiss her tenderly, but that would not stop them from whipping her with vigor. Mama now proved a broken reed, determined upon a daughter's suffering. Chrissy swept us all with a plaintive look and affirmed, "This isn't a bit fair. I haven't done anything bad. I shouldn't be whipped at all, please let me go."

"Get on with it," said Mama.

The guards whipped and caned busily.

Breathlessly I watched. Chrissy was truly splendid. Before the first stroke fell upon indignant flesh, the guards had raised the culprit's hands high enough to accentuate the magnificent curves they were about to mark. Chrissy looked back over bare shoulder and raised arm to vow, "You'll be sorry you did this to me. It's not a bit fair because I haven't done anything. I don't think Mama knows how much this is going to hurt."

"Ten more strokes," said Mama firmly. "I am well aware of what I am doing."

Poor Chrissy! Every pony heart was on her side. I winced as the long yellow cane sliced her bottom from hip to hip and the whip drew a scarlet line across her shoulders. It's quite amazing how much a maiden grows between fifteen and thirty. There was not a maiden on the Estate who could match Chrissy's plenitude of flesh. As that flesh was cut and sliced its owner became increasingly vocal.

"I'll tell the Council on you, Mama. This hurts something awful. Maybe they'll whip you next time."

"Another ten," said Mama.

Chrissy soon began to scream. Who could blame her! One guard caned her bottom while the other whipped her back. There was a fine expense of virgin flesh pleading for the wicked scarlet lines which soon appeared. In fine vocal outrage, Chrissy soon filled the shed with feminine protests while kicking and twisting in futile efforts to avoid the cane and whip. No matter how violent her evasive action, it did no good. Her flesh received a steady and relentless succession of blows she could only counter with screams, exclamations and a frantic dance of both her lovely torso and chained feet. Never had I heard a span of links between two ankles make more noise.

The whipping of Chrissy affected me in the way, no doubt, it was intended. I pushed escape resolutely from my mind, turning my thoughts to those ways by which I could gain the approval of those who locked my chains. I was becoming like all those other ponies, anxious to please and certain of my own weaknesses. I had no mama but could well envision myself asking to be whipped to keep me on the straight and narrow path. I went back behind the bars to Isabel a much chastened young woman. Ponies came and went upon the plow but Isabel and I remained a team. Perhaps someone thought us out of condition. Certainly after a week or two of the heavy labor and sparse diet, we became as hard as nails and in truly marvelous shape as if we had been training for the Olympics. As it was, this tremendous sense of well-being engendered a sense of the old restlessness in which I constantly found myself looking over the hill and wondering how far it might be to freedom. Fortunately there was nothing I could do about it, my feet were kept chained night and day, and a girl goes nowhere with chained feet.

Isabel gave me a lecture every night on the merits and rewards of good behavior. She was much concerned that our sense of well-being would cause me to get myself punished again. I was, as usual, uncertain of myself, of the Estate, and my memory of Bill Trafford. Isabel and I fed happily upon each other but it was not the same.

The Tea Party showed me another facet of pony life on the Estate. Derisive, but safe within my own mind, I thought of it as 'The Slaves Reunion.' It was the day a pony's mother came to call.

I had no mama but Isabel said I could share her's. The Estate was mostly kind to its

ponies and this rather British occasion gave us all a chance to keep in touch with normalcy. The ponies had complete freedom for the day except for chained feet. The Estate was wise about chained feet, well knowing the temptation to run and the emotional stress of perhaps wishing to go home with dear mama. Ponies were remarkable for good behavior but were only human!

We served our mama with tea and cakes from the main pavilion, using small tables scattered upon the grass and seating our visitors in deck chairs. I felt an idiot as I walked, naked with chained feet, among the affectionate matrons in their sleek and trim attire and marvelous hairdos. Being naked isn't too bad if those around you are naked too. But this was a gathering of half and half in a vivid contrast of which we were all aware. I could detect the proud ladies taking an intent interest in their daughter's breast and pubic hair. If a girl bore whip marks upon her skin, she would be called upon to explain them to a concerned parent. If a mama was dissatisfied with her daughter's deportment, she could lodge a complaint upon leaving and the girl would be placed into a training unit. Mama could then feel certain that upon her next visit the poor girl's skin would indeed bear some stripes. It was as truly a mixed up affair with more than one motive. I listened and watched with avid interest.

Isabel's mama was as much a sweetheart as her daughter, she overflowed with motherly advice and obviously believed in maintaining the status quo of the Estate. She viewed my whip marks with some doubt, quite probably wondering if her daughter was in good company. But the tea and cakes worked wonders and I felt secure in asking the sixty-four dollar question, "Mrs. Norman, where do all the babies come from . . .? I mean the ponies, they didn't just happen . . ."

"Artificial insemination, dear." Mabel Norman said without hesitation or embarrassment. "Most ponies, after graduation, want children and that's how we get them. The Council looks after everything and everyone. Male infants are returned to an outside agency for adoption. Though, there are very few males born. There's some sort of formula about this I don't understand. In another year you'll be able to have babies if you want."

It was a startling thought I had not considered. But a moment's reflection was all it took for me to know I would want Bill Trafford to be the father or any child I produced. And that was now no more than a pretty dream − I no longer believed in escape, even though I longed for it.

"But doesn't it bother a mother to have her teenage daughter made naked and harnessed and restrained and kept behind bars in a stable?" I inquired earnestly .

"Of course not! The darlings can hardly wait to be taken to the market and sold. There's no goodbye forever about it, you know, we see them often as they do their pony duties. We know who owns them and can visit if we wish but mostly we feel that's an intrusion. There's these tea parties once a month. And when Isabel's twenty-five, she'll come back to me. I think it's all wonderful, so much nicer than all

that ugly business with men and boyfriends and getting themselves pregnant with a baby no one wants."

Mrs. Norman sighed. "We think it's wonderful and I suggest, dear, you try and realize your good fortune. Isabel's enjoying your company and I don't suppose you'll spend much longer on the plow. You'd make a wonderful team on any buggy."

"But, doesn't it bother you, Mrs. NormaN, to see Isabel and I with chained feet?" I kicked at my irons. "We're never really free, you know. And keeping us in barred stalls like a cage is pretty much like a prison. I wouldn't want my daughter treated like that."

"It's for the general good, dear. There are always rebels, and I'm afraid the majority have to put up with some inconvenience to insure their control. Isabel doesn't even notice her chains anymore, do you dear?"

I could understand how functions like these tea parties aided ponies in keeping balance and perspective. It was a link with normalcy, but whether that normalcy lay with the parent or the daughter no one seemed to want to ask. Everything about the Estate pleased everyone so why should I ask questions!

Isabel and I waved Mama farewell as she drove away in a buggy pulled by a pair of stunning redheads that must have cost a pretty price. Then, like the good little girls we were, we returned to the stable and allowed ourselves to be locked again behind the bars. We sank gratefully upon the straw as if we had done a day's work.

"I'm always glad when it's over," Isabel admitted. "Mama always thinks my breasts aren't developing properly or I'm not getting enough discipline. I won't be going home for around four years and she's already thinking about me having babies. Gee whiz, I wished they'd extend the pony age up to thirty."

"You want to be harnessed to a plow until you're thirty?" I asked in disbelief.

"Don't be silly, Sybil. We've only been plowing for a little while and we'll be back to buggies before you know. Maybe they'll send us to the cane field. Out there a girl has to have her ankle locked to a ball and chain and I like it better the way we are."

Always satisfaction, always perfect acceptance, never regrets! I envied them all and made a silent vow to be happy myself. The next morning I went with Isabel to the plow in a more contented mood and did not earn a single flick of the whip the whole day through. It was evening before the Estate slipped me the whammy!

It happened during the hosing down after our day's work. Isabel was quietly detached from the group and led away in another direction. When I was taken and led to the now familiar stall and locked behind its bars I beheld a naked woman asleep on the straw and, even though she was bridled and bitted and bound into a hogtie, I knew instantly it was Marjory Monet. With no thought other than gladness

I threw myself down and clasp her in my arms.

It was an unsatisfactory embrace. I said, "Oh, Marjory . . . !" over and over and then went frantically to work. When I freed her head from the bridle and unclasped her tongue, her first exclamation was the same as mine.

"Oh, Sybil, my darling!" she said over and over in a deep thankfulness which came to an end when she gasped, "Sybil, you mustn't free me! I was told to tell you to leave me as I am, and when we said hello to each other you're suppose to put the bridle and bit back the way they were. Oh, darling, they're being so frightfully mean!"

I paid no heed, my fingers flew from knot to knot and rope to rope. Freeing my beloved mistress was the happiest thing I had done in a long time.

They defeated us, of course! A strap and buckle tight above Marjory's knees and another around her ankles, both were padlocked. If we did try any lovemaking at all it would be under an impossible handicap. In their way the straps around knees and ankles were a chastity belt. I decided to worry about them later and for now took my darling mistress in my arms while her's encircled me. I don't think there was anything lesbian about it at all, we were simply so glad to hold each other once again.

After a while we sat up to stare and to breath. "Oh, Marjory!" said I. "Oh, Sybil!" said she.

It was as if we could not believe our good fortune. To be locked behind bars in a stall might be considered almost punishment by some, but with the two of us together, unbridled and with free arms, made the moment glorious for us.

"They're being real mean to you, aren't they, Mistress?" It was my first question.

"They don't need to be. Sybil, was I ever truly that unkind to my ponies?"

I remembered the bastinado, but lied easily, "Of course not, Mistress, only when we needed punishing."

"They've got a list of sins a mile long I'm supposed to expiate," she said bitterly. "I get some sort of punishment every day. I've been hog-tied on this straw here every since they took you to the plow." She stretched arms happily. "Golly, this feels so good! I'm terribly sorry about my legs, darling, the rotten bitches have got them positively clamped together and there's no way we can get them free." She snorted disgust. "I can imagine them laughing their heads off about it now." Our first happiness over, I saw her whip marks. None had broken the skin but the whip had obviously been used on Marjory with considerable skill to prolong its use, and keep some portion of her loveliness always available. There was no part of her nakedness without the telltale streaks where a thong had bitten or a lash cut. Even her breasts,

those wonderful, glorious breasts had not escaped. They, too, told the story of the whip.

"They brought me here from my own place yesterday," Marjory said. "Lenore's the best of them but she'd had me brutally tied and gloats constantly on the 'How the Mighty have Fallen' theme."

My former mistress looked at me with a stricken look in her eyes. "My sentence has got months to go yet. Sometimes when they hurt me real bad I want to die."

I was about to mourn that my own sentence would last all my life but it didn't seem kind and our two captivities weren't exactly similar. "Darling," I said, "isn't there some way you can escape? Isn't there some way I can help you get away? Maybe I could escape with you . . ." I asked anxiously.

"What, and get us flogged! I know the way out, all right, but they've never even given me the chance to try. I'd like to try, it would be such a lovely excuse for a ritualistic flogging with everyone watching a member of the Council get her pelt stripped like a zebra. They've even laid traps they thought I would fall into where I would get as far as the hills then find them waiting. I told them how mean they were and I wasn't that dumb."

Once more the stricken look. "They never give me the faintest chance. Look at both of us now, I'm strapped and padlocked like a damned mermaid and your feet are chained. If they opened every door in the place we couldn't go anywhere." She laughed in bitterness. "At least I'm learning what its like on the other side of the tracks."

I played with her nipples and soon had her gasping. The poor darling must have been sex starved because when I lowered her to the straw and used my lips and tongue to bring her easily to orgasm, an orgasm in which she made all the right sounds and thrashed her strapped legs like a gaffed fish, I was suddenly within her arms, that pleased me most of all. She clutched and clung until coherent speech returned.

"Clever about the way they give me a bad time," she continued mournfully. "They have me punished by some pony who thinks I was mean to her long ago. They're not allowed to injure me but they sure do hurt. Once in a while they have a guard do the hurting but they're kinder than the ponies I'm supposed to have punished." She gazed at me with infinite dolor. "I suppose I was often unkind to the poor darlings, I didn't realize." She paused thoughtfully. "But six months! Darling, the way they go at me, I'm not sure I can make it."

I played the slavegirl. Marjory was my mistress and in need of help. I gave her all the comfort I possessed. We held each other tight and mourned our captivity. After a while Marjory resumed her plaint. "The pain they give me is bad enough but I'll never live down or forget the humiliations. They make me do degrading things.

They reduce me to humility! Making me recite my sins and beg forgiveness!" She clutched me again. "What bothers me most, Sybil dear, is the way I'm reacting. It wasn't all instant. At the start I bit and screamed and kicked, but now I do whatever I'm told. I don't have the spirit to fight any more. They've broken me. Oh, Sybil darling, what should I do, what can I do!"

We loved a while before Marjory resumed. "When they leave me alone, tied or chained or sitting on the horse or something, I try to keep my sanity by thinking of revenge. If there were someway I could escape. Or if someday I actually served my sentence, what do I do then! There's about a dozen of them, including the Council, tied up so I could whip them for days on end. It's horrible, a girl shouldn't ought to think these things."

She was so sweet, so desirable and we probably had very little time. I couldn't possibly imagine them extending this happiness to us both for very long. I was pretty sure I was in the shit list myself, but nowhere as deep in it as poor, dear Marjory. I thought it was at an end when the barred door opened and the stable girl briskly commanded, "Stand up, Sybil dear, I've got a present for you."

I stood up. I was probably every bit as obedient as Marjory thought she was. I stood still, quivering a bit, while my knees were strapped and padlocked the same as those of my mistress. With the snap of the padlock the stable girl patted my bottom affectionately before slamming the door again. Marjory and I shared a grin and a shrug.

"We should have known, darling. I should have eaten you while we had the chance," Marjory said disgustedly. "See what I mean? They think of everything. Once they have a girl handcuffed or leg-ironed she doesn't have a chance."

I was in complete agreement, busily exploring this new bond which would keep my thighs tight clamped. My feet no longer mattered. The Council had made its point with the new, tight strap I could not undo. I was so frustrated I could cry. I gathered my mistress into my arms and quietly sobbed.

We slept the whole night through, our two nudities becoming one. We forgot about lesbian love and our strapped legs and thighs, what really mattered was higher than our crotches. We both knew we had discovered something. Marjory was not taken from me in the morning but was chained and harnessed beside me on the plow. Since we were bitted and bridled we could not speak but she had said during the night that she supposed the plow was somewhere in her future. She had it now! I longed to carry Marjory's load, she was no way as toughened as the rest of us. The driver's whip constantly snapped at her to keep my poor mistress surging and thrusting at the shoulder straps in a desperate effort to keep up. Because we were bitted we couldn't speak but our eyes conveyed what our tongues could not. Poor Marjory's fatigue showed me clearly the degree of toughness to which I had reached with my fellow ponies on the plow. But this did not help her. When we were unharnessed at the end of day she was told she had made a damned poor showing.

When I protested, the two of us were taken to where the pillory stood in menacing isolation. Without being hosed down or fed my mistress was locked in the pillory, wrists and neck, and I was seated on the bench with my ankle chains removed but my feet solidly held within the oaken yoke. The ponies who had thus fastened us said, laughingly, they were sure we would be more sensible tomorrow. It was a sad and frightening time. Nightfall would come. The last thing Marjory desired was to be locked as we now were throughout the night. Positions should have been reversed. I should have stood in the clutch of the pillory and she should have had the relatively kinder bench which now pressed into my bottom with its rough surface. The only good thing about this whole affair was we could talk.

"They do this sort of thing to me all the time," Marjory wailed. "Now I've got you punished, too. It just isn't fair! Oh, darling, how long will they keep us like this?"

I knew no more than she. I hated the pillory and knew my mistress would hate it, too. It is a demeaning, wearying business to stand with your neck within the wooden grip you cannot break. When you are tired after a day upon a plow, the discomfort must surely be doubled. My own punishment for speaking out was bad enough, no girl wants to sit naked with her feet spread wide and simply sit there for she never knows how long. By the time night came, we were a sad, sad pair. We were a pony and her mistress who longed to be behind the bars within the stable. If Marjory wept, I could not see the tears. I brushed my own from sad cheeks.

It was probably ten pm when them came for us. When my ankles were free from the wooden grip, they were immediately locked with the familiar iron bands to make me clink and clatter as I walked. There were no handcuffs, Marjory and I, without the hosing and without our supper, were thrust within our stall and subjected to one further restriction which, at first, seemed sort of cute. But it was not cute at all! Marjory's hands were cuffed behind her back. One of my arms was thrust beneath one of her's and then I, too, was handcuffed the same as she. When our pony bid us good night we thought she had been kind, but we soon discovered that this new bit of bondage permitted nothing. We could kiss but not cuddle! We could thrust our nudities together but could not embrace! We could tongue each other's nipples but only with difficulty. Contort as we would, we could not make love! Once more Marjory bitterly affirmed that someone somewhere was laughing.

But we were together and that meant everything.

Our time upon the plow continued with Marjory getting tougher every day. Fitness can be a vice, a state of euphoria engendered by the perfect function of all our senses. We loved each other terribly but each night, behind our bars, we were frustrated by a succession of cute tricks which included chastity belts, the padlocked straps, and one exceedingly bad night, being bound in a hogtie. If this made someone laugh, they would most surely be hilarious with mirth. Marjory and I were not laughing, but we were both aware of a limited blessing in being close. We got what comfort we could from our breasts and our lips and the simple frictioning of whatever flesh we could thrust against each other. It became a case of those who

expected little received less. But we were happy with each other, terribly happy. I had once held Marjory in awe when her power as a member of the Council had first touched my life. Upon the state she had seemed omnipotent. Now, she had been reduced to less than I and the two of us lay naked on the stable floor behind the iron bars, hogtied and helpless, expecting no more than hard labor and the whip.

Impulsively I asked, "Why did you buy me? If you'd let Bill Trafford purchase me the way he planned, none of this might have happened." My mistress stirred restlessly upon the straw, flexing her muscles against the ropes. "I bought you because of what you are. Sybil, you underrate yourself, sell yourself short. You are one of the most glorious females in the whole world. You radiate sex without even knowing, you implore to be whipped without saying a word. For a lesbian mistress you are just about the most perfect thing in the world. You belong on the Estate yet you consistently try to escape. Darling, the Council has confiscated everything I own and will hold it while I serve my sentence. You actually still belong to me."

"I don't feel the least bit owned," I mourned. "Every since they brought me here I've felt like a slave on a plantation. I think that's what we both are for the next few months."

Marjory was still struggling. I knew she was aroused. I didn't bother, I knew there was no way I could possibly get free and was resigned to a night of being folded like a jack knife and tightly bound to keep me safe.

"What they've condemned me to has to come to an end sometime,"

Marjory spat out with heat. "When it does, I'm getting you back. You'll be my first demand. According to the Law they have to give you back to me." Her tone softened. "What shall I do with you on that first day?"

"Probably whip me."

"And why not, darling? Whipping you is the most exquisite ecstasy I know." She laughed.

"Then you'll find yourself back here serving a twelve month sentence instead of a six. You'll have to punish me very privately so word doesn't get back to the Council."

"Marjory, if you really know the way out of here, why don't we pack up and go?"

"There isn't any place as nice as this, Sybil dear, nowhere in the world."

"Sure, the climate's fine! But look at us! A pair of naked females trussed like turkeys. With all the struggling you've been doing, have you discovered any slack?"

"Hell no, they know their job. But in these ties they put me in I have to struggle or explode. Do you think there's any chance of untying each other's hands if we get into the right position?"

"It's no good, Marjory, they wired the last knot, I felt them doing it. They'd love us to spend the night trying."

"The rotten bitch! This is Lenore's doing, she owns this place and it wouldn't have hurt her a bit to give you and me a night together in a decent bedroom in her place. They might just as well condemn me to death by frustration."

I suppose after that we went to sleep. Plow ponies have a hard day and are grateful for their straw at night. And for whatever bonds authority chooses to place upon us. When I woke up in the morning the stable pony was tugging at my ropes. After I was free of rope and the shackles put back on my ankles, it took me a couple of minutes to straighten myself out after our hog-tied night. We got our apple, our bread and our water before being assigned to the labor of our day. I could understand Marjory's rebellious disgust. When it came time for our hands to be tied behind our backs, the bridle strapped upon our heads and the bit clamped upon our tongues, I realized again how devastating it must be for Marjory to be reduced from almost total authority to what she had now become. We gazed forlornly at each other and shrugged in mutual resignation.

Lenore had not forgotten me. Summoned to her office I deliberately made as much clatter as I could with my long chain upon her floor before standing obediently in front of her desk, beholding myself as a culprit before her judge.

"I've missed you, darling."

"You could have had me sent to you, I've been harnessed to the plow."

"With wonderful results," she said as her eyes assessed my firm, trim figure with pride of ownership. "You are absolutely superb, Sybil dear."

I said a lame, "Thank you, Mistress." The social amenities had been disposed of. I discovered I was trembling.

Lenore pretended to consult a sheet of paper. "There's a little matter outstanding, darling. Do you remember being instructed to no free an occupant of your stall?"

So that was it! Lenore knew everything, even the decency of mercy I had thought unnoticed. I knew myself condemned but did my best, "Marjory was brutally tied, she was hurting. I would have done the same for any girl."

"Even when specifically forbidden?"

I shrugged. "It seemed the right thing to do. I'd do it again."

Lenore walked around her desk and kissed my lips. My arms rose to embrace her in response. Lenore held the same magic for me as did Marjory. I suppose I'm a push-over for beautiful women who give me love. But my arms were slapped away.

"Naughty, naughty! You've been a bad girl. What I am going to do with you?"

I almost spat out a disgusted, "Whip me, I suppose, what else!" but had enough sense keep quiet and allow Lenore to sentence me in her own way. After all I had shared her bed often, surely she would not be cruel!

Lenore picked up my left hand and teased it lovingly with gentle fingertips. "It was these sweet little hands that were so naughty," she mused. "It is therefore you hands that must be punished. Don't you agree, darling?"

"As you wish, Mistress."

"Of course it is as I wish, Darling." Her silvery laughter bespoke pain to come. "Should I not teach them a lesson, perhaps six strokes on each pretty palm with the cane?"

I curled up inside. Once in the past my hands had been caned and I remembered the awfulness of the strokes. This would not be the innocent swishing impacts from school days long ago when sweet, young palms were cut by canes held by a headmaster with a rampart erection. These would be truly frightful assaults upon the twin innocence of those parts of myself I used the most. In desolation I looked across the desk, "I can't stand six on each hand, Mistress, I know I can't." I twisted unhappily. "Couldn't you punish me some other way please?"

Lenore was enjoying every moment, savoring my distress as an erotic tidbit of a maiden's pain. I stood before her, naked, and snubbed a fettered ankle back and forth against its chain, wondering if there wasn't something I could do to lessen that frightful punishment. Three would have been plenty, but six was murder! In a small, pale voice I asked, "Couldn't you whip me instead, please?"

My mistress shrugged. "A hundred strokes, darling?"

I did not answer. We both knew the impossibility of a hundred lashes upon a girl's bare skin. Impulsively I clattered around the desk and threw myself upon my knees at her feet. I placed my head upon her lap and whispered, "I love you, I love you, Lenore. Oh, please . . ."

For a minute no word was said. Lenore stroked my hair and played with it as a child does with a doll's pretty curls. Then her whisper banished hope. "You're already kneeling, darling, just edge over a bit and hold out your right hand. I shouldn't have to tell you what to do."

I did as I was told, there was no use becoming hysterical over something I might possibly manage to endure. Reaching a space well away from the desk, I extended one arm and opened its hand to expose the palm. It was a passive invitation to agony and I could hardly believe I was so meekly doing it. I watched Lenore take the long, slim length of venom from the cupboard. I closed my eyes.

"You have to look, dear. Open your eyes and look steadily at your hand and me. Don't be awkward."

I remembered the same words from a previous time. I expect there is something subtly delicious for a mistress to compel her pony to watch its own punishment. If my bottom is caned or my back whipped, I can only hear the sound and feel the pain, I cannot watch it done. But now my hand is so very close and so tremendously exposed. I find it hard to believe Lenore can possibly inflict what she has set out to do. Lenore taps my hand to measure distance. I hear the awful slicing of the air and actually do see that terrible instrument plant itself squarely across my palm. I dissolve in agony.

"You have two hands, darling, let me have the other one."

I am doubling up into a female package of pure pain. But the words of the woman who owns me filter through the mists of my distress. I cannot think nor reason, I am a girl completely owned. I kneel again and extend my other arm. The swift, sure pain leaves me breathless and longing only to curl up upon the floor. Each of my armpits strives to comfort a scolded hand. I hear myself whimpering.

"Please, not any more. I can't stand anymore, I can't stick my hand out again."

"Yes you can, dear. You just think you can't. Try."

"I don't deserve this. What I did wasn't all that bad. Please, Lenore, please . . .?"

Lenore taps my bare shoulder with the cane. I tense for agony. Her voice is cool and sweet and loving. "I can have you fastened and give you a hundred strokes, dear, if that's what you'd prefer?"

A hundred strokes is death, I'm sure it is! I extend my throbbing palm for the second time. Lenore laughs at my woe-be-gone features. "My, my, I should cane my pony's hands more often. You're reacting marvelously, Sybil. I actually believe you're learning a lesson."

Lenore is right. The palms of a girl's hand possess a quality of pain all their own. There is quite a bit of difference in the pain of a caned bottom and a whipped back. There is another awfulness upon the soles of my feet. But the palms of my hand carry an even more potent message, I am convinced that if I receive six strokes upon each hand, I'll never use those hands again.

As though hypnotized, I look at the throbbing surface I extend for my mistress. The cane sweeps in its terrible arc. I scream!

I am a pitiful bundle of female anguish as I strive to absorb the pain in the flesh beneath my arms. I bow my head in defeat, I care for nothing other then that the cane should go away and I not have to hold out another hand. Without warning strong fingers clutch my arms and lift me erect. As though my arms are no longer mine, my mistress drapes both of them over her shoulders and holds me very tight with both her own. Her whisper in my conveys the most wonderful words I've every heard.

"I'm a real bitch, Sybil. Go ahead and cry on my shoulder, go ahead and cry all you want."

It is so easy to cry, I am a tensed and pent up lake of tears. I let them go and sob out my pain.

"That's enough for today, darling. I'm not going to cane your little hands any more for now. Perhaps another time, we'll see."

I finally run out of tears but do not wish to move. I clasp my mistress in my arms with hands handing limp. I sniff and brokenly come out with, "Thank you Mistress." Then I haltingly add something which has to be nuts but which I have to say, "I love you . . . Oh, Lenore, I love you so much." I meant every word.

3

Love's Linkage Lost

There is so much of the sugar cane it dissolves a girl's strength to fight but not enough to dissolve her strength to wield the machete. There are several girls working as I work, but they have been chained beyond talking distance. I suppose we could shout but we have nothing to shout about. We hack away at the hostile stalks until, in order to continue, we must stoop down and drag the iron ball to a fresh position. I swear the beastly iron sphere possesses life and is chuckling over the ease by which it keeps me captive to the cane. The only sneer I can make in return is to kick and snub my ankle against its inert animosity.

On the day she had caned my hands, Lenore had me taken to her bedroom and the anklet with the long chain fastened to my foot. I hugged my hurts but was secretly jubilant over being her favorite for the night, and hopefully for other nights to come. I reveled in the bathroom, dragging my long chain and clanking it on the floor. We made love that night with my wounded hands clutching Lenore's hips to draw them closer to my need. The next day I was disappointed by being harnessed to the plow to give my hands a chance to regenerate before again taking up the machete.

Lenore had caned me and given me love for one night but that was all. There was no repeat, and when I was hosed down in early evening and taken to the barred stall, Isabel was waiting with chained feet and open arms. She told me Marjory Monet had been taken away, she knew not where. Once again freedom receded to a dream.

I had lost two mistresses. No doubt poor, darling Marjory was enduring some sort of misery beneath the Council's eye. As for Lenore, she had told me of her love but pointed out the number of her ponies she must consider in the granting of her favors. A night beside her in the bed was greatly prized in comparison to a night chained upon the straws behind the bars. I would have been a very sorry girl had it not been for Isabel and her cheerful acceptance of our lot. Except for chained feet, she and I were denied nothing in the making of our love. But pulling a plow is tiring work, mostly we slept.

I saw no significance when I was transferred to the cane field. It was a different kind of work but had an advantage in substituting the ball and chain for the harness of the plow. Pulling the plow had meant I was securely bitted, but here I was allowed to talk when there was someone to talk to. When I recognized a pony a hundred yards distant, we exchanged a cheerful wave, but that was all. The best of my day was Isabel behind the bars at night.

It was Isabel who changed what seemed an endless sentence. One day at noon she was led to where I worked, escorted by the usual cheerful pony who bound our hands behind our backs before freeing me from the ball and chain. She took Isabel's shackles from her feet and put them on mine. Isabel then became the prisoner of that iron ball still warm from my flesh. She laughingly complained that we were causing her more labor than if she worked the cane herself. She then untied Isabel's hands and handed her the blade. I was led away, swirling the chain at each step, my hands rebellious behind my back, but alive with curiosity. I asked questions all the way but was laughingly refused answers. It was obvious someone wanted me but I was not to be told who or why. I shrugged.

I had no memory of the table before, but the lounge was a very large room and heavily furnished. Lenore liked lots of everything and probably collected bits and pieces without following plan or pattern. The table should have been incongruous but was not. It had been prominently placed and drawn apart as though for the addition of other segments. But seeing the half circles, I knew for sure my neck was the missing segment.

"Kneel down, darling, and sort of wiggle yourself down and over until you're in the center," my pony said as she thrust down on my bare shoulders.

There wasn't much I could do except obey. I was in bondage. Besides, there was an atmosphere of gentility about this room which kept fear at bay. On my knees I shuffled into position and asked, "I suppose you want my neck inside the circle?"

"That's right, darling. Then hold very still while I close the gap." It was the strangest of feelings, quite bizarre. I was certain it was one of Lenore's inventions. I held my breath as I heard the pony push against the heavy table until my neck was completely encircled by polished wood. There were a couple of definite clicks to tell me I had become the centerpiece of an expensive item of furniture, like a bowl of flowers. I could have moved my neck slightly but it was snugly held.

"You look so sweet like that, Sybil," my pony exclaimed gleefully. "Here, let me fix your hair and touch up your lips." My imprisoned head was close to the smiling young face as the pony fluffed my hair and spread it around me in what she said was a glorious cascade. She used the lipstick and told me I was as perfect as I could possibly be. When I told her I was kneeling upright with my hands behind my back and irons upon my feet in a posture bound to tire and which I could do nothing about, she appeared not to heard a word but assured me I would not have too long to wait. She waved goodbye and closed the door as she left. I shuddered at the thought of being utterly alone and perhaps forgotten.

I most ardently wished I were a bowl of roses. Everything in Lenore's lounge was expensive and a bit redundant. I felt certain the table beneath which I knelt and which encased my neck in the firmest of grips had probably cost a small fortune. It was heavy and solid, its polished and grained surface speaking of a wood I could not name. I began to explore the latitudes of my freedom but they were few. I could add to my discomfort by thrusting up until my shoulders came close to connecting with the wood, but not quite! I could lower myself until my chin came close to the polished surface, but that didn't quite happen, either. What did rest within plain view was the lovely silver circlet I could never remove but which controlled me totally. Between the clasp of wood upon my neck and the band of silver upon my throat I could scarcely move at all. I could look around but could not turn. It was evident I was going to be a well-behaved young lady. I sighed and tested the ropes upon my wrists as I had already done a dozen times. But they were still firmly bound and, even if I could free my hands from them, there was nothing I could do with my head locked in wood. I had become a piece of expensive furniture.

The wait was making me uneasy and causing me to wish myself back with the machete and cane. But finally the door was pushed ajar so I could hear the final passage of an argument.

"Lenore, you're being a positive bitch, keeping me naked all the time. I feel positively obscene in civilized surroundings." It was the voice of my former mistress, Marjory Monet.

"You're far too sensitive, Marjory dear. After all we do keep you mostly behind bars in one of the stalls. You're frightfully hard to please." Lenore's tone was, as usual, honey sweet.

"The Council is treating me terribly. And you too, Lenore! Their lousy six month sentence goes on forever. And if I keep getting punished everyday I'll never make it.

The things you have those ponies do to me . . ."

My poor, darling mistress was naked and chained. It was that chain arrangement which joins a girl's ankles then comes up with another chain to join her hands. She can't get her hands apart and can lift them only as far as her waist. That is unless she sits down and draws up her knees. She was standing now in stunned amazement at sight of me and my predicament. It probably looked as if I had been beheaded.

"I'm having tea brought up," Lenore announced casually. "Here, let me pull up a chair for you. We'll use this table with the lovely centerpiece."

"Sybil darling!" Marjory tried to leap forward but the chain tripped her and she fell. Lenore helped her stand up again.

"Darling, you absolutely must get used to being chained. You're going to be chained for a long, long time. Now, take nice short little steps and go and kiss the pony you used to own. I think she still loves you."

It was cruel, an accentuation of Marjory's humiliation. She looked splendid as she walked carefully in my direction to bend and kiss my lips. That was all we could do, neither of us had possession of your hands. I said, "Oh, Mistress . . . Mistress . . ." in a small, choked, heartbroken voice. It seemed so wrong to see her chained.

Lenore drew up two chairs. She placed her own at the head of the table, and the other to her right on the side where I could see both of them. And they, in turn, could see my face. I longed to plead for release so I could properly greet the woman I loved. But even if I had been freed of the table, my hands were still behind my back, so what was the use! Miss Marjory Monet and Miss Sybil Charmers were a pair of helpless captives and had best behave themselves.

"I've been forced to work hoeing potatoes all this past week with a ball and chain locked on my ankle," Marjory said disgustedly. "That's no way to treat a Council member even if she did whip a few extra bottoms." She snorted defiantly. "And every evening they pretend I haven't made my quota so they can punish me. They hang me up by my wrists and lace into me with a whip as though I was one of the ponies or a side of beef. Lenore, you absolutely must put a stop to this outrage."

"I can arrange a formal whipping for you, dear, if your prefer?"

"Don't be a bitch! Look at my back. I can't see it but I'm sure it's covered with whip marks. I've been whipped so damned much . . . !"

"It's almost virgin skin, darling, your imagination gets the best of you. You have no idea how a little whipping improves your attitudes."

I was trying to think of a way to interject myself into the conversation but all I

could see were ways to get myself punished. I contented myself by staring longingly at Marjory and allowing my eyes to tell her of my love. I was indeed a centerpiece, largely ignored.

A pony brought the tea things and set them in front of my face. After the apple and piece of bread daily, the sandwiches and aroma of tea were almost intoxicating. I couldn't reach any of it, the pony had been dismissed and Lenore was not likely to bother feeding me. And Marjory's chains made certain she could not. I suspected I was there to taunt Marjory with what she had lost and what Lenore had gained.

Lenore recalled the pony and instructed her to place a stool beneath Marjory's feet. When this was done the poor darling got enough slack out of her chain to enable her to raise a teacup to her lips if she bent slightly forward. Every move she made produced a quite delightful metallic response she failed to appreciate.

"You've only got me chained like this to punish me," she said savagely. "You know damned well I'd have tea with you any time without trying to run away or committing an assault. Everything you do to me is to rub it in and not let me forget those six months. Oh, damn, I'd give anything to be out of this!"

Lenore poured tea. The ponygirl had been told to stay and attend my needs so I got a cup of tea and a sandwich after all. I felt better.

Lenore picked up the thread. "We were wondering, Marjory, what your plans are after your sentence? I suppose you've been thinking about it."

"No I haven't. The end of my sentence is so far away I don't even believe in it. You could keep me in this slavery and there isn't anything I could do about it. Besides, I'm punished so much I don't have time to think about or plan anything."

I could see her point. When a girl has been prisoner for so long she comes to wonder if freedom really exists. My sentence was for life. But it had merged with Marjory's six months to make us resigned to the slavery called being a pony. In theory I'd be free in a year when I was twenty-five but I didn't believe that either.

"Yes, we've been thinking about you and your punishments, dear," Lenore said. "I do admit you've been whipped an awful lot and maybe we should go easy on your back and bottom for a while . . . I refuse to allow them to touch your breasts, but there are alternatives and other delightful things we can do to you. Would you care to suggest some? I assure you will consider them."

"I'll bet! Like putting me on the horse that time with poor, darling Sybil. I thought I was split in two."

"An isolated case, darling!" Lenore said sweetly.

"I take that to mean we can rule out the horse. Is there something positive you can

suggest? I can take the negatives for granted." Marjory savagely bit a sandwich. "Thanks for this civilized food, Lenore, it's better than an apple and a bit of bread, which is all they've been giving me." She bit savagely again. "I know you're just playing with me. What girl can possibly name her own punishments. I know damned well if I make them too easy I won't get them. And if I make them too severe you'll damned near kill me. I can't possibly win. Go ahead and do what you damned please. I hope the Council comes to my funeral."

"We were thinking of easing up on you, darling. But with this attitude of your's I'm not at all sure. I expect it's difficult to be humble after what you were."

"You're damned right! I'm Marjory Monet."

"You're a prisoner subject to punishments, darling," Lenore said. "I'm trying to make them bearable for you. I wish you'd help."

"Okay then! Chain me to Sybil and keep us locked in a stall for the rest of my sentence."

During the silence that followed my pony fed me one more sandwich and another cup of tea. I felt completely divorced from the discussion and knew I was there only to aggravate Marjory's sense of injustice. Sweetly, Lenore cooed, "I'll put that one on the list, dear. Anything else?"

"Couldn't you give me a sort of ticket of leave, a sort of parlor status? Let me go back home and take Sybil with me. She is my property, in case you forgot."

"I'll put that down, dear, although it's not likely to happen." Lenore scribbled busily. "Anything a bit more practical, my dear?"

Marjory was becoming animated, glimpsing hope. She said, "So you won't do that for me! Okay then, let Sybil and I pick up our lives at my place. But once every week I'll come voluntarily to you for punishment. You know I'll keep my word."

Lenore raised an eyebrow. "You're getting warmer, darling. That last thought deserves consideration. Does darling Sybil get whipped at the same time?"

"Of course not, why should she!"

Lenore shrugged while my heart went thud, thud, thud beneath the table.

"Because she's so whippable, darling. You know that, it's the reason you're being punished so badly. But for the whip Sybil is a perfect treasure. It makes me horny to think of it."

I did my best. I interjected, "I wouldn't mind, Marjory, I'll come and be whipped right along with you if that will make them happy. Honest, I'll do it gladly."

I must have touched a responsive nerve, there was an awkward silence none could fill until I added, "If you want to humiliate my former Mistress, Lenore, then instead of whipping us in private why don't you chain us naked in some public place and let everyone laugh at us? I'm sure a member of the Council exposed like that would draw a crowd."

"Not bad for a pony," Lenore smiled. "Do come up with another, Sybil darling."

"Well then, couldn't you fasten Marjory and me like this one day a week, I'm not enjoying it one bit. I feel foolish and my knees are hurting. And I'm certain I'm not the least bit beautiful. And I certainly wouldn't want anyone to see me like this."

"An excellent thought, Sybil my pet, I'll put it down. Oh, by the way, I'll keep you kneeling as you are for quite a while so you knees will really hate me. How's that?"

I did not reply. There's never any use talking back to a mistress, certainly not to Lenore who eyed me shrewdly.

"I'm sure, Sybil my dear," Lenore purred, "you can come up with another one as good."

I searched my mind frantically and discovered an ancient memory. "In ancient times kings used to have a whipping boy. For all I know they had a whipping girl, too. His duty was to be around whenever the king got mad about something and then he'd get whipped until the king felt better. Why don't you let Marjory go home but keep me here and punish me whenever you wish. You can tell her about my punishment and even invite her to witness it. In that way she'd be punished, too."

"I like that," Lenore conceded generously. "What do you think of it, Marjory?"

"It stinks! All I want to do is get Sybil away from these everlasting punishments, not get her into more of them."

"Excellent! Darling Sybil has come up with a real face-saver for us all. Except for her, of course." Lenore's tone became sly. "You weren't thinking of escaping with the dear child, were you Marjory?"

We all knew it was exactly what Marjory was thinking, but she and I had tried to look innocent.

"I can't escape with Sybil," Marjory said disgustedly. "You can see that silver ring upon her neck and you know what it means. I get her half way to freedom and the impulse takes over to drive us both back with our tails between our legs. If you'd give me a break, I could pick up from where I left off. If you let me have my home and Sybil, I'll accept any kind of weekly punishment you name. Isn't that good enough?"

"Not compared with your imprisonment for six months, darling. It's letting you off far too easy."

"Very well, spread it over one year. I'll come to you fifty-two times and let you punish me any way you want."

The tea and sandwiches were over. The pony wheeled away the cart, leaving me with a sympathetic glance. Maybe she had been beneath this table once herself! Despairingly I said to Lenore, "I don't think you're going to do any of these things. I don't think you'll give either of us freedom even if promised weekly punishments. But please, chain Marjory and I together in our stall? Please let us be together while she serves her sentence. And please don't fasten us so we can't touch or make love." I put my heart into the simple plea.

It was then Bill Trafford walked into the room.

I don't believe any of this. I am firmly bound to a palm tree beside a pretty little pool of water within a walled garden surrounding the Moorish palace in which my master lives. I don't know how men contrive all these monetary and property miracles but Bill Trafford has told me about his oil and his need to reside on the fringe of civilization on the desert. He explained that Marjory, Lenore and I are to be considered his harem in accordance with Islamic law. There is also his glorious team of ponies, Melody and Nona, Celie and Inga, which he thoughtfully brought along when he thoughtfully rescued me.

It appears that any influential man possessing white female prisoners is expected to keep them in reasonable restraint. That's the reason I'm tied to this tree. Not brutally but with my wrists crossed behind the trunk and several bands of tight rope around my middle. It was Achmed who tied me thus with frequent inquiries as to whether I was comfortable. Achmed appears to be my master's Major Domo, who looks after things including me whenever my master is away. My master is away a great deal. Achmed is a nice sort of fellow but I suspect an opportunist. He has made no bones about telling me of his desire to "jig-a-jig" with me should I be so inclined. He has quaintly implied that should I perform this jig-a-jig with him, my ropes and chains would have a bit more slack than they do now. Like all the rest of what has happened, I'm not quite sure Achmed is real.

It is nearly two months since Bill Trafford's raid on the Estate. I will never forget that glorious moment when he walked into Lenore's lounge and repossessed me, almost tearing the table apart and slashing the rope around my wrists to once more give me hands. Shock robbed me of eloquence but I managed a breathless, "Oh Bill, oh Bill! Darling!"

I got a triumphant kiss and hug while Marjory and Lenore looked on in disbelief. A couple of men had followed my master and one of them picked up Marjory who was still helplessly chained while the other tied Lenore's hands behind her back.

During this first act of her enslavement Lenore was decidedly vocal.

"You can't get away with this, Bill Trafford. You're crazy!"

"I've already got away with it," said Bill cheerfully. "You didn't imagine I'd let a trio of cackling hens dictate my life, did you?" To his henchmen he ordered, "Tie her elbows together with a single strand. It hurts and keeps them in line."

"Don't you dare!" Lenore swirled around and aimed a kick at male genitals. For this act she was soundly cuffed around and the connecting of her elbows went on. "Stop it! Cut these ropes, get them off me! I absolutely refused to be bound!" She turned savagely to the smiling man over whom she had once held authority. "Bill Trafford, don't stand there grinning, tell this idiot to let me loose. You needn't think I'll quietly allow myself to be kidnapped." She glared savagely in disarray. Without a word the large chunk of man who had bound her arms picked her up and carried her away, her legs kicking wildly but uselessly in the air as she uttered dire threats.

Men are so strong and can do so many things a girl cannot. When the right man picks you up, as now, and carries you away, you have the comforting feeling of being owned and desired along with the prospect of being taken to his bed and being dealt with properly as a girl should be. I remember thinking joyously, "No more tongue and lips for Sybil Charmers," and clutching Bill Trafford's shirt with all my strength.

There was a very large helicopter and several very large men. Marjory and Lenore were carried up the steps to disappear inside. But there was still one more surprise. Bill Trafford's pony team had been assembled in a line and connected, wrist to wrist by handcuffs. I could see by their faces they were undecided whether to weep over being snatched from the Estate or cry with joy over this reunion and repossession by their master. Celie was already shedding a few tears. Their faces lit up as they saw our master and I, but a barked command caused them to turn in single file and march up the steps and through the open door to follow their mistress.

I was made to stand and got a command all my own. "We'll have to get that ring off your neck, sweetheart." He reached for a wicked looking cutting device offered by one of his men, "Push it as far towards me as you can. It's damned good and snug but I have to get one of these blades underneath. It may hurt."

It hurt but it was a lovely, glorious hurt. The steel jaws announced my release from the subtle bondage of the lovely silver thing which now lay at my feet. Once more my master picked me up.

My mind was a chaos of delight as the helicopter made the journey, by easy stages, to an Arab state I had never heard of called Langra. I spent most of the time in the small cabin with Bill. My feet were still shackled but he said to leave them that way rather than use the bolt cutters. I did not mind, I knew it gave him pleasure to watch me walk with my swirling clatter of links. From time to time I was allowed

into the cargo space in the back where the four lovely ponies sat, still handcuffed, looking scared and uncertain. There was no uncertainty about either Marjory or Lenore. Neither had freedom but they were able to walk around, Marjory in her chains, Lenore with bound arms. I could easily see Lenore's arms were causing her increasing pain. I asked Bill if I could untie her, I knew how awful that single strand can be. But he refused. He said the two members of the Council were now embarking upon a series of lessons to teach them how to be a woman instead of merely a female authority. Laughing, he said, "By the time I'm through with them they'll fetch a terrific price at auction. There's a thriving salve trade in Langra, there's never any problem in getting rid of a mistress you're tired of. I would have brought more ponies with us if we had the room."

It took a moment to sink in but then I gasped. "You're not going to sell those four lovely creatures the Council gave you, those darlings handcuffed in the back . . .?" I stared askance.

Bill laughed at my dismay. It seems my fate in life is to always be dismayed at something.

"Eventually I'll dispose of them. They'll be useful to lubricate any sticky deal I'm having trouble with."

"You mean harems and brothels and things like that?"

"Sweetheart, a slave in Langra is far better off than a pony on the Estate. A favorite slave is treated like a princess unless she's brought disfavor down on herself. And even then she'll only get her skin marked up and be given a second chance. Islam is kinder than you think."

"Oh, Bill . . . !" I sat on my master's knee and rubbed my breasts against his shirt. My mind was in chaos. "What about me? Bill, darling, you're not going to sell me, are you?"

"Only if you nag or become a shrew. I didn't organize this escape mission for what we've got back there in the cargo space. I did it for you. Girl, you ought to be tickled pink to be away from that pony nonsense. Don't you realize that when you reach the age of twenty-six you'd start being a frustrated and dried up old spinster? Sure, you could have bought a pony at the market and made her nibble you. But what sort of life is that? Every female in the place lives in a dream world that's not true."

"But they're all so happy . . .?" I was bemused. "I never saw any frustration. Everyone loved everybody."

"That the drug, Sybil. The poor things get an injection once a year to keep them content. I never discovered what drug it was but it keeps everyone happy. They would have given you a shot, too, when the time came. You're better off away from the damned place."

I was happy but not as happy as I should have been. Too much had happened too soon, and the Bill Trafford who owned me now was a different Bill from the one who had bought me in the market. The Estate might well be in my past but I could not forget the four ponies and the two captive women who were being taken into goodness knows what. I loved all six but Bill's arms were possessive and infinitely comforting. I needed Bill. If I had stayed on the Estate, I would have become a dyed-in-the-wool lesbian like all the rest. I thrust everything else from my mind except Bill and I.

"By the way, sweetheart, you'd best know I'm going to keep you a prisoner. Nothing dramatic but always a rope or chain on you. You know the drill."

I knew the drill. I did not mind! Bill could tie me up all he pleased and I'd love every strand of rope simply because he had placed it on my flesh. He told me about the traditions of Langra and all the ancient customs but I couldn't have cared less. I had what I wanted.

I knew I had a choice as to whether I fraternized with the other captives or stayed away. But they all meant too much to me, I couldn't possibly ignore them. If Bill would let me, I would visit them whenever I could. I did so now and found Lenore gently moaning herself into a small bundle of feminine pain. Any girl with elbows tied as tight as her's were, with but a single strand, is to be pitied. The pony team were eyeing her sympathetically but were too well trained to do more than offer verbal sympathy.

Marjory sat disdainfully in her pretty set of fetters as though disassociating herself with the whole thing.

When Lenore saw me she pleaded with me, "Oh, Sybil, I'm so glad it's you. Get this horrid rope off my elbows, its killing me and no one wants to help." She gazed up to me with tearful features. "Please, darling, it's simply too bloody awful."

It had been done to me, I knew how it felt and how it reduced a girl to whimpering impotence. All you wanted to do was curl up in a ball and suffer. Without giving myself time to think I untied the knot no one else would touch. Lenore's wrists were still crossed and bound, she would be quite safe. Somehow I sensed a difference in atmosphere, all six of them were prisoners while I had the run of the 'copter and was the favorite of the man they must now all call master. I did not stay. I gave quick kisses all around and returned to Bill Trafford. When I stood beside him I was still carrying the bit of rope.

"I've just untied Lenore's elbows, darling. Please forgive me."

"Gosh, how humble can love make a girl!"

Bill eyed me with his familiar half smile. "Didn't I expressly forbid you to do that?"

"Yes, you did. But I felt so sorry for the pain she was in I disobeyed you." I managed a weak little laugh. "I know you'll punish me but it was something I had to do. Please, darling, don't hurt me too much."

There were no fireworks, nothing dramatic. Considering the pain involved, it was all very ordinary. Bill took the length of rope from my hands and said quietly, "Turn around, sweetheart." A few moments later I was gritting my teeth to keep from making an unseemly protest against the pain. Lenore's bound elbows were now mine. Her pain was my pain. My hands were not tied but that mattered not at all. There was no possible way I could free myself of the wicked, bitting band which drew my elbows hard together. In a choked, small voice I managed to say, "Thank you, Master." And that was that!

Having tied that single cord deep into my flesh, Bill appeared to forget the incident and to assume I forgot it, too. He pulled me down into his lap and cradled me with a fine, masculine arm which appeared not to notice my bound arms. He briefed me on what to expect in Langra and on the duties I would assume as his prospective bride. We were not to be married immediately, there were big deals pending and he would give me a period of grace in which I might accept or reject the things I must do to be his wife. Bill considered his other six female prisoners a menace and would keep me away from them. If they were sold, I might not know until long after they were gone. The question now was, Would I yield my master total obedience? I said, very meekly, that I would obey him implicitly and he could punish me if I failed. He said, yes. I understood about the girls. Their life and mine were now separate. If he would allow me to show affection in brief visits to whatever place or condition he held them in, I would be content. In the meantime would he show a bit of chivalry and free my elbows from the cutting cord?

One of the first things a girl learns when she becomes the property of someone else is the tremendous advantage they have over you in the matter of discussion or argument. If you argue or said something with which they did not concur, they blandly ignore it as if you have never said a word. It was that way now. I shifted unhappily to show how I was hurting but his arms simply tightened on my nakedness to tell me I could damned will put up with the pain I had earned. I knew this was the first lesson he was teaching me in our new relationship. Ruefully I conceded I had best be a very good girl indeed.

"There's a retainer by the name of Achmed," Bill continued as if I were in complete comfort. "I leave him to look after the odds and ends when I'm away. I'll leave him in charge of you. Don't worry about being raped, he'll only do it if I tell him too. And I'm certainly not going to waste you on Achmed. Now, with those two Council members, your beloved Marjory Monet and your adored Lenore Livingstone, that's different. Perhaps what they need is a good reaming out with a rigid Arab weapon. Will do both of them a world of good. I do hope you'll agree?"

"They'd sooner die than have a man enter them. Please, Bill, don't be so mean."

"Weren't you the young lady who was going to be one hundred percent obedient?"

"Well, yes. But I know how the poor darlings feel about sex. They'd just as soon push a rattlesnake inside themselves as give entry to a man. Bill, darling, give them time to adjust."

"Further to the matter of Achmed," Bill continued evenly, "you'll find yourself completely in his power when I'm not around. He'll bind you or chain you or lock you up in anyway he pleases, or which suits his convenience. The poor chap does have a few duties other than you girls. The only thing you can use to bribe him with is your body. And, if you use that in seeking escape, he will tell me and you, or any one of the others, will be suitably punished. Mostly you'll be tied in some comfortable position where you can dream away the hours as you await my return. You'll sleep with me every night, just in case you're wondering. And you'd better live up to my recollections of you or there'll be trouble. When we get married I want you properly trained. Maybe I'll allow you to chose one of my former ponies to be your lady's maid. They're sweet girls but not sweet enough to make me want to forget the millions I can get for them in the right places. A million dollars changes everything about everybody."

"Would you sell me for a million dollars?"

"Not for a million, beloved, but perhaps for ten. Don't laugh, some son of the sand may be willing to pay me that."

This was a new dimension. I had never been property quite this way before, and the thought of ten million dollars being paid for possession of my body thrilled me in a way that made me feel ashamed. But there it was, I was costly merchandise indeed!

Rakesh, the town beside my master's home boasted no social events. But every one of us girls might be called upon to display her talents and charms for any male guest who had oil to sell. We would be expected to perform as good little dancing girls and not make waves. Any plea to anyone for help to escape was a major crime for which we would dearly pay.

"What you're really saying, Bill, is I'm a slave. There really isn't any ME any more, is there? You've turned me and the others into pretty feminine packages for your amusement."

My dolor was short lived. Male arms crushed out my intent. Male lips kissed mine and male teeth bit my ear just hard enough to tell of possibilities. I snuggled in close but once more ventured, "Please, Bill, untie my elbows?"

"You asked for that once before, sweetheart. If you ask again I'll replace that nice soft cord with a length of wire. Then you'll really have something to complain about."

I had been foxed but good. Bill had me for keeps and I could see there was no way I could be other than his slave. The prospect thrilled me. To be owned so utterly by a single man was the stuff of story books and fairy tales. I remembered once again with a thrill that the fictional accounts of those other days all agreed upon a certain principle, the slave girl was expected to be docile and obedient and obey her lord and master in all things. If she did not . . . ! I did not dwell on penalties, I simply shivered.

Bill compelled me to wear the band around my elbows for two hours, the last of which was pure hell. It was only when my pain spurred tears and caused me to lose attention to his words that he consented to untie the knots and peal the beastly strand from my flesh. If Torquemada failed to discover the torture of tied elbows, he missed a bit. I shed more tears of gratitude and kissed my master. He could have left me tied for four hours. Or six. Or eight. I belonged to him, he could do with me as he pleased.

The drone of the large helicopter told me of his power. The Estate rapidly receded into memory. I cuddled Bill's strength and planned our wedding which would happen sometime but not right now. It may be instinct but we females are suckers about weddings.

It was all pretty much the way Bill said. On our arrival at the huge Moorish house and Rakesh, the helicopter took off again and with it, the brawny males who had insured my master's victory. All the females, including me, were stood in a line and lectured on what was expected of them in their new life. They were told of Achmed and of his authority over them. They were also told of the possibility of being sold. Achmed then marshaled them and led them to whatever quarters Bill had for them. Against a background of iron bars and straw covered stalls, it might not be too bad. Each one sought my eyes in longing. I felt a bitch!

I refuse to try and tell much of my first Arabian night. It was like all the other nights during which Bill had possessed me put together, a concentration of carnality in which we were both equally guilty. We simply loved each other dearly and expended every particle of ourselves in fervid expression of that love. Somewhere down below the mistresses were chained in a dungeon but I never thought of them. The four ponies fared better, their cell was a cage heavily filled with cushions and rugs.

My master enjoyed me and I adored him for several days before he announced a temporary absence. He kissed me and instructed Achmed to restrain me each day and chain me each night. I paid small attention, I was too damned happy! Achmed turned out to be a character, a sort of comic relief who spoke English in a strange way. A typical conversation went something like this.

"Pretty Missy show Achmed her nice cunt?"

Considering I was naked and with my hands tied behind my back, his request

seemed to me to indicate some degree of refinement. He could have looked all he liked at my cunt without seeking my permission. It was borne upon me that naked white women had not previously come his way. I was therefore an event, something to be treasured. He sighed ecstatically about the four ponies and the two mistresses but refused to speak of them, giving the impression of immense masculine virility that would prompt each one of them to spread her legs wide in worship. I took it with a grain of salt. My feet were no longer shackled so I raised one leg and invited to look his fill. With my hands tied, I was still helpless and thought it unwise to deny him so simple a pleasure.

Achmed and I liked each other. There was something innocent about his enthusiasm for my naked charms. I gathered the men of Langra had to make quite a lot of money before they could afford a wife they could strip or punish as they chose. Achmed was indeed the fortunate recipient of erotic delights denied most men. He spoke of me with relish.

"You do not mind, Missy, if I whip your ass . . .? Just a little to make the fuck much better?"

"Don't be silly, Achmed, you know my Master is your Master. I belong to him. You can only touch me to bind or chain me into helplessness."

"Alas, this is so . . ." he mourned without visible sadness. "But as I bind you I will place my hand upon that pretty spot between your legs. I have asked our Master, he says he does not mind. You are most lucky girl."

Achmed kept his promise. No maiden of any age or period was felt up with more vigor than I. He cupped my sex at every opportunity and with scant excuse. I treated him and his attentions as those of a big, overgrown boy, which was exactly what Achmed was. It's certain the other captives, where ever they were held would deal with him in the same way. Whenever he became too ardent and spoke of his throbbing male member so urgently in need of release within me, I reminded him gently I was Bill Trafford's property and as that he must keep out of me. I hoped his respect for ownership would hold firm. There were times on the Estate I would have welcomed Achmed between my legs, but not now. Certainly not now or in the days that followed, Achmed bound me in a multitude of ingenious ways, never painful but always secure. He tied me to trees, to posts, to the big wheels of wagons, to gates and railings. And always, after the last knot was tied, his hand could cup my sex which he seemed to adore to the exclusion of all else. I got so I would have been disappointed if he hadn't done it. I steadfastly rejected his suggestion that we "jig-a-jig." I never managed to free myself, even when I really worked at it, he was highly skilled with knots and could make a little rope go a long way. Nor did he ignore chains, running all the way from a hundred pounds of metal to the single neat cuff which held my wrists at night and just enough chain to give me the run of my master's bedroom. In one of those lonely nights I asked Achmed to allow one of the four ponies to sleep with me. But Achmed was deeply shocked.

"You most naughty girl! You know jig-a-jig with me but you nibble-nibble with other ladies. I give Master full report."

Bill laughed it off, saying he could not possibly whip me every time I offended Achmed's sense of what is proper. Then he made a concession. Once every week I could spend a night with the Estate captives who were confined to a small walled garden of their own and an iron barred cage. I went to them joyfully but it was short-lived.

It was a lovely little garden but with a wall too high for any girl to climb. Even the cage had been made to blend into the foliage so its heavy iron bars were not as brutal as if starkly displayed. The ponies did not inhabit the cage, but Marjory and Lenore most certainly did. They were chained to opposite walls by an iron collar on their neck and, presumedly for simple irritation, their right wrists were loosely shackled to the bars. During the few minutes it took for greetings I realized I should not have come.

I had only seen the four ponies and my two mistresses when they were happy. They were not happy now. The ponies were bored and the two women in the cage seethed with resentment, remonstrating the bondage which denied them even the touch of hands, then turning to display once virgin backs now cruelly wealed by the marks of whips.

"He says he's going to sell us to a bordello," Marjory wailed. "He also promised to give that Achmed creature carte blanche with us. The bastard can hardly wait to do his 'jig-a-jig' with us while the ponies watch through the bars. Oh, Sybil, can't you do something . . . !?"

How could I tell them I was as much a prisoner as they! That I loved that imprisonment could only aggravate their own pain. I had never seen my former mistresses stark naked and in chains, at least not Lenore. There was something unreal about it. It must have been slightly unreal to them, too, as they were constantly testing and tugging against chains, making a pretty picture of frustration.

Turning my affection to Melody and Nona, Celie and Inga was the point at which my heart was bruised. The four radiant darlings were unhappy. They had lost their glow and were animated only by the hope of my being able to help them. They obviously wanted to return to the Estate which they viewed as their whole lives. I could understand that, after all I had been an Original, they had been born there. They even viewed this lovely garden with disfavor. They were dejected by our master's lack of attention and absence of their harnesses and daily runs. They gazed at me pathetically and added their pleas to those of the chained women in the cage. I went back to our master in thoughtful mood.

Bill Trafford had changed. He had explained how the unexpected bequest from an almost unknown relative had made him the possessor of a sizeable oil empire. It was waiting for him on the return from the Estate. And he found that he fitted in

with the role of oil baron, picking up the business very fast and finding a talent for making even more money than the business ever had. Now he possessed great wealth but it was a wealth that required constant attention.

I was not only concerned about my fellow prisoners but about myself. Sure, I had a lot of freedom but was never really free. Being bound everyday by a grinning Achmed had been amusing but I was now wondering where it would end. What I had supposed as temporary now appeared as permanent. I had also had doubts about the man who loved me and would be my husband. Finally Bill's rationalization of my pain and bondage left me with a great, big question mark. I could confronted him with the way I felt. I was chained by one wrist to his bed and I knew he desired me urgently but, even though I desired him, too, I was persistent.

"Bill, darling, I want you to send your pony team and Marjory and Lenore back to the Estate. That's where they belong. To sell them here in this strange land if pure cruelty."

There was one of those awful silences. I felt myself trembling in the certainty of having said too much and having set it with a forcefulness out of character for a good slavegirl.

"I knew I shouldn't have let you visit them." His voice was dull and irritated.

"Bill, darling, please don't sell them. I simply couldn't bear that thought. I would have thought you loved those four ponies far too much to part with them. I can understand your being angry at Marjory and Lenore."

"That's sweet of you!" Bill looked at me as if seeing me for the first time. "I've been meaning to have a talk with you, Sybil," he said as if reaching for the right words. "I know you found me changed. I know I've punished you and kept you bound." He mused silently for several seconds. "I'll be honest with you. I've always wanted a slavegirl. My time on the Estate just added to it. You fit my specifications so perfectly it is as if someone read my mind. Sure, I can marry you but it wouldn't change anything. You'd still be bound and you'd still be whipped."

"But, Bill, we agreed to all this. I understand the joy I can give you. And giving it makes a shared ecstasy. You know I love being bound and you know I adore being whipped if it isn't too hard. I can't endure a flogging any more than any other girl. Please, Bill, we've got it so good . . .?"

"Have we? You've just given me what amounts to an ultimatum. I can send the girls back to the Estate or loose your love . . . Maybe the proper word is respect. I should never have brought them here, I admit that now. Certainly not the ponies, the poor kids deserve better than what I've got planned. Marjory and Lenore, maybe. A couple of nights with Achmed would do them good. And they've already been well whipped and frustrated half to death . . ."

"Oh, Bill, not Achmed! It's not decent. It does you no credit."

"Would you prefer me to violate them, sweetheart? I can easily have them spread-eagled for what they should have had a long time ago."

"That's horrible! Oh Bill, please . . . !"

"If you love them so much, perhaps you'd like to stay in their cage. Would you?"

"That's not a sensible question. What I want is to have us all happy again. Please, Bill, send them all home."

"Well, then, how about you spend your time with the ponies. You'd be bound, of course, and so would they. Handcuffs would probably serve the purpose. You can be sold right along with them, too, if you're so all fired concerned."

I had known it from the start, sensed its presence in Bill's mind. He might not have even been aware of it then but the presence of seven females from the Estate was a distraction, a nuisance. I could not believe the price he would get for any of us would be really that much compared to the business deals he made almost daily.

Abruptly he grasped my bare arm and led me to the lovely room where we spent our nights. He grabbed my forearm and snapped the metal cuffs around my wrist tight enough so it hurt.

"Sit and think about it, sweetheart." I could tell he was preoccupied, his thoughts elsewhere. "I'll have you whipped tomorrow, Sybil, and your feet ironed. I suspect you're not to be trusted. See you later."

He went away.

I stood alone, gazing at my raised hand and the shinning steel around the wrist. My eye followed the trail of links which held me captive in that room. It might seem a flimsy bond but would hold me as securely as iron bars. For the first time I discovered bitterness in the realization of being so seldom free since I had first been kidnapped. There had always been a chain or rope or bars to look through. I had loved most of it because of my adoration of whoever placed me in restraint. Mary Maber, Marjory Monet, and finally Lenore. I thought of the fate of my two former mistresses but could not believe Bill's threat. Now I was in grave danger of being sold into a bordello or harem myself. We could be together but it was a togetherness none of us would relish. As frosting on the cake Bill had told me tomorrow I would be whipped. Bill probably thought I brought this upon myself but I saw it as something inevitable.

Irritably I sent a swirl of chain away from my fettered hand and then sat on the bed and wept. Tears made me feel better but prompted a train of thought I should have felt long ago. What I felt for Bill was the infatuation of a lonely girl for the one and

only male being with sight.

Perhaps because I was an original Bill had been intrigued. And, if the Council had left me in his possession, he would likely have exhausted his carnal interest in a month or two and returned me to the market and a certain sale to a female. From then on feminine love would have absorbed me totally and I would have only mourned my lost master now and then, or maybe not at all.

I shook my head angrily to rid it of ridiculous speculations. For sure I had little to look forward to.

I am ashamed to tell that when Bill Trafford took me in his arms later that night our lovemaking was as torrid as ever. His virility made me forget the ponies and mistresses. Made me forget myself and to long only for his penetration of my sex to last forever. In the morning Bill Trafford had me whipped.

There is nothing worth telling of the experience of being whipped. It is painful and demeaning and thoroughly horrible − unless, of course, administered lightly by a girl you love. That did not happen! I was delivered to Achmed and taken by him to the walled garden and the ironed cage. Facing my former mistresses, my wrists were bound to the bars, wide stretched and very tight, and then Achmed marked my skin from shoulders to knees with a tracery of angry lines and weals. He whipped me very slowly, taking great delight in the task and commenting sadly that since his master would behold his work he could not therefore offer me a lesser number of strokes or lighter ones in return for jig-a-jig.

I was bound only by my wrists, thrusting my nakedness hard against the cage to shield what I could of myself. Behind Achmed stood the four ponies in distraught distress while behind the bars Marjory and Lenore watched my punishment in tight-lipped disapproval. I tried hard not to scream but the thong swished and cut and bit with that sickening pain a girl just can't endure. When he finished with me and went away I remained stretched out and tied to the bars like an impaled butterfly.

My former mistresses had come as close as their collar and chains permitted. But that was not close enough for their purpose or mine. But the four ponies were free to use their fingers in the soothing of my burning skin, kissing the weals and licking the scarlet lines I could not see. They dare not free my hands, I must stay as I was against the bars until Achmed choose to untie his knots.

"I wouldn't have believed it of Bill Trafford," Marjory declared angrily. "The guy's gone crazy with all this money and power he inherited.

"We've got to get out of here," Lenore added her own conviction. "You ponies are our only hope. Achmed leaves you free most of the time, he thinks you're harmless. We've got to get over this damned wall and find an American Consul."

"What? And tell him about the Estate!" Marjory cried. "Remember, darling, we don't have a country. Our best hope is that if the son of a bitch takes any of us to bed, we give him such a damned good time that he'll relent and think twice about selling us down the river. Women have been doing this sort of thing for centuries. We can!"

"He never takes us to bed," mourned the four ponies. "We'd be ever so nice to him if he did. All he seems to want to do is sell us."

"When he takes Lenore or I to bed it's just a brutal rape," Marjory added. "There's no way we can make that good for either him or us. Sybil, darling, you're the only one who can save us. He had a thing about you and I don't think that's dead. Work on it, darling, please???"

All six pairs of eyes were on me. But I had never felt less up to a task in my life. Despite the ponies help my back was an angry burn and my wrists had been telling me from the start they had been tied too high and too tight. I felt more like crying than trying to persuade our master into something he didn't want to do.

By the time I'd recited all my woes, Achmed was back. "Achmed has decided to give pretty girl ten more fine, hard strokes with nice whip," he announced. Then he demonstrated by cutting the air, all too close for comfort, with the wicked whip. "Pretty Missy like ten more good hard ones?"

Pretty Missy kept silent. If I had said either yes or no, I'd get the strokes anyhow.

"Perhaps Missy don't want? If Missy give nice jig-a-jig instead, she no get." Achmed had a marvelous bed-side manner.

Tension flowed in waves from the six maidens breathlessly awaiting my decision. I wondered what they might do with such an offer. Miserably I retorted, "Go ahead and whip me, Achmed, but I'll tell your master about you 'jig-a-jig' offer."

The son of a bitch actually whipped me! I was hoping he was running a bluff, that he actually wouldn't dare incur Bill Trafford's wrath.

Evidently he was wise to the knowledge that a few more strokes more or less upon my waiting skin did not matter. He used that damned thong on me so hard and so viciously, finding crevasses I didn't know I had and curves I couldn't hide, I simply gave up being a little heroine and screamed and kicked as lustily as my fading strength allowed. It was hateful to hang against the bars like that and let him have his will, but that's the way it was!

When he untied my wrists, I deliberately crumpled to the ground and feigned unconsciousness.

Achmed was wise. His leather thong sliced my naked bottom once again to jerk out

of me a scream I could not contain.

"Missy play games, Achmed not easy fool. Miss Sybil now stand up. I tie her hands."

It was no use. Achmed held us all in the palm of his dirty hand. Stiffly I stood erect, turned my back and crossed my wrists. I was a very much defeated little girl. Grinning broadly, his hand grasping my bare arm, Achmed led me from the little garden to the far larger enclosure with the trees and stream. There he selected a young tree and, lifting my foot forcefully, bound my ankle to the trunk at the level of my waist to leave me standing precariously upon a single leg. I gazed in horror at my neatly and cruelly tied ankle welded against the slender trunk.

"But Achmed, I'll fall, I'll hurt myself!"

"Is too bad. Missy no like, Missy should jig-a-jig with Achmed. You now stand."

"I can't stand! Well, not for very long. Achmed, this is awful!"

"Missy look very pretty like that."

"I don't! I look awful and it hurts. You've tied my foot too high and too tight. I'm splitting in two."

I should have kept quiet. The word 'split' earned me a dirty male palm cupping my puss. Achmed had to try this gesture from various angles before seeming satisfied with the handful he held. He started a kneading that drove my desire and heat without really being exciting. Soon his hand was wet and I was damned near hopping on my one free foot just to keep my balance. The terrible part was that my body had responded with an orgasm of sorts even though I didn't want it to. Achmed exited, satisfied with the shameful response he had evoked in this naked woman's body. I was left standing on one foot.

I called after him, pleading until he disappeared.

A captive does the best she can with what she's got. All I had was the potential of a pair of hands if only I could free my wrists from Achmed's cords. I struggled and tugged and twisted in urgency until I realized I was wasting the effort. My hands were firmly tied behind my back and would stay there. The same was true of my ankle, cinched tight against the tree. I wondered how badly I would injure myself if I deliberately dropped to the ground to lie on my back with one ankle held well up in the air. I decided against the risk, it would be better to stand as I was for as long as I could. I shifted myself as best I could to find what comfort might exist. I bowed my head to wait without much hope for whatever might come next.

The whipping Achmed had just given my was at my master's command. I tried to make sense out of what Bill Trafford had done to seven naked females, five of them

who had never done him harm. He had, in fact, dearly loved his four ponies and had talked of marrying me. Yet now I stood in his Moorish garden, stark naked, standing on one leg with my other foot tied high and hard against as tree. A man does not have things like this done to a future wife . . . Or do they!

There was another contradiction about Bill Trafford I could discern all too clearly. He obviously now possessed great wealth and power. Why then would he care about some meager profit in selling his ponies to a harem and my two former mistresses to a brothel! The only thing I could think of was his realization of a mistake in kidnapping us, but now desiring to get us out of sight and out of mind.

It was bad, bad, bad! I desperately did not want to fall but I could see it coming. The leg on which I stood was begining to tremble and I was breathing heavily from strain. I think if Achmed had returned to repeat his offer, I might have given him his jig-a-jig to gain release. But when a man finally came it was not Achmed, it was Bill Trafford. I watched him walk towards me and allowed hope to once more flower in my mind. His greeting was a simple reference to my punishment.

"My, my, Sybil, Achmed really did lace into you, didn't he!"

"Yes. But by your orders. Look what he's done to me now!" I allowed only the briefest pause before adding, "Bill, please untie my foot . . . Please?"

"Being whipped do you any good, dear girl?"

"I expect it did, by your standards. I'm willing to apologize for everything and promise I'll do whatever you desire. Is that what you want?"

"A bit stereotyped but it will do. Believe it or not, you look damned attractive like that. Whip marks and a raised leg become you."

"Bill, don't joke. I'm in agony, I'm going to fall. Please untie my ankle."

He appeared not to hear. Instead of doing something to help, he now leaned carelessly against the tree to which my foot was bound. He stroked its bare skin gently while viewing with pleasure whatever sort of a picture I made as I stood there helplessly. My eyes implored.

Bill's voice was still unconcerned. "Still want to marry me, darling?"

"Yes."

"Even if I have you punished like this everyday?"

"Yes, if it gives you pleasure."

He nodded as though in conformation. "Would you like me to feel you up, Sybil?

There's no charge."

"No, I don't want that! Achmed's done it already. Bill, why do you act like this?"

"It would be amusing to give you an orgasm."

"Bill, don't be a beast. An orgasm is the last thing I need. It would tear me apart, tied the way I am."

"Ah, well, I did offer. Suppose I might as well be going."

"You're not leaving me like this!" burst from my lips. "You can't do that, it's inhuman!"

Bill Trafford shrugged. He abandoned the tree to place a finger under my chin and kiss my lips. It was a chaste salute, neither warm nor cold. Then he turned and walked away.

I gazed in disbelief. I've watched a great many departing backs since becoming a prisoner, but this one left me more desolate than any other. I don't know why but I failed to cry out, to plead, to beg. I think it was the memory of what we had been to each other and of that first time in his office on the Estate. Something had indeed changed! For a moment I forgot the stress of punishment. In a flood of anger I was about to scream aloud when the man I called 'Master' stopped, turned and came back to where I stood in pain. Without word he untied my raised foot and supported me while I kicked it back into circulation. His arm felt good but I could not be sure if I was teased or tortured. I was wise enough to keep quiet except for a meek, "Thank you, Master."

There was something very nice in Bill Trafford picking me up and carrying me to his bed. He did not bother untying my hands but allowed my bare arms and whipped back to bear the brunt of his weight as he entered me. From that moment on nothing else had meaning outside his possession of my flesh. I was his utterly and completely in every pain-wracked and ecstasy filled moment. But it was not the thing of moments, it went on and on and on . . .

Satiated, I was allowed to sleep away the agony of the whip and the stress of a corded ankle. I heard my master go but knew not where.

When I awoke it was still daylight but I could not leave the room, my left ankle was firmly shackled on the familiar chain. To fill the time until I was once more loved, or punished, I reveled in the luxury of the bath. I had long since ceased to care about the clatter of my chain.

When Bill Trafford returned we did a repeat which took us into evening. When we lay happily in the aftermath, my master mused aloud. "Reconciled to being someone's prisoner all your life, darling?"

"Yes." I kicked my chain. "I'll never escape this. I've given up thinking about it."

"Something's come up that I should have foreseen." His voice was still sleepy but held a deeper tone. "You're familiar with the Council of Three on the Estate. I forget if anyone ever explained to you about the higher authority which owns and finances the whole thing." He chuckled. "Seems like I've stepped on their toes. They were in touch with me this morning."

"I knew they existed, that's all," I admitted. "I can understand them being peeved about Marjory and Lenore, but I don't suppose they every heard of me."

"They see all and know all, sweetheart. They are a powerful force and well aware of you. They arranged for you to be left naked on the beach that day, if you can remember that far back."

I remembered. It was the genesis of my life as a slave, a life from which I would never escape. "What do they want?" I asked with little concern.

"You."

"Well, they can't have me. I'm going to be Mrs. Bill Trafford."

"You quite sure of that, sweetheart?" His tone was sardonic.

"Of course I'm not! You've treated all us girls terribly every since you brought us to this desert stronghold of yours. Oh, Bill, what really gives?"

He leaned over and kissed me. "You've already guessed, sweetheart. Everything's changed, including me." He laughed. "I've been trying to make you hate me so I could sell the whole lot of you with an easy mind. I've probably succeeded with Lenore and Marjory but I'm not so sure with the rest."

"But why then don't you send us all back to the Estate? We'd be gone and out of your hair."

"Is that what you want?"

"Not if I can marry the man I used to know. I haven't been very fond of you lately."

"I'm sending you back to the Estate with the rest of them." Bill made the statement as dispassionately as if disposing of an unwanted pet. "The powers that be have hired the same helicopter to take you back. We were absolutely civilized about it and you get picked up the day after tomorrow." His voice became steel. "You and the four ponies get off scot free. But tomorrow those two Council bitches, Marjory and Lenore, are going to be taught a lesson in respect. They believe men are to be kicked around and casually dismissed. By the time they get on the helicopter they're

going to know different. Care to watch, sweetheart?"

"No thanks."

"Sorry, you have no choice. Whatever I do to them will be doubly potent because of those who watch. The audience will be you, the ponies and Achmed."

"Please don't, Bill, don't be mean. You've a right to be mad at them but poor Marjory is already serving a six month sentence of disgrace and punishment which the Council imposed on her. They'll probably carry on with it right where they left off. They've been doing terrible things to her. Oh, Bill, you should have seen the poor girl siting on that horse! She doesn't need you punishing her also."

"That's her tough luck." He chuckled at a thought. "I'll give her the choice, go back to the Estate or go to a whore house. She may surprise us."

"That isn't a choice, Bill. I'd sooner be whipped every day than go to a brothel."

"You're one in a hundred, sweetheart. I suspect that's why I fell in love with you. Now it's your turn to be a little heroine and offer yourself for punishment instead of Marjory. Do I hear an offer?"

"I don't know what you're going to do to her," I said. "But if I offer my own skin instead of her's, do you promise to let her go without punishment at all?"

"You don't bargain with me, sweetheart." Bill laughed at me. "Marjory is going to get her own punishment and you'll simply watch. But you sure do run true to form. When it comes to self immolation, you're predictable."

I did not answer that. I had no doubt Bill was right. Where my affections are concerned I'm probably an idiot. I couldn't help loving Marjory just as I couldn't help falling for Bill. It now looked as if I could get neither. Bill fell easily asleep, replete from feeding on my flesh as I with his. But, to me, sleep played hard to get, teasing me with visions. I was going back to the Estate, back to slavery. But I was a prisoner now so I should scarcely notice the difference. Marjory would still be under sentence and I'd still belong to Lenore and have to learn the pony tricks all over again. I could almost hear the rustle of straw and the slamming of iron doors all over, and knew for sure I wanted none of it. What I wanted was a man, I wanted Bill. Bill was asleep beside me, his iron shackle was locked upon my ankle. But perhaps we had never been in love. Perhaps we were only victims of wishful thinking under the strange rules and conditions of the Estate. All I knew now was I loved Bill Trafford.

Somehow I'd get him!

4

Pain for a Mistress

Lenore and Marjory were solidly bound, awaiting our arrival. Immediately I saw the nature of their bonds I knew the nature of their punishment and shuddered in sympathy. Each lay face down upon a rug, their wrists crossed and bound behind their backs, their knees and ankles solidly strapped to a small but heavy frame against which the struggles, even of a man, would be of no avail. It now held the four soles of their four feet facing upward towards the ceiling, rigidly held them in place for one of the worst punishments a woman can receive. My mistress and Lenore were going to be bastinadoed. Our master had scorned the whipping of their backs.

Each was naked, shifting within the tiny freedom granted in an effort to ease the weight upon their breasts. Or perhaps they were rubbing their erect nipples against the rug, it was hard to tell. They managed pale smiles of greeting. The ponies and I had it good. Like a child's game of ring around the rosy, we were simply handcuffed wrist to wrist. I had been attached to the end of the line of four with my right wrist handcuffed to Melody's left. We had obediently followed Achmed to witness the punishment of our mistresses. We had no hope of reprieve, no expectation of mercy. We knew ourselves consigned to witness agony and to share that punishment along with the women we loved. Under command we lined ourselves against the wall, leaning our bare backs against the stone. We, too, were naked. Being at the end of the line, I had one free hand as did Inga at the far end. But if any other of the ponies desired to scratch their nose they could only do so by lifting another pony's hand along with their own. None of us minded. When you love her, no girl minds being chained to another. The four ponies and I loved each other dearly.

Achmed put on a damned good show for us. And for the benefit of the two anxious girls who's feet were to be whipped. He searched through cupboards and draws to produce, one at a time, for greater effect, a whole series of rods and crops, canes and whips. He laid these singly upon the floor in front of the anguished eyes of Marjory and Lenore, who knew without a shade of a doubt where they would be used. My own spine crinkled at the sight of them.

The ponies were overjoyed at thoughts of return to their own beloved Estate. Some of their happiness infected me. If I was not to be loved by Bill Trafford, it would then be best to be gone from this place with it's overhanging threat of sale to a brothel or harem. From the tales Achmed had told us with deep relish, we had come to see ourselves as only female merchandise, Langra's sole assessment of our worth. His jig-a-jig totally summed up the limits of our potency. In Langra white girls were worth only to be fucked.

As I leaned against the wall I realized that it had not occurred either to Bill or myself to think of my return to whatever life I had possessed before my kidnapping and drugging and depositing on the beach of the Estate. The life I could not remember remained a mystery. My life as a slave in Langra or upon the Estate was,

in either case, governed by the whip. I wondered how many times I had screamed beneath the lash. I lost count. But the lash had changed me, I know that for sure! The lash had brought me now to that frame of mind in which a pony born upon the Estate took for granted without contest or complaint. They adored it. I had not adored it yet but Lenore's whip would make me see the light and I could almost hear the jingle of bells as I drew her buggy down the road and sweated beneath the harness I could not touch. This time I would approach the Estate a very different girl!

Achmed had left the room but now returned with a tray on which reposed a bottle of brandy and several glasses. He place the trey along with the whips and cane where it evoked an instant response the Arab soul desired.

"Okay, Achmed, give us a bracer, we both need it. Make it a double."

My mistress wiggled in her helplessness.

"You not whipped yet, you no hurt, you no get drink." Achmed's logic was not to be denied.

"Don't be a bastard! Give us a drink, we both need it." This from Lenore.

Surprisingly Achmed obeyed. I suppose it was an example of what authority achieves even under handicap. He half filled a tumbler and, grasping Lenore's hair, pulled her head back and poured the burning potion down her throat. She gasp at the potent drink. She uttered, with feeling, "Thanks, you asshole, you're a real friend."

"You maybe now like jig-a-jig?" Achmed said.

"I'll give you jig-a-jig if you'll set us free and put us back in our cells without being whipped." The poor girl must have been truly scared to make such an offer.

"Sorry, Missy, no can do. You get a jig-a-jig and you get small soles of feet well whipped. It is our Master's order." Achmed was enjoying his power over these naked, helpless women.

Watching Marjory and Lenore gulp their drinks and settle themselves down for a wait for something they did not desire made me remember my own experience with the bastinado. But now I saw no signs of the seemingly innocent little rods with which my own feet had been beaten for hour after hour of the strangest agony a girl might ever know. Achmed's preparations now and the instruments he placed on view were more direct and far more lethal. It appeared there would not this time be any gentle rappings of innocent soles, but instead the swift and wicked cuts of cane or crop. I had to thrust all of it from my mind, it made me queasy. He was now mischievously tickling the up turned soles with a feather duster.

"You no ticklish," he said with obvious disappointment. "Achmed enjoy tickled if girl likes to squirm."

"We're too damned scared to be ticklish, Achmed," Lenore said. "How about another drink?"

She did not get her drink. The appearance of our master changed the atmosphere of the room. I could tell both girls were panting fearfully.

"Looks like an excellent job, Achmed." Bill was his old, cheerful self. "Everything ready?"

"Yes, Sir." Achmed's manner changed in the presence of Bill Trafford. "Prisoners cannot move. Feet are ready for cane."

My two mistresses contrived to turn so they could bestow their anguished regard on The Master who held their fate entirely in his hands. Their voices were shock.

"Look, Bill Trafford, you can't possibly do this to us or have it done to us. This is one of the awful punishments. Please, we beg of you, whip us instead. Our bottoms. This is inhuman."

"Are you going to whip them straight across, Achmed, or lengthwise?" Bill appeared not to have heard any plea.

"Don't whip our feet at all!" Marjory Monet's plea was pure agony. "String us up some way and whip us sensibly if you're so damned whip-happy," she snorted. "I don't see what we every did to you to deserve this. All we did was fire you because you broke the rules. Damn it, be merciful!"

Our master listened, unconcerned. He then, standing before the unhappy pair, proceeded to recite a list of grievances long enough to make me shiver. Bill Trafford had enough animosity stored within his memories to insure there would be no mercy for the two woman bound and naked at his feet. Awkwardly they gazed up at him in disbelief at their misdeeds. Bill Trafford was calmly recounting every slight, every insult and every injury the Council or either of this two had bestowed during his term of office. As I listened to his recital, I knew my mistresses were doomed. Quite surprisingly my mistresses listened to the list of their sins without interruption. But Lenore's stock of sarcasm was equal to the task. When Bill's voice slowed then halted, she said acidly, "Is that all you've got against us? I would have thought the headsman's axe was more appropriate than whipping our feet. Good gosh, Bill, you're impossible!"

I agreed with her but what could I do? Melody lifted her chained left hand and mine with it. Our eyes met in despair. We shrugged and allowed our shackled wrists to fall back to our side. We knew ourselves no help to anyone.

"Sorry, love." Bill's voice was, as always, even and controlled. "No headsman, no axe. That pretty head of yours is safe for the moment. But it is a good idea." He stood a moment in silence, contemplating the position of his mastery over female flesh. "Shall we continue . . .? Are you ready for the rod?"

It was a question no girl could answer. I saw their muscles tense. With fingers widespread they tugged and twisted at the cord upon their wrists. They could not move their legs or feet, that portion of themselves was totally immobilized, ready for the rod! The Male over whom they had once held authority, motioned to Achmed. "The limber crop to start with, Achmed, after that chose whichever instrument you enjoy." Inexplicably Bill Trafford retreated to the wall where we stood and, taking my free hand, raised it to his lips and kissed it tenderly. He then leaned back beside me to enjoy the show.

There is such a thing as telepathy, there must be. As though directed by a single impulse, the four ponies, dragging me with them, ran to place their chained bodies between Achmed and this victims. Melody said with total sympathy, "You mustn't, we won't allow it. Set them free."

I have to hand it to Achmed, he was not easily diverted from his course. For a bare moment he stood in shocked surprise before grasping my one bare arm and dragging us back to the wall. It was an easy task, handcuffed wrists hurt too much if you fight. Back at the wall he simply handcuffed my free wrist to a waiting ring in the stone while admonishing, "You very silly girls. I ask Master to let me whip."

It was hopeless. Everything was always hopeless. Ponies and slavegirls never have a chance. Metal or rope always control us. In the end we were captives to the cane. As we leaned once more against the wall, each one of us knew we would be feeling one of those instruments of Achmed's before too long. In dumb misery I looked at Bill Trafford. He shrugged and said only, "Good try, old girl. Nothing like a touch of loyalty. Now behave yourselves."

There was nothing else we could do except behave ourselves. The ponies and I shrugged as best we could. We were not concerned with ourselves but only with that erotic and strangely beautiful scene we were forced to watch. Achmed was flexing his thin riding crop with relish while his master drank in every last detail of the helpless anguish of the women soon to feel its bite.

"Please, Mr. Trafford, please don't whip our mistress. Whip us instead." The pony team spoke almost as one, their voices a wail of suffering.

I said nothing. I had already made my pitch and knew for certain Miss Marjory Monet must suffer her ordeal under the hand of a friendly but still mean Arab who would find only joy in her screams. Bill Trafford leaned down to grasp a handful of Marjory's hair and drag her hair up to where she must look at him.

"Seems like they love you," he suggested casually. "No accounting for tastes." He let

the lovely face fall back upon the rug and turned his attention to the pony team of which I was now a part. "As for you, young ladies, you had best remember when you're well off. You keep silent while you watch. Protests will do no good. If you make too much noise I'll have Achmed beat each one of your feet the same as he's about to beat these two bitches. Think about it."

Lenore got the first stroke upon her exposed sole. Watching intently, I saw the horrified amazement, the vivid shock, and then the clenching of jaws as she bottled up the scream. He nakedness bowed backwards as her wrists fought cords. When the second stroke sliced her other foot, she went berserk and gave her screams full loose.

It was evident the two members of the Estate Council were to be taught a lesson, taught never again to cross a man or seek to make him subject to their will. Bill Trafford had drawn up a chair and from it quietly surveyed the agonies of a woman who had placed indignity upon his head. Lenore Livingstone was paying a terrible price for the authority she had once wielded to his discredit. Marjory Monet, as yet untouched, was panting in the knowledge her turn was next. Her plea was potent by its gentleness. "Bill, I beg for mercy. Please don't do this awful thing to us."

The man who owned us all nodded briefly as if acknowledging the plea. "Duly noted," he said in a reasonable tone to match her's. Then, to Achmed, "Lay it one her – hard!"

The crop sang its frightful song. The ponies and I watched a repetition of the wounding of helpless feet. I knew my mistress fought hard for silence but quickly lost the battle. She, too, struggled wildly against her bonds but moved none of them. Thoughtfully, Achmed now tugged hard upon each strap holding a slender ankle, tightening them another notch so that the leather band bit deep into each ankle. Each nudity turned to observe what was being done to her then allowed her head to fall back upon the rug to sob.

It was clever and cruel. First Lenore, then Marjory. It was always the same. The surge of uncontrollable response as the crop bit its venom into each defenseless sole. Then the struggle and the frantic tuggings against bound hands until the whipped woman exhausted her screams and became limp. Before the crop moved on to the next girl to bestow its wicked kiss there was always a few words of praise from the man who watched.

"You're responding superbly, Mrs. Livingstone." Or perhaps a quiet, "Congratulations on your performance, Miss Monet. You are building character with every stroke."

With our backs hard against the stone wall the ponies and I absorbed each stroke as if the bruised flesh was our's too. We shifted little, transfixed in horror by what we saw. Sometimes we exchanged wide-eyed glances of shared feeling. None of us were so stupid as to believe this could not happen to our own feet should be raise our

voice in outrage. For the moment we forgot the Estate and our return to what the ponies saw as freedom and I as another kind of slavery. We were not concerned with ourselves but only with the punishment of the naked women we addressed as 'Mistress.' The small motions of our hands made a tiny metallic tinkle against the loud, heart-renting screams of tortured females. There was nothing we could do.

The blows impacted the helpless feet with cool precision. From time to time Achmed exchanged one limber instrument for another. He also used the canes. I could not know if the pain was greater with them or less. But in the middle of this orgy of revenge there came a fresh humiliation. Lenore, in a burst of uncontrolled fury allowed her tongue to forget wisdom. When she stopped, appalled by having said too much, our master's voice was equal to the test.

"Give her ten across her rump, Achmed. Ten good ones. She's a bitch."

Too late, and quite uselessly, Lenore sought to repair her fault. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry! Please, Mr. Trafford, I don't know what I'm saying. It's the pain, you're killing us both."

"I suggest you raise your hands as high as possible, Mrs. Livingstone. I'm sure you don't want the cane across your knuckles."

I watched Lenore obey. It was the only sensible thing to do, the cane might injure her hands but would only inflict pain upon her round, soft bottom. We all knew Achmed had a huge erection as he selected the yellow wand and applied it with vigor upon feminine flesh. I wondered how many times he would have jig-a-jig with these helpless women had he been given the opportunity. He planted scarlet bars upon the quivering skin Lenore could neither shield nor move. After the tenth stroke had snickered through the air to vent itself within the curves of an innocent feminine bottom, he then without pause applied the same instrument to the soles of Miss Marjory Monet. It was undoubtedly one of Achmed's better days!

The punishment of Mrs. Lenore Livingstone and Miss Marjory Monet was prolonged through and entire morning. Each woman received twenty strokes upon each sole, a truly appalling punishment when delivered by the strength of Achmed's arm. Towards the end each girl was reduced to pathetic moans and tiny quivers of their over-taxed flesh. When the punishment was done they had no belief it was over but lay with the same tense expectancy as before. When the blows had ceased to fall, they lay limp and panting on their breasts in total defeat.

But it was not yet done.

"Damned good show, Achmed." Bill was obviously pleased with the whole thing. He stood up and set aside the chair. "You've earned a reward. I'm not much interested in what you do now so you can have carte blanche for the rest of the afternoon. But remember, I don't want Sybil or the ponies injured. If injury amuses you, you can bestow it on this sad pair with the beaten feet. Give them a couple of drinks and

they'll be ready for anything." He waved at us and went away, closing the door upon us and upon responsibility for what would now happen. I had a bad, bad feeling.

Monarch of all he surveyed, Achmed lost no time in following his master's advice. Two large brandies were poured down the more or less grateful throats of Marjory and Lenore, whose heads were thoughtfully tugged up to receive this stimulant.

Filling two glasses again pretty well depleted the bottle and, while Achmed departed in search of a new bottle, my mistress asked of me in weak voice, "What will he do to us, Sybil? Do you know?"

I was pretty sure I knew! But I played safe by saying no and hoped he might do nothing but leave them bound and helpless. I had an unhappy feeling the ponies and I were not home free, either. Achmed's quest for bottled courage was not without its purpose.

The two naked members of the Estate Council shook their heads when offered a second drink. But Achmed was not a man to take no for an answer. Once more he grasped their hair to pull back the reluctant heads and pour within unwilling lips a shot of brandy enough to stun a horse. He refilled the glass and came to us. But the ponies shyly shook their heads, liquor was not a part of pony life on the Estate. Probably in their whole lives they had not touched a drop. When he came to me I signaled yes but had no hands with which to hold the glass. Achmed compelled Melody to raise her hand and give me enough slack to raise the glass to my lips. I drank gratefully. It had been a beastly morning and I suspected would be a beastly afternoon. Once more the bitter play resumed.

I suppose that perhaps I should not blame Bill for taking this revenge. There had been times on the Estate when I had bitterly resented the Council and the manner in which it had plucked me out of life to become a slave. I had never been a good pony so the term seemed inapplicable for me. All I had wanted was escape but the Council made escape impossible. I wondered if it was the continual punishments inflicted on me or if it was the affection I had come to feel for Marjory and Lenore which had modified my dreams of a return to a former life I could not remember. With me it had been a strange blend of discipline and love which told me I should not seek nor gain escape from the Estate and my friends. But it seemed impossible that in a couple of days I would once more be harnessed and strapped to a buggy and feel the sharp sting of a buggy whip from whoever owned me then. I had no future. I turned my gaze and thoughts to an industrious Achmed.

There were rings all over the place, a girl could be tethered any number of ways. Achmed was busy untying Lenore's punished feet, then dragging her to a bare and vacant area of floor where he proceeded to tie her left ankle to a ring embedded in the stone. He made a job of the binding, firm and tight, and above all tidy. I think it was not until he had dragged her other foot far out to the other side and proceeded to bind it as he had the other that Lenore began to glimpse her fate. But when her ankles had been tight bound far apart and Achmed divested himself of all covering

to disclose a muscular body and a huge erection, Lenore understood for sure. Her hands were still tied behind her back to leave her sitting erect and gazing with horror at her wide spread legs and Achmed's rod. Her voice was dry, "You're not going to do that to me! You can't, you absolutely can't!"

Achmed grinned down at her distress. "Achmed can, pretty missy. Achmed give you very fine jig-a-jig. You very lucky girl."

Lenore could do nothing. Achmed knelt between her wide spread legs and thrust her chest backward. Mrs. Lenore Livingstone sank back upon her bound arms to become most excellently positioned for rape, or fucking, or intercourse, or whichever of the terms she might have thought of it as. With a terrible urgency our jailer plunged within her sheath as though diving into a familiar pool, his hands beneath her back to clutch her shoulders and draw her hips closer to his thrusts. There followed the ages old thrustings that hardly need description. Achmed used every trick of the rapist's trade and, in spite of his high level of excitement, managed to prolong the act far beyond the norm. If a girl was forced to spread her legs, Achmed would be a good choice.

Lenore's head was flung from side to side as though it were trying to negate Achmed's intent absorption with her violation. But in between I caught glimpses of her agonized features and realized that, for her, what was taking place was the ultimate degradation, a punishment far worse than the whipping of her feet. I gazed, too, at what I could see of the soles of her feet. They were terribly colored and inflamed, swollen and puffed. She could move them no more now than when they were being beaten. When Achmed busily exploded to eject his sperm deep within a hostile female belly another chapter in this punishment of innocents came to an end. For a little while Achmed lay, breathing heavily, upon his victim's nakedness as if to assure her of male subjugation until she furiously exclaimed, "Get off me, you filthy pig, haven't you done enough?"

Achmed slowly withdrew and stood erect, his weapon glistening with the juices of his conquest. "You get jig-a-jig real good," he boasted. "Now you wash with mouth before I jig-a-jig Miss Marjory Monet." He positioned himself and grasp Lenore's hair to thrust her rebellious lips to where, with the aid of her tongue, they could complete her humiliation. She bathed without complaint. Mrs. Lenore Livingstone was a broken woman. Achmed thrust her back upon the rug like a discarded rag before turning to my mistress.

Marjory put up a pathetic fight. She could not kick with feet so severely wounded and Achmed's cords robed her of her hands. When her ankles had been tied well apart in the same manner as Lenore, she attempted sweet reason. "Whip me instead, Achmed, there's all my back you haven't touched. Please don't rape me."

"Is not rape, is nice, polite fuck," Achmed assured earnestly. "Pretty Missy enjoy if only pretty Missy stop worrying. Achmed very good for you."

"But, good heavens man, don't you understand Lenore and I could become pregnant!" She looked up piteously at the male erection so soon ready to again impart its seed within a female sheath. "You mustn't do this to us, its dangerous, it can ruin our lives!"

"Pretty Missy have pretty baby, Achmed's son. You be very proud."

It followed its inevitable course. My mistress was soon penetrated and soon panting beneath the shrewd thrusts of a master. I shared Marjory's horror at the obvious hazard in what was taking place. Since Achmed's first mention of his "jig-a-jig" to me, I had remained in horror of its possible aftermath. I knew none of us girls had better than a fifty-fifty chance of not becoming pregnant. If Achmed had ever heard of the pill, he failed to mention it. Any one of us he chose to enter would stand a good chance of bearing a handsome Arab child. It was all we needed!

No two women had ever been more competently and thoroughly ravished than my mistresses. After the finality of the act they lay in disgust with themselves and the world, uncaring of the discomfort of their bound arms or the obscene exposure of their sex. Busily at work within each captive belly were forces, the result of which were too terrible to contemplate, but I knew that was exactly what filled each mind. But I was diverted from the two bound members of the Council by Achmed's concern with us. His phallus, having responded nobly to his Arab Cause was coyly assuming its normal proportions, now became hidden from view beneath his robe.

"You young ladies now like nice jig-a-jig?" he inquired in a friendly voice.

The ponies and I remained silent. I could well imagine the ponies' horror at the suggestion of a fate they would never suffer were we back on the Estate. I knew they were well aware of the nine months wait between the sexual act and the possible climax of the sexual act. I could only hope their polite refusal of Achmed's offer would not get everyone of us impaled. I knew the glory a man could give a girl, they did not!

"There remains small matter of punishment for young ladies," Achmed intoned gravely. "I am sure young ladies agree they must be punished."

Five lips and five tongues, a flood of feminine distress, assured him most earnestly of such an infliction and innocence of sin. We assured him of undying love if he would forgive us for something we had not done and forego the punishment we did not deserve. He listened gravely as if actually considering such outrageously feminine logic. Achmed had us and was not about to spare our pretty skins.

"It is for your own good," he assured us in a fine, paternal tone. "Pretty young ladies get much benefit from whip and cane." Then he added, "You may ask Achmed to place his prick inside your pretty cunt. You have all beheld how fine is Achmed's cock."

It was shattering. He could do it! Not only did Achmed possess the physical prowess but also the time and opportunity. We were unlikely to request his favor but would get pierced and prodded anyway. We were girls with handcuffs on our wrists, we had no chance at all.

Achmed was a prudent man. It is unlikely the five of us could have gotten the best of him but he took no chances. He unlocked my left wrist from the wall and marched us around to reverse our positions. This time when he locked my wrist to a ring, I faced the wall. With me safely secured, he now went to the other end of the line and pulled on Inga's right arm so as to compel us all to extent our arms to either side. Another handcuff locked Inga's right wrist to another ring. There we stood facing the stone, five pretty, naked butterflies with wings outspread. I presumed he would take us from the rear, one at a time. He was indeed a lucky man!

Poor darling Melody was scared, so were the rest, so was I! Achmed failed to unveil his phallus, he had other things in mind. I supposed that each of us would get our bottoms soundly whipped or caned, but in this I was wrong. What Achmed wanted was our feet!

He chose me first. "Pretty young lady now lift left foot, bend it back and raise it high, then stand still like good girl."

For a moment it didn't register. My unsuspecting foot was halfway up before I realized and jerked it back on the floor. I said, "Achmed, you mustn't whip our feet. Your Master did not give you permission."

"He say I may punish. He say I do as I like." His voice was unctuous. "Now to please raise pretty foot."

I pressed my forehead hard against the stone and raised my foot as directed, and a moment later squealed with the agony of the cane across my sole. I had raised it high enough to give Achmed full scope from heel to toe and had been appropriately rewarded. In the blaze of pain I thought of my two mistresses and wondered why they had not died beneath such awful pain.

"And now, pretty lady, please your other foot?"

The words were polite, as if he were asking me to offer my hand. To lift my other foot was the last thing I desired. To do so I would have to put my injured member on the ground and place my weight upon it while receiving the second cruel cut. What I wanted to do was shake it in the air to rid it of the burn and scold with which it now protested. But I mentally computed that if I were to receive a blow on each foot, I had best do it and get it over with. If Achmed decided to whip us beyond that point, then would be the time for hysteria. I placed my whipped foot upon the floor and clenched my teeth while raising my right leg to present my uninjured sole for the attention of Achmed's cane. The blow was instant, the pain

atrocious. I squirmed and jerked and wiggled until I finally was compelled to place my second foot on the floor by a short order from Achmed. The terrible part was that with both feet whipped, it was impossible to comfortably place either on the floor. I sort of shifted from one to the other until I found a balance between them that didn't hurt quite as much.

I don't remember what I said or what sounds I made but I'm sure they weren't very lady like. What can a girl do when enveloped in pain? Besides me Melody was now whimpering and moaning beneath the first cut on her foot. It had come while I was wrapped up in my own pain. Achmed played no favorites, we all tasted the crop, each girl on both of her soles.

I'm afraid I paid little attention to the sufferings of the other girls. The distress of standing on whipped feet absorbed me totally. I wished I could have laid upon the floor or at least been given a seat. Melody had managed not to scream but was terribly shamed by being punished. As a pony she had never received punishment, her behavior had been perfect. But now, to get this! And without just cause . . . ! I knew the poor darling was a very puzzled girl.

Achmed worked his way down the line of naked, handcuffed girls. Each yelped and whimpered but did not scream. Inga was the only one who refused to raise her foot. Without comment Achmed proceeded to cane her bottom until, with a pitiful cry of distress, she raised first one leg and then the other to receive the imprint of the cane. We were five sad and suffering young women without even the faintest hope of help.

When Achmed had given Inga the final stroke in the first series, he backed away to enjoy the full effect. I'm quite sure the five of us, fastened as we were, put on an erotic show with our little dances of pain. When Achmed produced a whip and announced his intention of going back down the line to leave each girl with a scarlet rump, we simply did not care. We were so deeply sunk in pain and anguish he could have done most anything with us. We really didn't care about anything except the sore feet on which we had to stand.

It was at that point Achmed decided to change us around again. I'm sure he did it solely for the effect and show of watching us trying to walk on painful feet. But he did it and we dare not disobey. We were soon standing as before except that now Inga's once free hand was captive to a ring as was my own. We most certainly were not going anywhere.

I think Achmed was, by now, getting tired, he had had an active day. He consoled himself with a glass of brandy. Ignoring our punished mistresses, he offered brandy down the line of the ponies and myself. This time the ponies, no doubt hoping for some magic panacea to pain, gulped thankfully before coughing and choking as the potent brew burned their throats and set their bellies on fire. Gratefully I accepted what they did not drink.

"You are now ready for jig-a-jig." Achmed assured us.

We were not ready! But Achmed was most certainly was. He cast aside his robe to disclose a once more erect member which looked potent enough to impregnate each one of us. The ponies viewed it in curiosity and alarm. Male genitals had not been a part of their lives and were something to marvel at in the ability of a penis to expand or shrink. I hoped none of them would be stupid enough to spread her legs just to see what it felt like. They had always been four mischievous young women and I had a terrible vision of them returning to the Estate, all pregnant! We were momentarily saved by Marjory's voice.

"Achmed, if you have to use that thing again, use it on us. It's no use making those girls pregnant when you've already sowed your seed in us. Your Master won't thank you for fucking them, too."

It actually stopped him! Achmed looked uncertainly but lustily from the two tied woman to the five handcuffed girls. I was almost grateful I did not have to make the decision he had. The ponies were altogether delicious and desirable. But there were four of them which would surely place a tax on his virility, whereas the two mistresses sitting there with wide-spread feet were surely enough conquest for any man. That he had possessed them once already easily wet his appetite for a repeat.

But his decision was rendered needless by the unexpected return of Bill Trafford. "What have you been up to, Achmed, giving the poor girls a bad time?"

"He whipped our feet," said the pony team and myself. "Now it hurts us to stand. Now he wants to pierce us with his thing."

Our master laughed with genuine amusement at our woe-be-gone expressions. His laughter sounded good after Achmed's dire predictions. Our two mistresses added their own fuel to the fire. "He's raped both of us, in case you're interested," said Marjory.

"We'll be lucky if he hasn't made us pregnant," Lenore added. "Do we have to sit tied like this all night!"

Achmed was sent packing, perhaps not in disgrace but certainly in disfavor. I knew Bill had once adored his four ponies and some of that affection must still linger in his heart. They were so delicious and desirable I lusted for them myself. Bill made us show him the soles of our feet, the sight of which made him grunt. The damage was done.

"You shouldn't have left us at the mercy of that crazy Arab," I accused when it came my turn to show my feet. "It's been a damned awful afternoon for all of us, something you shouldn't wish upon a dog."

Bill cocked an eyebrow at my impertinence. Thoughtfully he unlocked me from the

handcuffed group to leave me secured by only one handcuff against the wall. He freed Inga's wrist and led his ponies from the room. They followed gladly and I'm sure that had he wished to ravish them, they would have accepted his carnal attentions with joy. Watching him go I had a suspicion I was in for trouble.

"He's going to beat your ass, Sybil," Lenore predicted wanly from the floor. "Damn lucky he showed up, you would have been raped for sure." She sighed sadly, "Gosh, I wish we were back on the Estate."

When our master returned he was in high good humor. "Would Miss Marjory Monet and Mrs. Lenore Livingstone care to be untied," he inquired cheerfully.

Marjory and Lenore exchanged glances. I knew they were debating the wisdom of a blistering retort but they were truly broken and came up with only a very meek, "If you please, Master." My heart bled for them.

He freed them totally, first their ankles and then their wrists. He stood looking down to watch them massage the rope marks on their skin, then ordered, "I want you to walk twice around this room."

There was a dead silence. I'm sure the two women with flogged feet hoped he spoke in jest, but we all knew he had not. Our master's request had been a firm command. The two darlings shrugged and rolled over on all fours and started to crawl.

"Not that way, you idiots!" Bill said irritably. "Get up on your feet and walk. I know it will hurt but if you're to get on that helicopter tomorrow you'll have to walk to it or stay where you are."

"Do you really have to be such a bastard, Bill," Marjory asked quietly.

"I was bastard enough to have your feet whipped. Now I'm bastard enough to demand you walk on them. You'd best do it now, it won't be a bit better tomorrow."

My poor mistresses were discovering what it was like to be under the heel of total authority, to be helpless against another's will, to have their skin crawl and quiver under the threat of fresh punishments. They looked at each other in dark despair, finding comfort in their mutual distress. They touched hands and without help struggled to strand erect. Achieving this awful objective they instantly collapsed back upon the rug.

"We can't do it," Marjory affirmed.

"Don't be such a bastard, Bill, we won't be able to walk for a week and you know it," Lenore accused bitterly.

For answer our master used no words but selected from Achmed's collection a

distressingly familiar whip. Running it through his fingers he casually inquired, "Would you prefer this?"

They tried again, clutching each other for support, finding strength in the suffering of their companion. Their faces were a study when, having achieved their objective, they managed not to fall.

"I said to walk twice around the room, not stand there like a couple of statues," Bill reminded as he made the whip sing its familiar song by slashing it forcefully through the air. I watched in awe as my two mistresses took cautious steps and began their limping, tortured walk around the room. Soon there were tears upon their cheeks but Bill Trafford had only to snap the whip to spur them on. I suppose anything is possible, girls seem to have an infinite capacity for pain. Step by step, they obeyed the edict of The Male and managed to complete their first circuit of the chamber. Coming abreast of their master once more they paused.

"Can't you be a bit merciful, Bill?" Marjory asked. "This is pure hell."

The only answer Bill Trafford offered was a swift and savage cut across her back with the waiting whip. The march resumed.

I watched, totally absorbed, forgetting the implications of being handcuffed to the wall to await whatever Bill Trafford might chose to do to me. When my mistresses had completed their almost impossible task, they literally flopped upon the rug at Bill Trafford's feet. He looked down without a trace of pity.

"Now, I want you to crawl to Sybil and service her, first one of you and then the other. Do you understand?"

They understood. So did I! Bill was on a humiliation kick and was piling shame upon pain for the once proud beauties at his feet. As a pony I had serviced them often but no pony was ever serviced by her mistress on the Estate. It was pretty much like asking a queen to give a blow job to a page. I stood in helpless dismay while my mistresses gazed at each other in a bitter knowledge of subjection. Several times they looked up at their master as if about to plead but then kept silent in the knowledge of helplessness and hopelessness. But both were lesbians and their servicing of a pony was no more than symbolic, dissolving authority and reversing roles. Silently they came toward me on hands and knees with Bill not far behind with his whip. I knew each of my mistresses was thinking that if the Estate could see them now, they would never hold their heads high again − they would be forever soiled.

I was my usual bewildered self, I stood almost free except for my one locked wrist. I looked at the handcuff and tugged at it in disgust at being forever helpless. I knew well enough how to aid my mistresses in the service they were about to give. But to stand with legs apart as those lovely faces buried themselves in my fur and with Bill looking on close by, was an experience I could well do without.

I knew I could not remain calm and composed while being brought to orgasm. For me, being brought to climax is a flaming incandescence I cannot control. I looked at my master to say, "Bill, please don't do this."

For answer he flexed his lousy whip and stared hard at my naked breasts. I said no more.

5

Judgements of Sybil

It is one of the contradictions of life that something once loathed becomes familiar and then friendly so that you return to it with wry affection. I found myself sort of nestling into the straw with ironed feet and cuffed hands in the manner of a return to a much-loved bed. Marjory did not share this pleasure, she had never slept behind iron bars in a pony stall. Being forced into the confinement a pony takes for granted was, for her, just one more milestone in her path of humiliations. In this the Estate would be no more kind to her than had Bill Trafford. But I had been given rolls of bandages by the stable girl and told to bind the wounded feet of my beloved mistress as best I could with handcuffs on my wrists. I had made a good job of covering and shielding the poor darling's wounded soles, making the soft bandages tight to give support when Marjory was compelled to walk. As I gazed down at her bruised and swollen and purple feet, I wet the bandages with tears while she watched me with an amusement all her own.

"How are the mighty fallen!" she exclaimed disgustedly. "Is that what you're thinking, Sybil darling? It's true, you know. Between the Council and Bill Trafford I've been knocked down about as low as I can get. If this was the army they'd have me cleaning out latrines."

I was glad to be back in the only home I really knew. I knew now how much a pony I had become before Bill had kidnapped us to Langra.

But the abduction had been a thing of fierce loving and fierce punishments, and even though I had sworn to make myself Bill's wife, I was happy enough to concede a temporary defeat and return to the condition where I was now chained, which was about as normal as I could get. If they would only put Marjory with me in the cage, I'd be happy.

I was still vividly remembering that hateful time against the wall while a single ironed wrists compelled me to an unwilling role in the humiliation of my two mistresses. I remembered their loving lips and gentle hands and probing tongue to fire me into climax after climax in a gasping scarlet-faced shame beneath the intent scrutiny of the man I thought I loved. A man who I had vowed one day to possess.

To Bill Trafford the lesbian act he watched was a triumph, the culmination of a bitter revenge. Knowing myself only an instrument by which my mistresses were degraded to be less than whores helped me not at all. I loved them both, the three of us suffered together.

"You're thinking back, aren't you, darling?" Marjory accused. "I expect we'll both think back for a long time. Did that bastard Trafford hurt you any more after he'd ordered Achmed to compel Lenore and I to crawl on hands and knees back to our cage?"

It was still vivid in my mind. When Achmed had sternly strapped my mistresses into the beginning of their bitter crawl, I had remained standing in flushed and sweating embarrassment before the omnipotent Male. I had nothing to say, I was frightened and feared the whip. But Bill Trafford allowed me no respite.

"Go ahead, sweetheart, tell me I'm a bastard, tell me how cruel I've been to those two bitches and how you don't love me any more. Don't be scared, I won't whip you."

I made motions with my handcuffed hand to tell him I'd like it freed. I indulged in a sort of shrug. "You know it all, Bill, there's nothing left to say, except I still love you and don't know why."

"Still want to marry me?"

"Yes, even after what I've been through. I'll marry you tomorrow if you'll allow me enough liberty to go to a minister."

I got patted and kissed which made me feel better before he soberly said, "We'll both think about it. Sending you back to the Estate with the hens and pullets doesn't mean a thing. I've no doubt I can pluck you out of that lesbian hive anytime I choose. By the way, I have sources of information, I'll know what's going on."

Bill unlocked the shackle from my wrist. Laughing at my busy massaging of chaffed skin, he said, "There you are, sweetheart, completely free, not a particle of metal or nylon or rope on you. I'm curious. If I asked you to walk over and arrange yourself for the whipping of your feet the same as Marjory and Lenore, would you do it?"

We stared. I could understand his testing of me but had no idea of the result. Making my mind a blank, I walked steadfastly to where my mistresses had suffered agony, arranged myself upon the rug and place my knees and ankles within the waiting straps. I looked up, trying hard to stare my master down and make him avert his eyes, but in this I failed. My heart was thumbing hard.

My master picked me up and carried me to his bed. "I'm going to make you forget those two bitches nibbling your pussy," he promised cheerfully. "You're going to get something you'll always remember. Scared?"

"No, happy."

It was the strangest night of love a girl could ever know. Bill did not bother with the shackle on my ankle but what he did bother with was one of the wickedest of Achmed's whips, a short, cruel little brute with questing thong. Whenever I became half way to orgasm, Bill disengaged himself and used the leather on my sweating and hot skin until I pleaded frantically for the obvious relief. He then plunged within me again to carry me to such ecstasies of sensation as I had never felt. I screamed and screamed again in passionate joy.

"You really love the guy, don't you dear?" Marjory interrupted my vision. "Those whip marks you carry so proudly weren't a punishment?"

My joined arms encircled her and hugged her close to whisper breathlessly into her ear. Cleansed by confession, I disengaged and plunged into the pubic bush. Bill had made certain neither my mistresses had come to climax during their captivity. This darling creature with whom I was chained behind the bars had a lot of catching up to do.

The Estate had reclaimed the ponies and myself. It had also relegated Miss Marjory Monet to continuing punishment until her six month sentence was complete. It still had far to go but was slightly amended to permit my mistress and I to spend time together within the confines of a cage. It was understood that on completion of her sentence I would revert to be once more her possession. When her feet had healed she and I would become a pony team, harnessed together to a cart we must pull. In the meantime, I would be harnessed alone between the shafts of a buggy for Lenore's personal transportation. Within a few days Lenore had acquired a pair of crutches with which she made remarkable progress around her estate, upon which Marjory and I remained prisoner. I had to suppose their mutual sufferings had drawn the two mistresses closer. But the only mercy Lenore had shown her companion in distress was to allow Marjory and I to share the cage. I would always think of the barred stalls with their piles of straw as a cage instead of as a stall with bars. Either way there was no escape from it.

Lenore visited us with the stable girl in close attendance. She surveyed us through the bars with a quiet air of self-satisfaction in possession. "Hello, darlings. Feeling better, Marjory?"

Marjory remained silent on the straw but I rose in greeting to say, "Yes, she's better, Mistress. Thank you for allowing us to be together."

Lenore laughed. "I can imagine what the two of you are up to. It occurs to me that with Sybil attending both of us, her interest in this duty should not be diminished by any orgasms she may pick up along the way. I've brought a little device to help assure she does just that."

It was an unusual twist. I would have supposed it would be Marjory who's sex would be isolated by a chastity belt but it was I who must wear the punishment of lust, the sexual shield in which my loins would be locked and out of bounds for any who did not hold the key. I had seen and worn a chastity belt before and so stood still while it was fastened upon my naked hips and between my legs. The stable girl seemed amused as she fastened the steel tight around my hips and down my groin. It seemed to me that she might have been fastening it a bit tighter than need be but perhaps that was part of the punishment and I protested not. My woe-be-gone expression did, however, earn a rebuke.

"Sybil, darling, if you'd rather not wear this, I can always have Marjory put in another stall or another farmstead even. Would you like that?"

I shrugged, disgusted at being so totally controlled that even in the act of sex I could give but not receive.

"Don't be sulky, dear," Lenore chided affectionately. Then, to the stable girl, "Harness the little darling up to the buggy, I'll take her for a run."

Nothing was ever the way I expected. After being a prisoner in Langra and now again a prisoner on the Estate, I suddenly discovered the glory of motion within the grip of harness and with my forearms clamped to the shaft. My feet flashing, I rediscovered the joy of motion, the glory of youth in the generation of sweat beneath the threat of Lenore's whip. The problem was the chastity belt, a girl cannot wear a thing like that without being conscious of it all the time. When Lenore went shopping and left me hitched to a rail, it attracted attention. On the Estate the chastity belt was a punishment evoked only when ponies had been immoderate in their sexual activities or had acquired the bad habit of using a naughty finger within themselves. I did not care, they could stare all they wanted. The bit in my mouth prevented speech but had I been able to talk I would have told them that after my time in Langra, this was a picnic.

I wanted to ask Lenore to let me run every day like this but I couldn't do that either. I was a pony!

When the stable girl hosed me down that afternoon Lenore, with her crutches, stood by to watch. I suspected she adored my wet nakedness and bright-eyed radiance created by the run. When the stable girl locked the leg irons back upon my ankles and handcuffed my unresisting wrists, she was told to leave us alone. While I towelled myself dry, Mrs. Lenore Livingstone handed me the shock of my life. "You've been elected a member of the Council, darling. How does that grab you?"

I stood as though frozen, unable to believe what I heard, the towel hanging limp from one hand. Stupidly I said, "You're joking?"

"No, dear. I've talked it over with Levina, the other member, and since Marjory's still got months to go before completing her sentence, we decided you'd be an ideal

choice, a fresh point of view. Besides, I'm terribly fond of you."

I suppose Lenore had thrust this upon me out here by the hose rather than force me to consider it in Marjory Monet's presence. With Marjory Monet it would be a touchy subject in which she could scarcely be neutral. Without conscious volition I raised my joined hands to look at the shinning cuffs of steel encircling my wrists. I tugged them apart the short distanced their length allowed. As I let them fall I transferred my interest to the leg irons my ankles wore with the same unconcern as with nylons long ago. Lenore Livingstone read my thoughts.

"Scared of life without them?" She laughed at my dilemma. "Sorry, we can't possibly keep a member of the Council with her feet chained together and her wrists handcuffed. You'll have to get used to freedom all over again." Once more she chuckled at the thought. "But you do get to wear clothes, darling. Or are you too accustomed to being naked?"

She had guessed my state of mind all too well. I suddenly felt a distaste for the stuffiness of clothes, and was frankly frightened of a freedom which carried so great a load of authority.

"But I don't know a thing about the Council! I don't really even know anything about the Estate. All I've seen is what a pony gets to see and most of that is looking through iron bars. Oh, Lenore, it's crazy!"

"Not as crazy as you think, my sweet. It's been well discussed and there are logical reasons for the choice. If you turn it down I'm sure you'll end up out in the fields with ball and chain on your ankle. It's very easy to hurt the Council's sensibilities."

My choice seemed already made for me. Working in the fields kept a girl in marvellous condition but what is the use of being a perfect physical specimen when you've got a big iron ball locked to your ankle and the prospect of a whipping every night that you don't make your quota! Helpfully Lenore continued, "You're twenty-four, Sybil, you've only a year to be a pony anyway. After that you'll join the matrons. And you're as little like a matron as I've every seen. As a member of the Council age doesn't matter. On this Estate the Council holds all the cards."

Lenore was making sense. But I stood there naked and chained and feeling about as far from being a Council member as a girl can be.

"But supposing I take the job and blow it? I mean, I have no background for this kind of stuff . . .? Supposing I offend the Council in some way? Like Marjory?"

"What's happening to Marjory isn't all that bad, you know," Lenore offered. "We've had her whipped a few times. And she's been tightly tied up or chained quite a lot. And she's been sent out to labor in the fields like other ponies. It's not the end of the world for her, she's surviving remarkably well."

"You sat her on the horse for a very long time!"

"So what! We sat you on the horse right beside her. Look, darling, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll have you locked in with Marjory for the night and the two of you can discuss it. She'll have her own ideas and you might as well hear them. In the morning you can make your choice."

I clanked my ironed footsteps to the stall. The iron door was open, I was thrust inside and the door slammed shut. Lenore had not followed the stable girl and I, and now the girl too, had disappeared. Marjory sensed trouble right away. "What's the matter, darling, what have they done to you!" I told her everything. And then leaned upon her shoulder and cried desperate tears of frustration. All I wanted was to stay within this cage with Marjory and to be allowed to race a buggy along the roads everyday to get the glorious glow. But now I was patted and petted and kissed. Marjory had the answer.

"They want a Council member who will deal with all the delinquents on the Estate, sort of like a public prosecutor and judge rolled into one," she explained slowly. "They'd been preparing me for the job but then got the silly notion that I'd been too cruel to some of the girls, and look where it landed me! I've still got weeks and weeks of that lousy sentence to serve. But I will admit it's not as bad as it was at the start, they're not whipping me and sitting me on a horse all day and stuff like that the way they did. On the other hand I can't imagine they'll let me sit here on the straw forever. I expect they're simply waiting for my feet to heal before I get a ball and chain on my ankle and field work. You'd best take the job. The Estate isn't much of a place to be if you offend the Council."

"You mean I'd have to judge girls and hand out punishments!"

"Not girls, darling, ponies. Always remember you're a pony. It's only ponies you'll be dealing with."

"But I can't possibly sentence the poor things to be whipped or sat on the horse and stuff like that!"

"Yes you can, Sybil dear. Set your mind to it. If you don't do it someone else will and they'll do it worse. You're the happy medium you're looking for when they decided I was too much of a bitch."

It began to take shape. I discovered I was becoming excited at the prospect of freedom without bonds. I wondered how few clothes I could wear and still be considered respectable.

"But," I said, "most of the ponies seem happy and well-adjusted. I thought I was the only delinquent on the Estate?"

"I'm sure you thought that while you were being whipped or sitting on the horse,"

my mistress admitted slowly. "But the Estate is a big place, you haven't seen more than half of it. There's all sorts of pony girls and among them many Originals. It's to be expected they will need discipline. The idea is that instead of them being punished haphazardly by their owners, they will be brought before you as the appointed member of the Council and you will judge them and sentence them in a reasonable conformity." Marjory smiled encouragement. "It's really a very easy job. There will be days when there's not a single delinquent girl in sight. Dealing with them isn't that much of your problem, either. You pronounce sentence and others carry it out. If you wish to watch, that's your privilege. If you wish to offer them comfort and advise, that's also your privilege. Actually it's no big deal."

The next morning I told Lenore, yes, I would happily join the Council and dispense the Council's justice. But could I please wear the harness of a guard instead of clothes. She laughingly understood my wish and granted it instantly. The leg irons were taken from my ankles and the handcuffs from my wrists, and, nakedly, I went in search of the harness I had worn once long ago. It made no sense but nothing made sense so it really did not matter. If I thought of Bill Trafford laughing somewhere out beyond, I keep discreetly silent.

She was a truly lovely girl. But that meant little, all ponies were either pretty or lovely or beautiful according to your point of view. I sat behind my desk in my new office, where I had already dispatched justice several times and gazed with what I hoped was kindly attention at Nancy Brewer, who smiled readily but stood with an almost military attention before my throne of justice. I thought of Trafford's four pony team, Nancy was almost that good. Her sin was clearly defined on a sheet of paper on my desk but I asked for it in her own words.

Nancy Brewer was articulate. She seemed more amused than frightened. "I'm afraid it happened on the main street," she explained modestly. "I was harnessed to a buggy and my mistress made me angry so I kicked her in the tummy and ran away." She grinned confidingly. "I know it was silly, a girl can't go anyplace when she's dragging a buggy. I suppose it was a gesture of protest."

"You don't seem much concerned, Nancy." She shrugged. "What's the use? I know I'm going to be punished so why make a fuss? What will you have done to me?"

Remembering my image I snapped, "First things first, young lady! I want to know if you think, and if you truly believe, you deserve punishment."

"I suppose so." She giggled. "I expect I hurt her but she shouldn't have been so mean to me." She paused before changing the subject.

"I'm an Original, you know. I've only been a prisoner here six months. Even though I try to play along there's some things I just can't take. I understand you're an Original, too, so you'll know what I mean."

I knew what she meant all too well, my heart went out to her. But kicking an owner

in the stomach was not to be condoned. I was about to tell her this in no uncertain terms when she got the jump on me.

"That's a really gorgeous harness you're wearing, Miss Charmers. I wish I could wear something like that instead of always being naked. I'm not sure I'll ever get accustomed to running around without a stitch."

"The matter of your punishment, Nancy?" I hinted gently.

"Oh, that! Don't you have to sentence me or something. Then send me to the Lord High Executioner? Or whatever?"

She held up chained wrists and kicked irritably at chained ankles. "They've fixed me this way so I can't argue or run away. What's it going to be?"

She was impertinent and was using sarcasm to shield her fears. But these are two things no pony may be allowed to get away with, especially with a member of the Council. I could almost feel my authority like an invisible clock. But I tried to keep the harsh snap of authority from my voice. "You'll receive twenty strokes with a whip on your bare back, Nancy. You will also be chained in solitary confinement for one week. You may go."

Nancy Brewer stared at me in what I could only construe as disappointment. "Twenty!" Her voice was incredulous. "I've never had more than fifteen before, and that was bad enough. Look, Miss Charmers, couldn't you be a sport and make it ten?"

"There will now be an additional five with the cane across your bottom," I said gently. "A Council member does not haggle. Ponies make no bargains. Do you understand?"

Nancy swallowed hard, her voice loosing some of its brash assurance. "I'm sorry. I'd tell you I didn't know but that wouldn't be true. Please, Miss Charmers, couldn't you forget that week in solitary? I've had that, too. It's horrible."

"It is now eight days instead of seven."

The insolent young miss dissolved into a frightened girl. Nancy Brewer buried her face within her locked hands and wept. I allowed her tears full vent for almost a minute before I went to her and led her to a chair. I wondered if brandy was appropriate. The Council had provided a couple of bottles, neither of which I had opened. I decided against it now, water would be more appropriate since not a single stroke had yet marked the lovely skin. After the poor girl had swallowed a few mouthfuls, she gulped and muttered, "Well, I suppose that's that." Then she wept again.

I did things right. There was a form. I completed it and rang the bell. When the

guard appeared I handed her the slip and motioned Miss Nancy Brewer from the Presence.

I was discovering a tremendous sense of power, coupled with a thankfulness in pronouncing the sentence rather than receiving the punishment. The four girls I had already handled had accepted the sentence with varying responses, but mostly they had been sulky when marched away to receive their stripes. So far I confined my punishments to simple whippings or periods of imprisonment. There were other things but I would get to them later. There was nothing more on the sheet so I decided, for the first time, to watch a prisoner receive her punishment.

Two guards made sure the delinquent had no chance to assert herself. When I arrived they were in the process of removing her handcuffs and locking her wrists in the stocks which had no other function than to hold a naked girl immobilized for the whip. It was a pillory with no other holes but those for wrists. They were spread well apart and tiny enough to hold maiden wrists tightly. The slavegirl would be forced to stand erect with arms spread wide to receive the whip. There was nothing she could do and no where she could go. In Nancy's case the guards had left the leg irons on her ankles. They clinked musically as she moved from foot to foot. She was decidedly articulate and, as yet, unaware of my presence.

"Look, you two, you don't have to give me twenty-five the way she said. Can't you cut it down to fifteen, she'll never know."

"No we can't."

"Very well, but surely you don't have to hit me too damn hard with the beastly thing. Can you go a bit easy?"

"No, we can't."

Nancy kicked her fettered feet once again and jerked experimentally at her wrists. "It's not right to whip a girl when she's all bare," she complained. "Couldn't you give me a shirt or something? And a pair of panties? This is going to hurt something terrible . . ."

"No, we can't. And, yes, it is." The guards were terse.

I felt sorry for Nancy. She was a high-spirited girl doing the best she could without weapons to fight. Since she had previously been whipped, she knew well what to expect. I could almost see her skin cringe.

The guards first chose the cane and sliced Nancy's pert rump quite cruelly for the five strokes I had proscribed. The guards performed their functions be standing on each side of the secured girl, each using a cane to provide an even distribution of weals. They were aware of my presence but made no sign.

I knew the pain must be terrible but Nancy Brewer handled it remarkably well, with a fine clatter of leg irons and quite lovely contortions of her body. From time to time she looked distressfully back over she shoulder as if intending to berate her executioners. She did not scream.

The whip was something else again, and Nancy visibly braced herself for its whining song. Once more each guard held a weapon of her own to assure the even marking of the naked skin. Nancy had courage but it lasted no longer than the fifth stroke at which point she uttered her first cry of frustration, anger and pure pain. From then on the slow beating of her back brought forth a cry as the leathers bit and marked her flesh. I felt each blow. At the end I crept away unseen to return to my office to ask myself how much of a bitch I had been in this trial and punishment of a girl guilty of nothing more than exasperation under stress. I had no answer, I would never have an answer for anything on the Estate. My role now was as much to change myself as to punish others.

The damsel who stood to obedient attention before my desk on the following day was something else again. Her hands had been bound behind her back and her elbows securely strictured. I knew she was in pain. The printed form in my hands gave her age as sixteen. She was not an Original but a product of the Estate itself. She oozed anger and discontent from every pore. Her name was Peggy Hawks. She fired the first shot.

"You needn't think I'm going to say 'please, Miss Charmers' and 'thanks, Miss Charmers' and 'yes and no, Miss Charmers,' because I'm not!" Her vexation poured out in a volley. "I know you're going to do something mean to me so get it over with. I hate you all."

"In what way did you transgress, Peggy?"

"It's right there on the paper. You don't need to make a big deal out of this. I can tell you right now I'm going to scream as hard as I can." She sniffed in self-pity. "I never did want to be a pony, and I told Mommy I didn't want to be a pony. I've been a pony for a whole year now and I've hated every minute of it. I think you're all mean."

I wanted to laugh. I longed to comfort the young flesh so soon to be harmed. But I reminded myself who I was and, with an expression of severity, thumbed the edge of the paper before me without reading it.

"I'd like you to tell me, Peggy. Reading it is not the same."

She glared defiantly. "I jumped up and down on the buggy shaft until it broke. I attacked the stable girl in trying to get away. I said rude things to my owner before they got the bit in my mouth. Then I kicked a guard." She made a grimace at me. "There's all sorts of other things and I expect they've all been written down but surely that's enough. Do I get hung or beheaded?"

Peggy piqued my interest. Ponies on the Estate mostly seem to be glad to be ponies. I wondered what had happened here. "Why didn't you want to be a pony, Peggy, tell me.?"

"Because Mommy wanted me to be the best pony ever and started to train me for it when I was about ten. She had a harness made for me and I had to haul things around. Sometimes she would lock me in a stall at night to sleep on the straw. And often with my hands tied behind my back like they are now. I got so damned sick of it I would have run away if there had been anywhere to run."

"Did you tell your mother you hated it?"

The child's laugh was bitter. "Every time I told her she whipped me. We had a team of ponies of our own and she was forever putting me in the stall with them so they could explain to me how I should love being a pony and what was going to happen to me when I was fifteen. They did that, all right, but they also did awful things to me down below with their tongues and lips. It was beastly. When I told Mommy about it she just laughed and said I'd know about these things after I was fifteen. I told her our pony team had taught me all there was to know already but it didn't do any good."

Peggy was a problem. I was no social worker, and anyway there was no way I could drag her mother into court. I disposed of the poor child by sentencing her to confinement in a stall for ten days but in the company of Bill Trafford's four girl pony team, who I knew were around somewhere. As a concession to authority, I also sentenced her to five strokes across her pretty young ass. Five each day, that is. I got the distinct impression it was better than she expected. By the time the guard led her from the room she was almost polite.

Nancy Brewer stuck in my mind the way an unusually pretty girl always does. After I left the court for the day I sought out the stall in which she was imprisoned. The guards had done a magnificent job on her. The poor girl was loaded with a tremendous weight of links and shackles. A collar on her neck was tethered by a long chain to a ringbolt in the wall. The rest of her restrains were simply from arm to arm or leg to leg − elbows and wrists, knees and ankles. There was also a metal belt around her waist which was punitively tight. When I arrived she was curled up in a pathetic bundle on the straw. But, aware of a visitor, she rose quickly to her feet and came slowly and with difficulty to clutch the bars with fettered fingers. She had no sooner done this than she remembered and turned her back for me to view the scarlet and purple evidence of cane and whip upon her skin.

"You did that, Miss Charmers, I hope you're satisfied. Have you come to visit or to punish me some more?"

I wished I hadn't come. I cursed the curiosity which had drawn me to where I now stood. There was nothing I could do for Nancy, not a thing. From what she had

already said I was not a bit sure she would want to even talk. Striving for cheerfulness I asked, "Let's forget your punishments, Nancy. Tell me what you plan after you've served your sentence."

"Ponygirls don't plan anything," she reminded me. "The owner I kicked is real mad at me so she's going to have me sold in the market the first Saturday after I get free. I don't suppose you would care to buy me, I wouldn't mind working for you."

I was flattered but explained I could not buy every girl who passed through my court. I knew Trafford's team were available to me but I was ashamed to go to them or use them in my new capacity. I knew I would get over the shyness in time but not for a while. I talked with the prisoner a while then went away. In a way I was a prisoner myself, I wasn't going anywhere.

It was Levina who first asked me to tea, a severe lady who spent most of our time together in sage advise and stern warnings. But actually she was reasonable and I could not complain much. The second invitation was from Lenore and this I accepted gladly. After we had kissed and hugged my first question was as to whether I still belonged to her. Or had my pony status been dissolved.

"I lost you when you became a member of the Council," she mourned sadly. "I loved owning you, you're so beautifully receptive to punishment, and you're so good in bed. You ought to spend the night."

Lenore is nothing if not frank. I was excited and experienced my usual sense of shame over that excitation, over what a woman had between her thighs. I laughed with her over my cases and mourned for those ponies I had punished.

"You've done marvellously, darling," Lenore assured me. "Come, kneel beside me, I have a gift for you."

In a return of the happiness I had always known with this woman, I did as I was told, I knelt and instinctive thrust my head against the closest of her breasts. She stroked my hair and tweaked playfully at my nipples. Then she slipped something smooth and hard and heavy around my neck, and clasp it snug to draw from it a click I recognized. My hands flew to my throat to explore the round, circular necklace I knew I could not remove.

In wonder, and strangely unconcerned, I said, "It's the same as the other one. It's one of those . . . things?"

"That's right, darling, it's identical. You look so lovely with it on your neck."

Lenore was beautiful, she possessed magic. My adoration for her was different from my love for Marjory Monet but I knew myself now deeply into the lesbian life of these two women who had successively possessed me and, for all I knew, might yet own me once again. I fingered the lovely silver on my neck and asked mischievously,

"You don't trust me?"

"I've discussed you with Levina," Lenore was her usual brisk self. "We don't think you want to escape, at least not right now. But your new position leaves you entirely free to do anything you wish. We can well imagine that sometime you might be tempted."

I grinned at her. "So you're taking temptation from me?"

"That's right, darling. You'll get a lot of comfort out of that ring around your neck. Wanting to run away is a beastly business. It gets a girl into all sorts of trouble. No one knows that better than you. Are you grateful?"

I entwined my arms around her waist and nestled hard against her breasts. I was simply revelling in this freedom of my hands and arms to do such things. Handcuffs had for so long denied me these simple but tender endearments. Lenore raised me up and kissed me tenderly and then with an increasing violence. Still gasping, she explained, "No what I think! I think both of us would enjoy your being handcuffed while we have tea." The flare of pure lust possessing me at her suggestion caused scarlet shame to envelope my face. It was answer enough. Lenore laughed delightedly. "You give yourself away, darling. Don't be ashamed. With a girl like you this longing is the most natural thing in the world. When I handcuff you, you'll have no more decisions to make." She kissed me again and again. "But it's far more than that. The steel bands I'm going to put around your wrists spell love. They spell security. They spell something shared between two girls who adore each other. The man who invented handcuffs, whoever he was, little realized the side issues of his creation."

I was trembling with happiness as I extended my hands and watched Lenore lock them together in the cold steel circles that joined my wrists. I love handcuffs, and I suppose that's the beginning and the end of it. Some people like corned beef with boiled potatoes, or love each other's secret longings. Lenore had make the steel circlets beautifully snug. I tested them but the was no slack at all. I made the single link laugh at my new helplessness as I jiggled them back and forth playfully. I almost wanted to bury my head in Lenore's lap and shed tears of pure gratitude and joy.

"I'll get the tea and look after you myself, darling," Lenore assured me. "There's no way we must have a pony see a member of the Council in handcuffs. Don't worry, I'll look after you."

I knew she would look after me. It was glorious and wonderful and magic to be looked after, to be held by bonds of steel placed on me by the fingers of one I loved and who loved me. I was still quivering with thankfulness when Lenore Livingstone returned with the tray. We took a long time over the tea and I knew that during every moment of it Lenore's eyes were devouring every move I made with the bracelets. I loved them, too. It was understandable that, with the tea dispossessed of, Lenore should announce, "I'll put the tea things away, dear. You go on up to the

bedroom. You'll find the shackles there. Lock yourself in them and dream of the lovely things we'll do to each other until morning. I won't be long." I did as I was told.

My tea time and night time with Lenore did much to cement my new authority. The inconsistency of that left me unconcerned. If the wearing of a deadly ring around my neck and the temporary infliction of handcuffs around my wrists did so much for me, I was not about to argue. It was nice to know Lenore was there and I reminded myself of her existence constantly by fingering the silver ring she had placed around my neck. I returned to my office and judgments with an easy mind. It was perhaps a week before the Estate slipped me its next test of my sincerity.

Each morning, upon my arrival at the office, I quickly scanned the waiting printed forms, each representing a pony with whom I would have to deal. They provided the necessary statistics but not the sentence, I filled in the sentence myself. I read them casually and almost set them aside when an unexpected name jolted me. It appeared that a Miss Marjory Monet had twice slapped a guard's face and would appear before me for appropriate action. I read it ten times over before slumping in my chair and asking myself what the hell I was going to do about that one! Before the first subject was led in to stand abjectly for my attention I scanned the book of rules, the reference by which I was to be guided in my deliberations. For the offense Marjory had committed the punishment was clearly defined, simple and concise. It was twenty lashes on the girl's bare back. I read it again and again but there was no way out. The sentence I must deal out to the woman I loved was dictated for me in no uncertain way. I slammed the book shut angrily and thrust it aside. I was still in a maze of conjecture when the first delinquent was thrust forward for my attention.

She was a pretty brunette named Dolly and it was easy to see this was her first visit to The Court. With innocent eyes she proceeded to confess to a truly shocking series of sins against the Estate as to leave me gasping, but she appearing to glow with pride of achievement. I think the poor kid, she was only about eighteen, considered her enterprise in unlocking every stall in the stable, throwing stone through windows, hosing down a guard, then as one final challenge to authority, setting the stable on fire. She had committed these crimes in a fit of anger while she was the stable girl of the day and free to enact them. Now she seemed to expect praise instead of punishment. The manner of her binding should have warned her of things to come. Wrists and elbows were corded tight behind her back, thrusting out her cone-shaped breasts and accentuating the concavity of her belly. A collar was tight around her neck and from it trailed a leash by which she was controlled. Rope belted her tummy with truly savage strands, one of which descended between her thighs and was cinched up tight to penetrate within her lips. It must have hurt when she walked. She dismissed her actions by suggesting slyly, "I won't be punished, will I? I mean, it wasn't all that bad."

I explained how bad it was and watched her bright and shinning features shadow in dismay. I asked a question that should have driven the ordinary girl up the wall, an implied threat to make anyone go hairy, "Have you ever been bastinadoed, dear?"

She thought for a few seconds, obviously having never heard of that terrible punishment before. "I don't think so," she assured me. "Is it something you have to go to the doctor for?"

I explained the mechanics of the bastinado, both the slow process with the little rods and the swift and awful justice of the riding crop. She listened and said, cheerfully, "I think the little rods might be fun, Miss Charmers. I'm not sure about the riding crop, I expect that hurts."

"It all hurts."

"Well, I'll have something new to tell the girls about when I'm put back in the stall," she mused happily enough. "Is this bastinado thing what I have to have? Are you sure you couldn't cane my bottom or something?"

"You will receive that also." I watched realization shadow the young face. The poor kid can not have been punished much or she would have been more afraid. If I knew I was to be bastinadoed again, I'd be in a hell of a dither. "Are you ready to be sentenced, Dolly?" I asked gently.

"Do you really have to?"

"I'm afraid so, you've behaved shockingly."

"Have I really!" She took it as a tribute. "I'd no idea everyone would get in such a dither. The way you've got me tied up now isn't a bit nice. There's a rope right inside my pussy and I've been this way quite a while. I say, Miss Charmers, couldn't we call this punishment enough?"

"You know we can't, Dolly. You have to be punished properly. You are sentenced to fifteen strokes with the crop on each of the soles of your bare feet. Then, in addition, your bottom will be caned ten times. That is all."

"Is that a lot or a little, Miss Charmers? I mean about the bastinado. I know about my bottom, my bottom's been caned before."

"It's a severe punishment, Dolly, it should teach you a lesson."

"That's what they said the last time," said Dolly. "I say, Miss Charmers, couldn't you make that ten on each foot instead of fifteen. Fifteen sounds a bit much."

Poor Dolly! When she found me inflexible she tried tears. I suspected tears had worked for her in the past. Weeping, she was led from my presence. I felt quite certain watching Dolly receiving her just reward for sins would be entertaining but the cases pending kept me where I was. The next nudity to stand before my desk was Marjory Monet.

"Hello, Sybil darling. I'm not allowed to kiss you and you mustn't kiss me. Gosh, you look impressive behind that desk."

"Oh, Marjory, what am I going to do!" I was far from being the stern judge.

Marjory laughed at my woe-be-gone face. "We'll do exactly as the book says, darling. I know that book by heart, I wrote some of it. You now have to sentence me to twenty lashes on the bare back. Nice and simple."

She was wonderful! She was also my mistress. She did not look much like a mistress now, being handcuffed, naked, and leg-ironed. She wore the metal well to make it embellish rather than detract from her loveliness. I had noticed before how handcuffs never seemed awkward on her wrists. She disposed her hands in natural grace and casual ease. The shinning metal glinted at me now as if in mockery of my problem. I stated my case more precisely. "I can't do it."

"But, darling, you must." She was immediately concerned. "I've been trying to think of some extenuating circumstance we could use to maybe bring the sentence down a bit, but there are none. I did exactly as that sheet tells you. Gosh, did I knock that girl sideways!"

"Then I'm going to resign," I said flatly.

"You'll do nothing of the sort!" Marjory Monet was instantly my mistress, eyes flashing, ready to punish me for disobedience. "Don't be a silly girl, I've been whipped so much that twenty more or less makes no difference. And there's not a thing you can do to stop me getting it. If you behave like an idiot and get yourself sent out into the fields with a ball and chain on your ankle, I'll feel a damned sight worse than the whip will make me. Look at me!"

I looked and was lost. Marjory was a mistress even in captivity. The chains on her wrists and ankles detracted nothing from her authority, she was every bit a member of the Council as she stood before my desk. Miserably I said, "Okay, darling, I expect you're right. Will you ever forgive me?"

"You're already forgiven, stupid. Go on, fill out the damned form and I'll take it down with me to get myself whipped. In half an hour it'll all be over and I'll be on my way to something else." She snorted angrily. "Like I told you, darling, this blasted six months is going to be forever."

I sat still and silent after Marjory was gone. I was picturing her with her arms fastened over her head to leave her body open to the whip. I could almost hear it's whine and the thunk of leather upon female flesh. I had done something unpardonable and wished I could be whipped right along with the radiant woman I adored.

I felt certain the termination of Marjory's six month sentence would mean almost as much to me as to her. In the events of the past days and weeks I had lost track of time but I feared the poor darling had served no more than a couple of months, leaving four to go. I marveled at her courage. The next girl on my list was something else again. Her name was Julie Sandstron. Her age twenty-two. Her sin was an attempted escape from the Estate. She was an Original, and to all intents and purposes could have been myself. She must have in some way offended the guards. They had inflicted upon her the wrist and elbow bindings but had used thin twine without mercy. She was magnificently proportioned, her breasts pointing at me accusingly as if it were I who tied the cords. In a pixie humor all their own they had painted the erect nipples a bright scarlet as if to flaunt their loveliness and invite the cut of thongs. The guards had also inflicted the crotch bindings, this time with the usual cotton rope which had been wound and wound around the slender waist to make a belt from which the single wicked strand bisected her bottom and her pussy lips to be cinched cruelly tight up in front. Involuntarily I exclaimed, "You're hurting!"

"I thought I was supposed to." Her retort was one hundred percent sneer. I let it pass.

"You're an Original so I don't have to ask why you ran away. Do you intend to run away again?"

Julie wiggled deliciously, probably an attempt at a shrug of disgust. "Since you know it all, sentence me and let me go."

"You now I'm an Original, too?"

"Yes, I was told about it. But does it matter! You're bound to be a bitch or you wouldn't hold the position you hold. You're going to have me punished real bad, aren't you?"

"If you say so. Why prejudge yourself? I don't, I'm willing to listen to your story."

"It won't do any good. I've confessed the whole thing already. And there's witnesses. I got quite far away before they caught me. They never did think of putting one of those silver collars on me, like you've got. I suppose I don't rate. They evidently value you a lot."

Once more I felt the falsity of what I was trying to be. The ring robbed me of temptation but this girl had not been granted such a boon. Julie pursued her one track mind, "I'm going to be terribly whipped, I can be sure of that. What else do I have to endure?"

"The horse. You won't like it."

"I know, they've had me up on it already. It's a beastly punishment. Can't you give

me anything else?"

This girl was not afraid. She was simply enduring, plowing her steady course through travail after travail and punishment after punishment. I wondered to that end!

"Give me some extenuating circumstances," I asked. "I'll willingly consider them. I don't want you suffering more than right now."

"So you noticed, heh! The bitches used thin twine to hurt. I'm in agony, but you probably know that. If you want to get this farce over with, I plead guilty."

If I had been a real judge, I would have been pleased. Julie's plea of guilty made it simply to sentence her. I did so, hating myself with every bitter word. "Fifty lashes, anywhere upon your person. Ten with the cane across your bottom. One month chained in solitary confinement."

"Thanks a lot!" She watched my pen condemn. "Look, you rotten bitch, you've got all the authority there is, you don't need to give me fifty. Cut it in half, even that's too much."

I was the judge. I was the Estate. I completed Julie's form, tucked it in the ropes around her waist and sent her downstairs to begin her punishment. After sentencing my mistress I did not feel a bitch.

It was the next day I got the most potent jolt of all.

6

The Punishment of Ponies

I adored Melody. She is my favorite pony. If you think all this adoration exaggerated, it is all a part of a community of girls, girl have keener sensibilities than a man. It is easy to love a girl, especially if she is a companion in some kind of distress. And, goodness knows, every pony in the place was exactly that! I suppose the pervading lesbianism helped. Melody had never stood before me in the court, her record was blameless. She sought me out at home and said, yes, she had time for coffee. The darling's only bond was to be handcuffed and, like myself, we hardly counted handcuffs any more. Handcuffs and ponies go together.

"I have something terribly difficult to say to you, Mistress."

I watched the sweet thing wiggle in embarrassment. Melody was a dish by any standard.

"With you, I'm still a pony," I said. "You don't have to be scared. I'll never punish you."

Darling Melody quaffed the coffee and looked at me dolefully. "I don't mind being punished," she said seriously. "My problem is to make you understand something that is absolutely inexplicable. I'm going to have to ask you to take something tremendous purely in trust. Can you trust me that much, Mistress?"

"Of course. What's so damned mysterious about it, darling? Come on, out with it."

Once more Melody did that delicious pussy-perking wiggle. I lost interest in that message, whatever it was, and wanted to take her to bed. I knew she'd come easily enough but, even if she demurred, I had the authority to compel. But in ordinary decency I had to give her a chance to get her message off her chest. It was a very beautiful chest, too. "Something illegal?" I challenged.

"No, I don't supposed it is." Melody was obviously thinking deeply. I than poured more coffee.

"You know you're going to be punished for something and you've come to ask me to go easy on you, is that it?"

"Gosh, no!" I could tell she was offended. "It's nothing like that. Look, Mistress, I've been sworn to secrecy. That's the whole trouble. If I could talk freely, you'd jump at the chance."

"Chance? What kind of chance?"

I could have questioned Melody all night. Her delicious wigglings were very exciting to watch. But she blurted the whole thing out.

"What I want is for you to accompany me out into the country, not too far, nowhere near the limits we're allowed. There's a place out there called the Sacrificial Stones, just a couple of rocks but someone has welded chains and shackles onto them to hold a girl lying on her back on the ground with her arms spread way out. I want you to let me fasten you there. That's all."

"Good gosh, Melody, isn't that enough! Are you going in for Pantheism? Does a Satyr come and ravish me in the moonlight?"

"Yes, I know it sounds silly. And there are two more stones for your feet, I have to tie your ankles to them with rope."

"What you're saying, darling, is you want me spread-eagle in the middle of four stones, naked and helpless. Do I have to stay that way all night?"

"I don't know. I didn't ask about that. Can you believe me, Sybil, when I tell you

you'll be happy over the whole thing, terribly happy?"

With anyone but Melody I would not have taken it seriously. But I adored Melody. I knew I could trust her. If she wanted me to go through with this strange scene, then I knew I'd do it. I expect feminine curiosity had a part in it but the way the picture had formed before my eyes as Melody described it I was aware of the heat within my sex commanding me to take a chance. I would not be the first maiden bound beneath the stars to await a satyr's seed – but that was fantasy.

"Who's going to ravish me?" I demanded.

"I can't tell you that either, Mistress. I'm terribly sorry," Melody said. "If you feel like whipping me, I wouldn't blame you a bit."

"What I feel like is to take you to bed," I said with firm decision. "As for this crazy thing you want me to do . . . Of course I'll do it. Darling, I trust you! If you want me spread-eagle out there on the grass I know you have a reason. Don't mind what it is. Let's go to bed."

That's how it started.

Being a member of the Council had one tremendous advantage, I was free. True, the harness I had chosen left me as good as naked but I liked it. I also had the authority to extract Melody from the barred stall she inhabited with the other ponies of the team, and to ask, "Anything we need? I mean, rope chains and things? I hope we don't need a whip."

We needed nothing. I was suddenly feeling like a school girl on the first day of vacation, and very happy. I took Melody's hand and we ran as if pulling a buggy in harness. We had done it often and were beautifully matched. The motion was intoxicating and I found myself approaching the adventure with curiosity and a fire within my loins which would have roasted chestnuts. When Melody slowed us down with a whispered, "This is the place," I instantly picked up vibrations. They were not her's, they were not my own. I could swear they were from those who lived here ten thousand years ago.

The four stones left me gasping in delight. They were large, no four men could have lifted them. They were aged and partly covered with moss. The tiny glade was very quiet and very still. It was full of ghosts.

I allowed Melody to guide me to my fate. Standing within the small space between the stones I could swear I felt ghostly fingers up and down my spine.

"I don't think you should wear that harness," Melody whispered. Without thought I unlatched the fastenings and tossed the lovely leather thing to one side to stand myself in total nakedness. It felt so good I toyed with a silly notion of seeking permission to sit behind my desk like that. I had come to love being naked and

wanted no clothes of any kind. I knew Melody was the same. In amusement I wondered what she and I would do when we reached the age of twenty-five and were expected to become clothed.

"Now, you lie down on your back upon the grass." The reverent whisper came again. "Leave the rest to me, I'll look after you, Mistress."

The place held magic and the magic held me. I lowered myself to the grass and spread my limbs in lewd invitation to both the bonds and to anyone who might be watching, even to Melody. She could use me all she wished and I would be in no position to deny. I felt the cold metal of a shackle clasp one wrist and then the other. The click of locks followed. I did not bother to struggle, I knew I was well and truly captive to the chains. Rope was already there and with it Melody bound my ankles to the rings, not to stretch me tight but with some latitude to move and kick. But, at the same time, I was denied freedom. When she was through with me, I tested my fastenings and found I could move a surprising number of inches this way or that but was helpless. I could contest nothing, my body was open and at the mercy of anyone who came. Curious, I too used whispers.

"There's nothing ancient about these chains on my wrist, darling, they're new. And those locks are new, too. Do you have the key?"

For answer she held it up for me to see then took it to a nearby tree and hung it on a nail. Evidently others used this place besides ourselves. I wondered how many other girls had been bound here beneath the stars, unable to evade whatever fate the night might bring!

Melody stayed with me a little while, teasing my nipples until I began to get excited. She then kissed each one and my lips, patted my cheek reassuringly and flitted away into the starlight. I was alone.

I am sure there were ghosts, if ghosts can be counted company. I could hear them whispering from a past long distant. Had it not been for the modern shackles which held me, I could have easily felt that this place had held girls exactly like this for centuries. Perhaps it had, discounting the modern metal shackles and allowing for rope.

What creatures were out there among the trees and would I soon sniff the goat smell of a hairy satyr? I twisted and tugged to no avail. I did not expect to free myself but it is always nice to try. That task over, I knew I could never free myself and that I now belonged to whatever pagan deities inhabited this place. I should have been frightened but was not. I owed this to my trust in Melody. If she chained me thus, it was for a good reason. And I must surely soon discover that purpose. I gave myself to sleep and dreamed for a period.

Something awakened me, a distant sound. I listened intently but it did not repeat. I shifted my pinioned limbs to seek more comfort. Then I listened again. It was not

long before I sensed for certain the footsteps of a Male, they were advancing swiftly to a target I knew was Me.

"Hello, darling, I see Melody got you fixed," said a cheerful male voice.

It was my master, Bill Trafford.

As I gasped, "Bill . . . Oh, Bill!" he threw aside his clothes to impose his bareness upon my own. His skin felt so damned good, cool and hard and muscular. I wished I had arms with which to clasp him but a girl can't have everything. Before he entered me I gasped, "How . . .? Oh, Bill, how . . .?"

When he entered me I knew nothing mattered about how or when or where. The only thing that did was us. After he had brought me to climax twice I pleaded, "Unlock my hands, darling, untie my feet. I want so bad to hold you."

"Sorry, sweetheart, no key."

"It's hanging on a tree, I can show you."

"Don't bother. I like you the way you are. Girls should never be completely free. And you're just about right the way Melody's fastened you. Stop beefing or I'll make you wait for next time."

I discovered I didn't care a bit about the details of why I lay beneath my lover. That Bill was inside me and I, myself, aflame with female lust, was enough. I did the best I could without my hands and I knew I did very well indeed. After several orgasms Bill untied my feet. A girl who's had the practice can use her feet like hands. I used mine as best I could. Often Bill made me scream with ecstasy in that midnight glade. We had no thought of morning.

But even sexual giants must sometimes pause. In such a rest he told me of the helicopter half a mile away and of how he was defeating his vast fortune by slowly returning to normal. Laughingly he assured me he would one day be the Bill Trafford I had first met on the Estate so long ago. While she had been his prisoner, he had presented Melody a wireless set on which they now maintained contact. As he told me these things I could hear the peal of wedding bells.

"Why don't you take me back with you now?" I asked innocently. "I won't be any trouble, I'll do as you wish. I want you to marry me but if you don't want that, I'll be content to be your slave or mistress or whatever."

Bill kissed my overly eager lips that said too much. He still lay upon my nakedness. "I'm not ready yet, sweetheart, you'll have to give me time. But I can always come to you the way I did tonight. But one day I'll take you home with me."

"Why did you have Melody chain and tie me like this? I would have come running

if I had known. You never need to tie me down, I'm yours!"

"Because I'm some kind of a bastard," Bill admitted ruefully. "I simply enjoy taking you this way. I love you in chains. I've told you this many times. And you do have to remember that, if I do marry you, I'll still keep you as my bound slavegirl."

"I don't mind. This thing you've done with me tonight is truly beautiful out here under the stars, and with me a virgin sacrifice. Oh, Bill . . . Do it again and again and again."

There was something gorgeously pagan about Bill's possession of my chained nakedness beneath the stars. I felt certain the unseen ghosts in the shadows were smiling in approval. Slowly the rhythm of our coupling began again.

At some shocking hour in the night Bill tied my feet as he had found them. He then took the key and unlocked one of my hands and pressed the tiny bit of metal into my palm. "It will take you a few minutes to get loose, sweetheart. By that time I'll be back at the 'copter and there'll be no use you chasing after me. Be a good girl and continue your life as if this hasn't happened." He grinned. "Maybe it hasn't happened at all! Maybe it's only a beautiful dream." He paused as if seeing visions before adding, "No woman has ever made me as happy as you. You're gorgeous, I love you." Before I could reach for him, he had vanished into the trees. I was a very puzzled and very thoughtful girl as I buckled my harness back on and ran on pony feet back down the path. I reached my bedroom with the first light of dawn to fall into a dreamless sleep.

It was shortly after that incident the Estate granted me a farmstead of my own. It lacked the size and field of Marjory's and Lenore's, but it was a beautiful home and I adored it instantly. I asked myself guiltily why I had ever sought to run away from so beneficent an existence as the Estate provided. Like all such farmsteads, my new home possessed a stable with a row of barred stalls, now all empty.

I toured my tiny estate with vast pride and a growing excitement.

After I had poked into every nook and cranny I became aware of loneliness, of an obvious need for someone. I thought instantly of buying Melody but she was Lenore's property and not for sale. My course was obvious − I must go to the Saturday event I always thought of as the "Slave Market." But I never called it that openly. Excitement flared anew. The thought of viewing a huge collection of bound beauties and making my selection possessed a truly shocking erotic flare within my sex. With the comforting thought of being a member of the Council, I looked forward to Saturday.

In the matter of surprises, the Estate never let me down. The following day, after I had finished with the office, a pony team drew a buggy up my driveway to the hitching post beside the barn. I recognized Inga and Celie instantly in their harnesses. Lenore hitched the buggy to the rail before opening her arms to me.

"You can't wait, can you darling, to find out why I've got Melody tethered behind the buggy." Her voice was filled with laughter. "Well, I won't keep you in suspense, she's my gift to you in your new home. You're going to need a girl, you know."

It was one of those rare glorious moments in any girl's life. Lenore took my hand and led me to where a naked Melody stood tethered to the buggy. She was attached to it by a collar on her neck, her hands were tied behind her back. That was all. With mischief coloring each word she gave greeting, "Hello, Mistress. I do hope you like me."

"Leave them as they are," said Lenore severely. "It's been a short run and they're not that tired. You can give me tea. You can whip Melody's bottom after I've gone. She's altogether too happy for her own good."

Lenore and I talked of many things but my mind was filled with only one. "I know you adore each other," Lenore was laughing at my happiness. "I can easily spare Melody, a four pony team is really cumbersome, a three pony team is really better. Don't think you're robbing me, darling, you're not. Like I said, Melody is bursting with joy over being yours. I expect you'll spoil her dreadfully."

While I rattled the cups and made the brew Lenore's tone become one of heart-felt thankfulness. "I've had my period, darling. You've no idea what a relief. I was scared to death that bastard Achmed had gotten be pregnant. I've asked Marjory about her's, and she also is safe. We could both jump up and down with joy. That bastard Bill Trafford, the things he did to us."

We discussed the tortures and travails of Langra until I ventured timidly, "I haven't seen Marjory, what are you doing with her?"

Lenore sighed. "The poor darling's a bit of a nuisance. I wish we hadn't sentenced her to that six months. Six days would have been a lot better. Lavina and I decided we can't possibly have her whipped daily or spend her time hanging from her toes or thumbs or whatever. We know it's not a true punishment but we send her out into the fields. She cuts cane or hoes potatoes everyday and wears the ball and chain on her ankle. She hates that iron ball with a passion, so I suppose that's something to the good. She gets herself whipped once in a while for short quotes but not often. She's strong and determined. I admire her tremendously."

"Couldn't we give her a reprieve?" I asked as I filled the cups. "The Council has that power, of course, darling. But it wouldn't do to use it. The Council must always set a shining example of integrity, and to pardon one of its own members after it sentenced her in the first place − well, that wouldn't sit well on the Estate. No, the poor dear will simply have to put up with it. It's getting her in perfect condition, she's quite something to behold."

"Lenore, do we have to sign papers or something over the transfer of ownership of

Melody?"

"Oh, sure, we'll do that when we're through with tea. By the way, in getting the sweetheart ready to bring over I discovered she had a tiny wireless set hidden in the stable. She's one of those who cannot tell a lie and it was easy to discover that it connects with Bill Trafford. I've put the damned thing away at my place. You can suit yourself, Sybil, as to whether you punish her for having it. There must have been something going between the two of them we didn't know about. She was terribly upset when I took it away." Lenore's shrewd eyes stared right through me. "What in the world are you blushing for, Sybil? I'll bet you know something!"

"I knew he'd given it to her," I admitted awkwardly. "We thought it was a joke. He said he'd let us know when he came to steal us away from the Estate. It has to be a joke, he can't possibly be serious."

"Well, I don't know. That man's a menace," Lenore said disgustedly. "I'll listen in on the damned thing once in a while and see if I can pick anything up.

"In the meantime, darling, isn't it a good thing I put that lovely ring around your neck so you can't go romping off to meet him in the hills? I'll visit again soon and snap one on Melody, too. I could kill that man, the trouble he's caused!"

The small shadow on my joy was short-lived. We took the tea things to the sink where Lenore assured me I could order Melody to wash them, such tasks being often part of a pony's duties. We then went to view the new possession I prized most of all.

Melody speaks body language. She doesn't know she's doing it but she does it all the time. On our arrival, she contrived small motions and a flickering of eyebrows. Had I been a man I would have a huge erection. As it was, the fire inside my belly became almost unbearable. She stood in demure innocence, awaiting my pleasure, the tether trailing from her collar to the back of the buggy. It was a lovely picture, this naked beauty who was mine, mine, mine! I was trembling with happiness. When Lenore freed Melody's tether from the buggy and placed it in my hand, it was one of those moments to remember. She laughed away my thanks and awkward embarrassment at striving to express thanks and gratitude beyond words, then got in the buggy and drove away. I was left there holding Melody's leash. In beautiful simplicity, the darling girl bridged an awkward gap by kneeling at my feet and saying, with unmistakable fervor, "I will be a good pony for you, Mistress, I promise. I will always obey."

I raised her and took her in my arms. It was quite a while before we turned towards my house. I guided my new possession immediately to my bedroom. Neither of us had any doubts what we were about to do. But when I untied Melody's hands and took the leash from her collar, we discovered there were no attachments to the bed by which she might be secured. I could have cared less but Melody was perturbed.

"But, Sybil dear, you absolutely must keep me in some form of restraint, that is, when I'm not locked in some stall. The Estate won't like it if you don't."

Her use of my real name made us once more equal as we had been when I was a pony in the same stable. We were almost the same age and would have made a marvelous pony team of two had I not been a member of the Council. I knew she was correct about restraint but on our first night together there would be none, not even the tying of her hands. Tomorrow would be different. I remembered I possessed a pair of handcuffs. Handcuffs are so beautifully convenient. We went together to share a bath of oriental splendor. Melody's morning greeting was to do a lovely stretch and fling wide her lovely arms. "There you are, Sybil, see, I'm as free as the wind and I didn't run away."

"That proves you don't need restraints." I seized the opportunity to make a point. "Tying you up is a waste of energy." Melody was as pleased with me as I with her. Our biggest problem would be to avoid a relationship that was too easy going, instead of the proper pony-mistress one. Alone we were Melody and Sybil. Of the two of us, she was the most determined.

"Sybil, you've got handcuffs? I'm sure you have." I told her where they were but when she fetched them, I refused to locked them on her wrist. But Melody was equal to the task, closing the steel circlets upon herself with studious caution to get them as tight as possible without hurt.

When the job was done she held them up for me to admire, her own eyes shinning. "See, Sybil, I'm dressed." Archly she mocked, "You won't make me strip, will you?"

We went to breakfast. When it was done I ordered her to do the dishes, including those from tea the day before. Laughingly she obeyed, the handcuffs impeding not at all. I wondered what I had done to deserve such a treasure!

Apart from its preoccupation with ponies, the Estate was as prudish as Queen Victoria. There were things you did and things you did not do. And a delegation of matrons would very soon put you right if you did wrong. Such wrong-doing was usually not punished by the whip, but by the verbal censure of your peers. The oppression of ponies was a gauge by which you were judged. Poor Marjory had overstepped the bounds of tolerance and thus was now shackled to an iron ball, busily hacking at the cane.

It was understood and acceptable that a mistress take a choice ponygirl to her bed. It was equally understood that said pony would be safely locked behind iron bars in the stall before dawn. That this severely inconvenienced the mistress in the middle of the night was a matter of no concern, the pony in the cage was what truly mattered. It was the same with restraints, although in this the Estate was oddly inconsistent. If a mistress trusted the girl and sent her about affairs which could be described as "work," it was acceptable that the girl be free. To turn her into a messenger but keep her feet leg-ironed was obviously impossible. But the Estate

artificially contrived a useful comprise. Handcuffs worn in front impeded little and were thus employed often. Some ponies admitted to wearing them night and day for several years, and would certainly now feel naked without them. My recent appointment as dispenser of justice on the Council had lifted the burden of deciding punishments. A delinquent was now sent to me for sentencing and the sentence carried out upon the premises. But there remained an understanding that trifles and just simple naughtiness were a domestic matter and the mistress was at liberty to impose small penalties for pony transgressions. This included the caning of a pony's hands. Having your hands caned hurts something awful, I know! But so much depended upon the number of strokes and the vigor with which they cut the palpitating palm. In it's wisdom the Council had imposed a limit of three cuts upon each hand. If the sad and tearful maiden deserved more, she would be sent to me for sentence.

There were other small diversions by which a pony could be encouraged to closer attention to her duties. One was to keep her head bridled and her mouth firmly bitted through the night. By morning the pony would have made good resolutions to behave. Another infliction no pony cared for was the cropper belt and the cords tight up within her crotch, possibly also within her swollen lips. Worn throughout the day and while her feet flashed busily between the shafts of a buggy, this could be taxing indeed. The list was long. Most ponies could recite it to you by heart.

With Melody delightedly wearing her self-inflicted handcuffs, she and I sat over coffee to discuss the disposition of her day. I would soon be due in court and would remain there as long as sad and sorry maidens were brought to me.

"But it's simple, Sybil!" Melody pointed out. "That's what the stalls in the stable are for. You lock me in one of them and I'm safe until you come home. You know how it works."

"I can't leave you alone behind bars all day, you'll get morbid."

"I know I'm accustomed to having the other three for company," Melody admitted thoughtfully, "but I'm a big girl now and I'll bet you on any given day on the Estate there's a hundred girls locked firmly behind bars and alone." Her eyes twinkled at me mischievously.

"I could harness you to the buggy and drive to the courthouse. But then I'd have to leave you tethered to the rail. And that wouldn't be much fun. Or would it . . .?"

"The courthouse is so close, it would be easier for you to walk than to harness me. But if that's what you prefer, I won't mind a bit. I promise I won't break my tether and go on the rampage."

I had never harnessed a pony. My fingers trembled to the point where a smiling Melody had to help me with the buckles. When I clamped her forearms to the shaft, she lost the ability to do anything except obey the whip. When it came to clamping

her tongue and adjusting the bit and bridle I felt a total bitch. But her shinning eyes reassured my failing resolve. By the time I was finished with the harness and its plumes, I found myself the proud possessor of as smart looking buggy and pony as the Estate could boast. I climbed into the buggy and flapped the reins with total assurance but a fast beating heart. Just to assure Melody I was not altogether a sissy, I lightly flicked Melody with the whip. She tossed her plumed head and pounded the road with speeding feet. My spirits sang.

The court was not downtown, but there would be enough coming and going to keep my pony diverted through the day. I had to realize this was the culmination of a pony's conditioning and training throughout the years in what I secretly suspected was a sly snow job, to prime the budding maiden with thoughts of happiness in harness and behind iron bars. If the Estate achieved nothing else it contrived a miracle in this alone. Most teenagers could scarcely wait to feel the bit between their teeth.

I longed to kiss the poor darling as I tethered her to the rail. But members of the Council were not suppose to kiss ponies in public. I tied the tether to the rail and patted her bare shoulder and left darling Melody to what I felt certain would be a damn dull day but one that would probably be preferable to sitting on the straw in the cage. I tried to look suitable severe as I entered my office.

I had it made!

7

Melody in Iron

She was a handsome creature. For reasons of their own, the guards had cuffed her wrists behind her back. She stood before my desk, proud, arrogant, and very beautiful. I scanned her printed form to learn she had completely demolished a neighbor's buggy. In addition, she had pulled up a whole bed of prize begonias and strewn them on the gravel. Curious, I asked, "How the devil did you manage to do all that?"

"It was easy − I used an axe on the buggy, and anyone can pull up plants. I waited until after the rotten bitch had gone to bed."

"You do not wish clemency?"

She shrugged. "Why should I! I'm glad I did it, and I'd do it again. And everyone knows I did it, so there's no use being called a liar too."

"Ponies don't order this court what to do. For a pony, you've got a lot of nerve."

"Pony! Hell, girl, I'm no pony. I haven't been a pony for a couple of years. I'm

twenty-seven. It's down there on the form."

I flushed. She was right, it was there. I wished Lenore or Levina was dealing with this case instead of me. I said, "You're upset. This court is willing to listen to any excuses you care to offer. Perhaps you have a character witness you care to offer."

"Oh, for God's sake, stop trying to fill your shoes! I don't know how you got this job − I'd be a damned sight better than you − but get on with it. Do I get my head cut off or life in a dungeon?"

My points of reference were limited − they covered only what was vaguely described as "destruction of property," the penalty for which was one month hard labor. At night the prisoner was to be heavily chained within a stall.

"Is that all!" the graduate exclaimed without relief. "I thought you'd come up with something really dramatic, at least have me whipped in the downtown park in public view. Have you forgotten the pillory and the stocks? How about I go back and start demolishing her house!"

I felt sure Constance was not a masochist. She was probably a chagrined woman venting spleen with more than a touch of bravado. "Do you want me to include those things in your sentence?" I demanded sharply.

Constance shrugged disdainfully. "Go ahead, you might as well do it right. They've got my hands cuffed behind my back so I can't do anything."

I felt sorry for this woman three years older than I. Perhaps she was my first test of my ability to assess judgment. Perhaps Lenore and Levina had set it up and were quietly chuckling over my dilemma. They had failed to tell me I had to deal with females over pony age. I was glad I wore the harness of a guard. Quite suddenly I had a vision of what life might easily be like for women alone who passed from being a pony, regimented and controlled, into the freedom of private life. I could well imagine frustration and uncertainly. If this woman had a man . . . !

"I sentence you to one month at hard labor and to be heavily chained each night inside a stall," I told her evenly. "It is what the rules proscribe. I think you're lucky."

I called a guard and handed her the completed form then watched her lead the haughty beauty to the iron ball by day and the chains by night. From her attitude I could well imagine her being harshly whipped each evening for failing her quote. The case of Constance Connors left me distressed.

My next judgment was a relief. It was upon a richly endowed nymphet of seventeen who's two years as a pony had done little to dampen a naturally high spirit. Tracy Hannock was one of those delightful females who, seeing and hearing no evil in others, was in theory incapable of sin themselves. She moved in a delightful aura of total innocence. She was handcuffed but wore the steel bracelets in such a casual

manner as to tell me she wore them most of the time. She opened her case by a simple statement, "You're Miss Charmers, aren't you? I've heard about you and I'm thrilled to bits."

She eyed me with a touch of doubt. "You won't be too hard on me, will you?"

She was one of those I would have loved to kiss and send upon her way. But, reading her printed slip, was like a fictional account of girlish mischief from a Victorian under-the-counter book. Reading it aloud I had a hard time not to giggle. It was easy to see that none of her offense could even remotely be called a crime it was only the number of them which brought her now to stand before my desk. As I read her indictment, she punctuated it with girlish giggles.

"Glue on the toilet seat of a Mistress. Syrup within her Mistress' bed. A couple of toads inside her Mistress' handbag. String across a passage over which the Mistress must trip. The loosing of a nut so the Mistress' buggy lost a wheel." The list went on and on to prompt my inquiry, "But how could you do these things? Weren't your properly restrained or locked in a stall?"

"Well, I was always handcuffed," Tracy explained patiently as if I were a bit dim. "But, of course, handcuffs don't stop a girl doing much, do they, Miss Charmers?"

"Evidently not!"

"My Mistress wanted me in bed every night so, after she'd gone to sleep, I used to . . . Well, I guess I sort of . . . did things. If you know what I mean."

"You're Mistress was very kind to you and you abused her trust."

"I suppose you could say that." Tracy wiggled erotically as if to rid herself of sin. "But I never did anything really bad . . . Did I?"

"All of them are things a pony is not suppose to do." I made my voice as acid as possible.

"Yes, I know that. But I do think my Mistress is terribly unkind sending me here to you. I do mean, she caned my hands and my bottom before sending me here. I told her I thought that was plenty, and if she punished me any more I'd get word to my Mother and make a complaint."

I could see this was a case of too much kindness. If Tracy had been locked in her stall each night and kept busy with the buggy each day, none of this would have happened. The terms of reference provided no help in a case like this. Glue upon a toilet seat was hardly a cardinal crime. Even though I was glad I had not sat on it! With a touch of exasperation I demanded, "Your behavior has been outrageous. How do you think I should punish you, Tracy?"

"Please don't bother! You can just send me back home. These handcuffs belong to my Mistress, so you don't have to take them off." She added a final touch of outrage, "Perhaps you wouldn't mind writing her a note telling her how nice you think I am and how lucky you think she is to own me. I'd be so grateful."

"That's a letter I won't be writing. You're altogether too flip about the whole thing. I'm sentencing you to spend a whole day locked in the public pillory for every one to see."

I could see her cute little mind assessing possibilities. "I don't get whipped?" she inquired doubtfully.

"Yes you do. I'll add ten strokes with the cane upon your bare bottom."

"I don't mind my bottom being caned, not a bit. Getting caned always makes me beautifully horny, and I have the most gorgeous orgasm afterwards. But I sure don't want to stand in the pillory. Everyone will laugh at me and make crude remarks. Couldn't I have something else please?"

"No you can't. That's the way of it." I completed her form and sent her packing, glad she was not my property.

Melody was constantly in the forefront of my mind. The poor darling was tethered out there to the rail for everyone to look at. I knew her condition bothered me far more than it bothered her, but I was constantly searching my mind for the means whereby I could bring that equanimity to myself. I did not wish to lock her in a stall alone or place upon her loveliness cruel bonds. I guiltily realized Lenore had made me the most fortunate of woman. In Melody she had given me a fortune beyond price. If I was compelled to keep Melody under restraint or in a stall, it was no more than Melody's normal expectations. Ponies took these things for granted in a way I never could. I sighed and looked down at the sole remaining form upon my desk. I was instantly curious.

There were five of them, all within the first year of pony service. They seemed very young as they were marshaled into my presence by a grinning guard who had taken the precaution of tying them together by their wrists. Naked and only a trifle ashamed, they stood at the prescribed distance before my desk and surveyed me with frank curiosity.

I can understand why some men become obsessed by pubescence. There is a quality about the teenage girl most shockingly carnal. Their giggles are lewd, their whisperings sensuous. Their breasts are large enough to make one wonder just how large they will grow to. They are aware of their breasts and seem to enjoy showing them off beneath the various coverings designed to hint and tease rather than conceal. They know themselves budding into curves and soft places that attract members of the opposite sex. And their own, for that matter. But they are still regarded mostly as children. They radiate sex in waves one can almost feel.

The self-appointed leader at one end of the line spoke instantly, "We think you're ever so nice, Miss Charmers, but we'd all like to go home."

I looked at the five young, expectant faces and at their bound wrists which probably hurt, and felt myself thankful they were thus bound, five youngsters naked and free might be hard to cope with.

"You can't go home," I told them sharply. "You've just begun your servitude as ponies. You ought to be happy. I can scarcely believe what I read about you."

They spoke breathlessly, one after the other and often all together. "Oh, it's all true, Miss Charmers, honest it is. We had the most wonderful time and we don't know why everybody's mad at us."

I took another glance before suggesting, "Why don't you tell me about it in your own words."

The eager young voices were very sincere. "The stable girl forgot to lock our stall. It would have been silly not to escape!"

"The pot of paint was right there and it seemed a terrible waste not to paint Mrs. Toosberry's cow green. She didn't mind a bit − the cow, I mean."

"The buggy was just sitting there and all we did was push it down into the creek. It's not our fault it just sort of floated away."

"And Mrs. Toosberry had this money on her dresser just sort of lying there. It seemed a pity not to use it."

"What they said about using it to buy all those bottles of wine isn't true, either. What we did buy was Southern Comfort, which is every so nice. Have you tried Southern Comfort, Miss Charmers?"

The tale of a colorful and outrageous afternoon went on and on. There appeared few crimes in my terms of reference they had failed to commit. But my heart went out to them in their youthful exuberance in unexpected freedom. To imprison these five nymphets behind bars to await a profitable sale seemed almost cruelty. Quite obviously their owner should have had the sense to keep them leg-ironed or at least handcuffed. They stood there in shinning innocence, sometimes wiggling a wrist against its cords, and heartbreakingly desirable in their young nakedness.

"Your sentence is to sit for one hour upon the horse," I told them wearily. "You may now go back to your guards."

"Oh, Miss Charmers, only an hour!"

"Have you sat on the horse before?"

"Well, no. It's a sort of pole thing a girl sits on, isn't it? It sounds such fun!"

"Very well, young ladies, since it seems to be your wish I'll make it two hours instead of one. I think you'll find that's plenty." I inscribed their form, holding up my hand to inhibit further discussion. Then I gave the slip of paper to the girl at the end of the line and ordered them out of the court. Their laughter tinkled down the hail. I felt at least a hundred years old.

When I freed Melody's tether our eyes were close. She managed to convey the message I should not kiss her in this public place. Members of the Council did not kiss their ponies while their ponies were in harness. Instead I did a little touching under the appearance of checking her harness and bindings. The touchings made us both feel good. I then climbed into the buggy and guided her to the building in which the justice was dispensed. Those five young girls had piqued my curiosity.

The guards were equal to their task. Five maidens to be punished for two hours each would occupy all day. They therefore fastened a plank upon its edge and supported it above the ground. The maidens had watched the whole procedure and, so I gathered, had offered helpful suggestions together with some unconstructive complaints. I listened in delight. "Suppose we have to go to the bathroom?"

"Couldn't you find a wider plank, that one's going to hurt our pussies."

"We don't think that nice Miss Charmers wanted to hurt us. I think she was thinking of a nice round pole or something like that."

The guards paid no attention. There were four of them so my five delinquents were well taken care of. The first was swiftly detached and her wrists bound behind her back. Then she was bodily lifted astride the plank and held in position while her ankles were noosed and drawn apart. I noted the care used to insure the placement of the delinquent pussy where it would hurt the most. When the little darling's arms were raised far up behind to maintain her painful perch and her taut young legs tractioned harshly to either side, the child could no longer move but could certainly speak.

"I don't think I'm going to like this. I thought it was going to be fun. You'd better let me down and do it again, I think you've done something wrong. This hurts something awful."

The protests continued while number two was readied to share the same distress. Number three and four followed swiftly, but number five, finding herself suddenly free, leaped swiftly towards the door. When she was recaptured and brought back for the binding of her hands she was in tears, bitter tears of realization of the inevitability of punishment. By the time she was fastened astride the wicked edge,

her legs taut and stretched, there were tears of pain and disappointment on every cheek. There were also protests of outrage and moans of discomfort.

"We didn't know it would be like this. We thought we would just have to sit on a pole!"

"This will ruin our pussies! We'll never be able to pee again."

"Miss Charmers said one hour. Don't you keep us here a minute longer!"

"We don't deserve this – not for painting a silly old cow green! And the paint was right there waiting!"

I wished I had held them to the one-hour sentence. An hour on the horse is bad enough, none should know that better than myself! Impelled by curiosity I was certain I would regret, I walked within the range of vision of all of them to circle them and truly study the effects on a girl siting astride a plank's edge. What I beheld made me wish more than ever I had kept the sentence to the original hour instead of two. The nymphets were young, their weight far less than that of a mature girl. But, even so, as I stared in awe at my own creation, their pussies were cruelly crushed as the plank's edge thrust hard within their crotches. I remembered very well my own conviction I was being split in two. They would feel that now! I said severely, in the stereotyped language of authority, "I hope this will be a lesson to you."

"Please, Miss Charmers, tell them to take us off. Tell them we're too young for such pain."

"I'm splitting in two! Miss Charmers!"

"I'll never be able to pee again or have babies or . . . ooooohhhhh! Pleeeease!"

"I'm going to start screaming, Miss Charmers. You don't want me to start screaming, do you?"

"Let me down, let me down, let me down!"

My fire burned fiercely. This teenage anguish was erotism with a capital E! I answered nothing. Had I not been The Law I would have tugged feverishly at knots to set them free and pardon their youthful sex from this terrible punishment. Before I disgraced myself I turned and left the five little beauties to pay their tribute to The Law. I suppose justice was in there somewhere but I wasn't all that sure.

"You love girls far too much, Sybil," Melody reproved when we got home. "You worry about us and you want to set us free and you don't want us to be punished. Darling, you're going to have to watch yourself. Don't blow that lovely authority you've been granted." She chuckled in wry amusement. "Don't ever hesitate to

punish a pony. Most of us need it and need it bad. They won't be standing there in front of you if they didn't. No woman sends a pony to be punished without good reason. And there's always evidence . . ." She looked at her joined hands and added, "You'll have to punish me sometimes, darling. I won't always be a good little pony."

"Never!"

"You were supposed to whip me as the 'welcome' after you took possession. It's the custom, you know."

"Pee on the custom! I love you."

We shared laughter. When I ceased to clutch and kiss her lovely nakedness, Melody persisted. "I really do think you should punish me, Mistress. When people see there's no marks on my back they'll know I've not been whipped. It is the custom, you know."

"It's a custom you're better not break, Sybil dear. But you don't have to whip me at all. Just send me to the guard with a slip of paper and they'll do everything. They'll send me back all nicely marked by whips and canes and the whole thing's neatly looked after. I really think you should."

"Melody, are you telling me you really want to be whipped?"

"Well, not exactly." Melody wiggled delightfully. "I simply think it would be a good idea. It's so absolutely wonderful belonging to you, I don't want to mess it up." She giggled at a memory. "There's women on the Estate who've been declared unfit owners and their ponies taken away from them to be punished. Whenever that happens it's a terrible shame because the owners have fallen in love with their ponies and just can't stand to whip them."

Melody giggled again. "Do you remember when we were kids and got punished how they told us it was for our own good and we'd be better girls for it. Well, it's sort of like that now. When the Law dictates a pony be punished, it's best to do it."

I did not whip Melody. Instead I took her to our bed and made her forget the whole fool thing. But Melody was wiser than I!

Lenore and Levina, my fellow members of the Council were the first. "You really must give the sweetheart at least a token whipping to cement your new ownership," Lenore explained gently.

"A pony can be whipped anytime to good advantage, they almost always deserve it for something," Levina added severely.

"But I just as soon whip either one of you!" I proclaimed.

"That's got nothing to do with it, your feelings don't count," Levina admonished. "And, anyway, it's not you who whips the child, the guards will do it for you. She'll return to you a much better girl."

The delegation seeking audience within my court cinched poor Melody's fate. They were determined matrons anxious to assure no pony received fewer stripes than they themselves when they were ponies long ago.

"Girls need the whip, Miss Charmers. You do them no kindness by withholding it."

"Melody has been allowed far too much freedom. She is a darling girl but a whipping is long overdue. You'll be surprised how well she'll understand."

"If you cannot have your own pony properly disciplined, it seems unlikely you can dispense justice in this court. Think about it, Miss Charmers."

"Whipping a girl's back is conventional and overrated. I suggest you do not inflict such a threadbare punishment upon such a nice girl as Melody, Miss Charmers. You must assure she receives the lash upon her sexual parts. The guards will have no trouble fastening Melody in a suitable manner. I trust we have your cooperation?"

I longed to tell them where to go and what to do but in the face of such authority, plus Melody's own urgings, I was a coward. When we got home that evening I told Melody the whole thing. "What have you ever done to make them want to hurt you like this?" I asked unhappily.

"They don't hate me, darling, they don't even dislike me," Melody assured me brightly. "You're simply up against the Estate and it's ways! What's a single pony being whipped? Darling, don't worry."

"But being whipped hurts something awful," I said dismally. "I wouldn't wish it on a dog. What's more, you've never been whipped. Everyone tells me you're a model of behavior. This welcome thing is nuts!"

"But it's the custom, Sybil. All you have to do is sentence me to a nice comprise like, let's say fifteen on my bottom, and tell the guards not to lay it on too hard. I can easily put up with that and then the whole thing's disposed of." She smiled brightly as if it was a wonderful idea.

Between the two of us, Melody was the strongest. She has a quiet assured conviction in the Tightness of things. She was of the Estate and wanted no other life. I couldn't imagine what she would do after the age of twenty-five when she was no longer a pony. But that was academic. The problem was now.

On the next day Melody took the matter in her own hand. She announced she would not be harnessed to the buggy that day but would accompany me to court

with wrists handcuffed. She kissed me hard and told me to ask no questions.

I suppose I guessed what she was up to and the darling knew I knew. But neither of us said a word and parted at the courthouse steps as if no horror hung above our heads. I knew I could trust her. But even though I had made a fair guess as to what she was up to I was unprepared for the manner of it's happening.

It was an ordinary sort of day but when I had worked through to the final slip upon my desk I found my curiosity piqued by a strange thing. Her name was Alice Brown and her age given as twenty-seven. Her sin was insubordination. The penalty recommended by my book of rules was a well caned maiden bottom.

Alice Brown was an irritated young woman who was still tugging savagely at wrists handcuffed behind her back. She was of excellent physique and the guards had not trusted her. She eyed me as if I were one more irritant in a trying existence. "For goodness sake don't have me caned any more," she exclaimed, "Just look what that woman's done to my bottom already!"

The lovely curves turned for my attention were indeed a sight to see. Miss Alice Brown had been ruthlessly caned to a fine overall purple. It must have been the whipping of a life-time. I cringed at the sight of it.

"Just because I told her a few truths," Miss Brown stated defensively. "All I said was she was a rotten bitch to treat me the way she does . . . And look what I got for it!"

"You have trouble relating to your Mistress," I inquired gently.

"Hell, yes! She should get herself a simpering fifteen year old, not a girl like me. We grate on each other's nerves."

"You age is noted as twenty-seven," I continued. "Isn't that beyond the law?"

Alice Brown was continuing to nakedly wiggled and twist as if convinced she could rid herself of the handcuffs by trying hard enough. "It's a rotten swindle that Bryant woman, she's my owner, pulls on me again and again." Miss Brown snorted disgustedly. "Every so often she puts in an application in which she says she has had to give me so-and- so many months of training and requests that my time as a pony be extended. She's kept me for two extra years and will probably keep me for life. The hell of it is she's only a couple of years older than I am. And we enjoy each other in bed. She's got a good thing going."

"Can't you stand still? You can't possibly free yourself of handcuffs, you ought to know that by now," I said sharply. "If you've got a grievance, I don't see why you haven't brought it before the Council."

"Because she keeps me chained, that's why. The way I am now is about as free as I ever get."

"You're talking to a member of the Council now. I'll investigate your complaint and see what I can do. In the meantime you're here to be punished. Can you give me a good reason why I should not sentence you?"

Miss Brown perked up visibly. "Would you do that! I'll be ever so grateful if you will." Her eyes were suddenly shinning to make her doubly attractive. "As to this punishment you have to give me, I really don't mind. I've been punished so much a little more or less doesn't matter. But I sure would be grateful if you would stay away from my bottom, it's been punished enough."

"The soles of your feet?"

"I've had that. It's awful. You can't imagine how awful it is."

"A couple of hours on the horse?"

"I've had that, too. It shouldn't happen to a dog!"

"Suspended?"

"I get that all the time. She's always hanging me around somewhere like a plant. Look, Miss Charmers, couldn't you use my back, it hasn't been whipped in quite some time?"

"But whipping a girl's bare back hurts her terribly."

"I know. But I can take twenty on my bare back without fainting. Could I have that, please?"

I sighed and completed the form and placed it in her hand. I ushered her from my court to the waiting guards. I would certainly inquire about the extra two years she had served. Perhaps I could keep Melody forever!

My courtroom was very quiet and very still. I was thinking of going home when the door opened and Melody marched in with a familiar printed from held in handcuffed hands. With an air of triumph she slapped it on my desk. "There, Mistress, it's all fixed. All it needs is your signature. The guards are waiting for me to go back down." I felt like spanking the little so-and-so's bottom myself, well aware she was quietly laughing. Instead I looked at the printed form to learn that Miss Melody Melrose was due a moderate whipping as the final legal gesture by which Lenore's gift would be made mine. For good measure, Melody had added guilty of talking back and on a single occasion being disobedient. I signed this fictional document, placed it within her handcuffed grasp, kissed her with savage feeling, and pushed her towards the door. Reaching it, Melody dug in her heels and turned.

"Sybil, darling, I want you there to watch. I want you with me so I can look at you

while it happens." Her bright voice quivered. "I've never been whipped before. This is my first time."

She turned and ran.

I stood there breathless, condemning by having done what I did, but at the same time conscious of the increasing heat below in my sex. Melody's nakedness beneath the whip was a vision I could not expel. I wondered if the poor darling would scream . . . !

There was only one way I could know for sure!

The place wherein the dictates of justice were administered was a fine, large, well-lit chamber without menace. A dungeon room had no place within the benevolence of the Estate. If a pony must be punished, she would be punished in pleasant surroundings. There were four guards present, their day's work done. Melody was their last prisoner for the day. They had secured my lovely pony in a sweet simplicity befitting her temperament. The wrist stocks were only holes in a horizontal yoke between massive vertical posts. When the yoke was raised, the girl could slip her hands within the waiting holes, the yoke would be lowered and she was held in place. That was all!

The delinquent maiden then stood with arms apart and outstretched to where they disappeared within the heavy wood. Thus stood Melody Melrose in all her naked loveliness. She turned to smile at me. Even at a distance I could tell she was trembling.

Melody stood in simple nakedness with arms held rigid and thus she would stand while she was whipped, able to move everything except her arms. The stocks might be simple but were, in their own way, cruel. The girl they held could shield nothing from the lash.

The guards had compromised on one of those long, very slender and very flexible crops which came close to being a whip. When one such had been used on me it seemed to possess venom, and it would be so with Melody now. It was shown to her and she obediently kissed it on demand. Melody was superb, she was amazing and marvelous. Stealing close I heard the fearful slicing of the air and beheld the imprint of the crop spring into vivid life upon the virgin skin of a girl as innocent as a girl could be. Melody stood in startled shock for an instant then bent her cheek upon her imprisoned arm and bit the flesh of her arm. She did not draw blood but I knew that was her way of holding in the scream that wanted to get out.

When struck again, her head reared backwards in mute tribute to the crop, one foot raised and lowered several times before she stood in tense expectancy for number three. No sound other than a gasp had escaped her lips.

It was at this point Lenore came to stand at my side. She took my hand and

whispered in my ear, "You're so sensible, darling, I'm so pleased you're having Melody attended to. The guards will mark her just enough to show her whipping for all to see." She sighed. "Isn't she sweet!"

Melody did not scream but coped with each stroke upon her back and bottom by the language of her legs and the pained dance of her nudity. Her posture with outstretched arms was almost one of supplication as, one by one, the marks appeared from her bottom to her neck. When the punishment was almost over, Lenore halted the proceedings with, "Spread your legs, Melody darling, we can't leave your private place without a touch of scarlet." She nodded to the guard who held the crop. "You know what to do." Melody spread her legs, I suppose she knew what was coming. Her cheek was once more against her arm. I think her eyes were closed. The supple snake-like withe snickered up within the open crotch to plant its mark upon Melody's most private place and snap its tip upon her belly. This unkind intrusion within her sex evoked her biggest gasp and a sudden, painfully hard jerk of her entire body. For a long second she arched on tip toes, head thrown back, every muscle tense, a most beautiful sight.

But it was not yet over for the poor girl. The guard tapped her inner thighs and she was forced to spread her legs again for another searing impact upon her sex. I think it was when she realized she was to receive another such stroke that she came closest to screaming.

With that second stroke upon her private place the punishment was over. The guards left her to stand in solitary helplessness to absorb her pain. She could touch nothing of herself. As in the beginning she turned to look at me and she smiled.

I longed to go to her. I owned Melody now, beyond dispute. My arms ached to comfort her, but Lenore's hand was firm upon my arms, her's was the whisper of authority. "Leave her alone, Sybil. She's suppose to stand a while and there's something I must do. You've done fine, don't blow it now."

In my chosen harness of a guard I was close to naked. Lenore was clothed for the Estate's eternal summer and her handbag matched her dress. She opened it now and withdraw an object which sent my heart beating fast and hard. It was another of the lovely silver bands such as circled my neck, the silver ring which could laugh at any escape effort I made. By the awful agony it had the power to impose, it would keep any girl prisoner on the Estate as surely as heavy iron shackles. Lenore held it a few moments before Melody's eyes. Then she clasped it around Melody's neck and clicked it shut as a bond to last for life.

"You two love each other too much for us to take chances. Be happy here with us on the Estate. This ring will keep you here for always." Then, as though to comfort us she added, "I love you both. Don't ever let me down."

Lenore insisted I provide us both with tea while Melody stood in the stocks, completing her punishment. "You're going to have to watch yourself, Sybil darling,"

she warned as I filled her cup. "This business of falling in love with your pony has caused no end of trouble. It gives the other ponies ideas and they become impertinent and inclined to impose on any good will that a mistress has to offer. They'll try and cozen you into leaving the stall door unlocked at night or to relieve them of leg irons and handcuffs during the day. Ponies are young and they're mischievous. I told Melody to guide you where she can. Listen to her, she's delightfully wise."

"But putting the ring on her neck shows you don't trust her any more than you trust me?"

"Just simple logic. Sort of 'lead us not into temptation,' Sybil, my pet. If those rings were not so beautiful upon your necks, you'd have something to beef about. As it is they enhance you both wonderfully. If that son of a bitch, Bill Trafford, cuts them off, I'll make him so much trouble he'll wish he'd never seen you."

"But Bill Trafford isn't here, he's far, far away!"

"Maybe, but that radio he left with Melody tells me he's hovering around somewhere. He hasn't given you up. He evidently wants Melody, too. I expect he's slept with the darling when he owned her – he'd have been crazy if he hadn't.

"There's probably some code signal in using that damned little wireless set but Melody won't give it to me, and I'm damned if I'll have her tortured to make her tell. See what you can do, Sybil. I'd love to see that bastard's face when he heard my voice."

It was comforting to sit and talk to Lenore with the knowledge Melody's punishment was passed. Melody would be standing down there in that room with the feeling of relief a girl knows after the last stroke has cut her skin. I felt better than I had all day.

"I'm not a bit sure I'll ever want to escape again," I admitted thoughtfully. "You've done so much for me and made me so terribly happy. Owning Melody has changed my life."

"It should, sweetheart. I've given you about everything the Estate has to offer. Melody is the greatest prize of all. I hated to part with the darling girl and I'm almost inclined to make you come and service me once a month. I'd cane your bottom, too, just to keep you in place. But that damned guard's harness hides nothing." She sighed. "I never cease to be grateful for this lovely life the Estate gives us. Don't ever forget that."

Melody was returned to me after Lenore had gone, a handcuffed captive girl with scarlet cheeks to match her scarlet skin. Suddenly she was shy, the whipping had been a new experience in some subtle manner of its own, implanting in the poor girl an unearned consciousness of shame. I took her in my arms and kissed her lips,

her eyes and nipples until the scarlet had faded to a gentle pink. She had been returned to me with hands behind her back but I freed a cuff and changed them to where they could be held with her usual demure unconsciousness in front. I clicked the cuff shut to make the metal band tight upon her wrist while I said, "I feel terrible, Melody. You were an absolute heroine. If I can help it, you'll never be whipped again."

I took her to our bed and buried my face within her scolded sex. It might not have been protocol, but who would ever know.

"You must harness me to the buggy and drive me through town," she said firmly after dinner. "You must then tether me a while in one of the busiest spots so everyone can see I've been whipped. The marks on my skin are gorgeous now, all nice and separate and distinct. This is the best possible time to show me off."

This was a point of view with which I could concur. Since the poor darling had taken the pain, she might as well get the credit. I placed the bit within her mouth, then climbed on board and flicked her with the whip. I'm quite sure the release of flashing legs and dancing plumes must have been a glorious felling after a whipping. I would gladly have run beside her in the shafts but there are penalties authority has to pay. This is one of them. I drove her briskly up and down the main street before tethering her to the most public of the hitching rails before going to do some shopping I really didn't need.

In a store I ran into one of the delegation of dowagers who had insisted I have her whipped in the first place. She complimented me on Melody's scarlet skin which she assured me earnestly would turn a desirable purple tomorrow. I almost glowed with absurd self-satisfaction.

In the ensuing days I exhibited Melody at every opportunity. The poor girl stood tether and harnessed to every hitching rail I could find. In addition, she insisted I use her in the buggy to drive to work even though the distance was minor. It gave an excuse to attach her to one more rail and leave her there for hours and hours for interested eyes to behold her marks of submission. When I demurred she became extremely firm in her demand to be so exposed. The fact was Melody was telling me what to do in all directions. I adored her more and more and would probably have walked upside down at her request if she insisted the Estate demanded such behavior. As it was, she guided me from every pitfall and into every pleasure, proving herself the most highly skilled courtesan upon the Estate. Lenore constantly chuckled over my absorption with my pony and advised me to always accept Melody's advice. I knew Melody was running me and not the other way around but the sweetheart was always insistent upon recognition by restraint of her social status. She was a pony and the very least she would be satisfied with was a pair of handcuffs. Often she insisted we vary these symbolic bracelets by having me bind her hands behind her back with cord. She said it was no use tying them in front because she could then undo them with her teeth. I delighted in her more and more.

One night as we sipped brandy after dinner and discussed my day in court, Melody came to a point obviously on her mind. "Sybil, you never lock me in a stable stall. There's lovely fresh straw in all of them but they never get used. Don't you think visitors might find this strange?"

"I'll be damned if I'll leave you alone in that empty space," I assured her with feeling. "You'd get morbid and sit on the straw all day."

"But, Sybil, I'm a pony, I'm supposed to be confined in a stall in the stable when not in use. Everyone knows ponies are taken to bed by their mistresses but she's supposed to be taken back to the stable afterward. You never take me to the stable at all. Someone's bound to notice this sooner of latter, especially since you harness me outdoors where everyone can see. A pony is supposed to be harnessed and bridled inside and then led out to her day's work. Gosh, Sybil, I seem to be forever nagging you."

"Don't stop," I said. "But don't tell me you actually want to be locked in the stall and sit on the straw instead of sitting comfortably her like we are now."

"Well . . . I suppose not. You're spoiling me rotten. But you're right about a pony getting morbid in solitary confinement. That will happen when she's in there all alone. Even if you didn't chain me."

"Fine! So let's forget it!"

Melody bestowed upon me her maternal look. I recognized it as a prelude to sage advice. "There is a way we can sort of get around this, Sybil," she mused thoughtfully. "Why don't you buy a second pony. Then you could lock us in together and the problem's solved. A real cheap one, there's no need to spend a lot of money." She giggled. "She can help around the house instead of me."

I recognized a good idea. I could afford it. I didn't know what I'd do with the girl when I got her but I was sure Melody would keep her busy. As a pony herself she couldn't own another pony, but she could certainly act the part of my number one girl and tell them what to do. "Have you got one in mind?" I inquired cautiously.

"Not really. But we could go to the market Saturday and look over what's offered. I remember you telling me about a cute girl named Peggy Hawks who had committed every sin in the book and had to be punished terribly. I'll bet her feet are healed by now and they'll be putting her up for sale. She sounds amusing."

Melody knelt and placed her head upon my lap. "I'm a terrible pony. Mistress, always telling you what to do." Mischief took over the lovely voice, "Maybe I deserve to be punished?"

I kissed her and told her to sit back with her brandy. "And what's this business about

asking to be punished, honey? A girl can easily become addicted to having her bottom caned, I'm half that way myself," I admitted with a laugh. "In fact, Melody my pet, we can both become addicted to having you punished. For a girl who is forever innocent, you are wonderfully punishable. It's a good thing there arc no men on the Estate or one of them would buy you and you'd never sit down again."

It was always like that with Melody and I. I wondered how I had lived so long without her, she was as much a part of me as my arms and legs. She was so damned beautiful. The word pretty was not for Melody, she went far beyond, possessing a radiance, and aura of female sexuality and loveliness. Her female scent was more potent than any I had known. As close as we were I was enveloped in it all the time. She said I affected her the same way. There is a strange and marvelous magic in this smell of girls I can't explain. But when you discover a compatible scent from a maiden's flesh you had best hold on to her and never let her go.

When Saturday came around I took Melody, or more properly Melody took me, to what I still think of as the slave market but which the Estate primly described as "The Saturday Sale." I had seen it previously but only from the point of view of a pony being sold, a limited view since any pony offered for sale spends the day tied with her hands above her head to make her as attractive as possible. Now, with Melody at my side, I toured the lovely bit of park in which the market was held and stared my fill at anxious maidens uncertain of their fate. To comfort with the Estate's opinion of what was proper, I handcuffed my pony's hands behind her back, she didn't need them anyway. We watched the vendors binding or chaining up their merchandise and with intent appraisal evaluated breasts and pubic hair to our heart's content. I found it hard to resist when confronted by a maiden, tied so she was forced to stand on her toes, pleading with me to "Buy me, please Mistress, buy me!"

But Melody giggled and told me that this was an old ploy. Should the unfortunately pony's plea fail to effect a sale she would be whipped when the got home. Mostly they sold and sold well. There were tricks to every trade.

Melody had been correct, Peggy Hawks was there. Whoever had fastened her had been kind. She stood against a massive frame to which other girls were also bound, and was busy recounting her tribulations of being a pony in disgrace and how badly it hurt to get the bastinado. She, herself, was simply attached to one of the massive uprights by a single wrist encircled in shinning steel. Her wrist was held only slightly above her head. There was little else she could do but stand and hope for approval. As she caught of us her face lit up with hope.

"Oh, Miss Charmers, my feet have healed up after what you had done to me. Now I'm for sale. Will you buy me?"

"My Mistress has me," Melody informed her primly. "Why would she wish to buy you?"

Poor Peggy was suitably abashed. "I'm terribly sorry," she said apologetically. "But even when Miss Charmers sentenced me to get my feet whipped I could tell she was nice. All the time I've been sitting chained in a stall I've been wishing I belonged to her." She eyed Melody wishfully. "I don't think you know how lucky you are."

"Are you quite certain your feet don't hurt any more?" I inquired cautiously. "Whipped feet keep a girl from being any use for a long, long time."

"Well, they still hurt a little bit. But if I don't have to stand on them all day, like this . . ." she admitted. "But I expect I deserved all I got. What I did didn't seem all that bad at the time, but sitting in that stall all chained up so I couldn't move I got to thinking that maybe I'd over done it a bit." She gazed at me with soft brown eyes. "But I suppose that's what punishment is for, isn't it, Miss Charmers?" Once more came her heart-felt plea, "Please buy me, Miss Charmers."

"Supposing I did, Peggy, what would I do with you?"

"Well, I'd be ever so well behaved. You could harness me with Melody when my feet get better. I don't think I could run too well right now. And I could do all the house work. And I'd always be second to Melody. Melody could discipline me when I need it." A small but vivid silence spread before she added, "I expect I'll need to be punished sometimes. I just can't help it."

Melody and I continued on our way, leaving the chained girl staring off at us in pure longing. We knew we would buy her but must not appear too eager. We would keep an eye on her throughout the day and, from the number she attracted who paused to consider her attributes, we might accurately guess the size of the bid I would have to make. Melody laughed without shame.

"Just think, Sybil, you could tie me to a tree or post here and you'd make a fortune. I know I'm salable. The Council paid a shocking price for me when they bought me for Bill Trafford."

Peggy Hawks was not every woman's cup of tea. Her reputation proceeded her and not many owners wanted her with feet still tender from the bastinado. My bid was low but it still prevailed. I had never seen a happier girl than when the attendant unlocked her and I chained the hands of my purchase behind her back just as I had Melody's. Looking at these two delightful creatures I now owned, I could not restrain a thrill of pride.

I was not worried about Peggy's exuberance, Melody would keep her in line. Already their eyes searched each other's with love.

Melody had pulled my buggy and I to the marketplace. We had left the vehicle and Melody's harness outside the grounds along with others. I was about to harness the dear girl when I picked up the slightest wink and shake of her head when I realized it would not do for a member of the Council to do a stable girl's task while an idea

pony stood by and watched. I changed Peggy's handcuffs from back to front and, in a fine lordly manner, told her to get busy. Melody stood still for the bridle, straps and buckles. Soon she was helpless between the shafts. I then put a noose around Peggy's neck and tethered her behind the buggy in the approved fashion. Then I sensed fear in her and, while she said no word I remembered her punished feet and the distance I was about to make her run. Relenting, I took away the tethering rope and pushed her up into the buggy beside me. I was rewarded by a look of pure adoration and a sly glance back from Melody.

"You've made me every so happy, Miss Charmers. Are you going to keep me handcuffed all the time?"

"Don't you like handcuffs, Peggy?"

"Oh yes, they're every so nice. But when they're behind my back there's nothing I can do."

"What is it you want to do?"

Melody's lovely legs were pulling us along at a fine pace despite of the double load. She was in fine condition. It caused me to wonder how so much strength could be clothed with such slender loveliness. Peggy was evidently thinking similar thoughts before coming out with another of her frank admissions.

"Nice to have my hands, Miss Charmers, because I love to play with girls. I want every so much to play with Melody and I do hope you'll lock us together in the same stall." Her shinning eyes were innocent of guile. "I'd love to play with you, too, if you'd let me. You've got the loveliest breasts and nipples."

"Is that all you like about me, Peggy?"

"Oh, Miss Charmers, fancy asking that!" The young voice was heavy with reproof. "I've been in love with all that lovely hair above your pussy ever since I first saw you but I didn't know if it was polite to talk about what an owner has between her legs. You are my owner now, aren't you? Would you like me to hold it in my hand while you drive? Your pussy, I mean?"

"You can't, your hands are behind your back. And if you talk like that all the time I can understand why you're always being punished. 'Hold my pussy' is pure impertinence."

"Well, I thought it would be nice for both of us, I don't mind the least getting my hand all wet . . ."

"Peggy! Stop such talk at once or the first thing I'll have to do when we get home is punish you." I made my tone severe but longed to laugh.

"I think I'd like to be punished by you, Miss Charmers. Don't you have to whip a new pony after you've bought her? Isn't it sort of a welcome or something? I'm so looking forward to it."

"If I'm to whip you, Peggy, I'll make sure it hurts," I warned in my most authoritarian manner. "Stop talking such nonsense or I'll gag you."

"Would you really! Oh, goodie!" Her youthful eyes were alit with curiosity. "What sort of a gag would you use to keep me quiet?"

"I'd strap the bridle on your head and clamp your tongue with the bit. You wouldn't enjoy it one bit."

I got a reasonable period of silence but a great many sly sideways looks to appraise my mood. Upon my arrival home I realized I had a problem, not with the girls but with myself. I did not want to part with Melody, if locked her in a stall with Peggy she would have company enough for anyone. But I didn't want her in the stall at all, I wanted her in the house with me. But I knew I was dealing with a new experience so I unlocked Peggy's hands to fasten them again in front. I stood and watched as she unstrapped Melody but not without a deal of sly teasing of the two nipples Melody could not shield. I made a mental note to never leave Melody helpless within reach of such young and artful hands. It was easy to see Peggy had been a stable girl. In the absence of handcuffs she now tied Melody's unresisting hands behind her back. I could tell Melody was getting a charge out of the whole thing and being deliberately docile to test what our new possession might inflict. When she was led to the hose to be washed down I was about to intervene when she signaled me again to allow it to happen. The dear girl turned this way and that to expose all of herself to the unkind jet Peggy used with such panache. I had become curious myself and watched while my beloved was dried and marched to the stall. Intensely curious, I followed.

I need not have worried, Peggy was equal to the task. Selecting the nicest of the stalls, she pushed Melody inside then followed and slammed the door shut. The key was in plain view but well out of reach. Peggy Hawks turned to clutch a bar in each chained hand and to eagerly inquire, "Did I do that right, Miss Charmers? We are locked in, aren't we? If you bring us supper later on, you won't have to bother with us until morning."

I had been dismissed! Competence had taken over and desired no further supervision. Peggy's hands were cuffed in front but Melody's were tied behind her so she could shield nothing from nymphet hands. Peggy thought she had made a neat move to insure her nighttime delight. I said nothing but was intensely curious. I left my ponies behind the bars and went into my suddenly lonely house.

I could settle to nothing. I longed for Melody with intensity enough to hurt. I did not want to lose her to a nymphet in a cage. It was not long before I regretted the whole silly adventure. Melody might be able to endure imprisonment behind the

bars for a period each day. But her absence left me bedeviled and hurt. I even considered the absurd idea of locking myself in the cage with them and sharing their straw throughout the night. Such an absurd notion generated within the mind of a Council member told me how badly I needed my pony back in the house with me. Right now we would have been laughing together over making supper. As it was I did not even wish to go near the kitchen.

Damning what Melody considered the niceties of convention within the Estate, I marched determinedly back to the stable and the one locked stall. Entering the open door unseen, I stood to look and listen.

Had I not already been annoyed with myself, I might have been amused. The two naked girls were cautiously circling the stall and warily eyeing each other's movements, Melody in a determination to evade the mischievously young hands, and Peggy obviously scared of Melody's long legs and their ability to kick. It was Peggy I first heard.

"Don't be silly, darling, all I want to do is play with you, make you feel every so lovely. And I'll let you play with me afterwards."

"I don't want to be played with." Melody's tone was vehement. "Why can't you wait until we've got to know each other. I simply don't want to be teased and sucked and bitten by a girl our Mistress has just purchased. Untie my hands, you've got an unfair advantage."

"Darling, I'm not that crazy. You can't undo your hands, I tied them good and tight. And as long as they're behind your back I'm going to get the best of you sooner or later. Why don't you simply surrender and we'll both have fun?"

The radiance of Melody's smile told me I was doing the right thing. I opened the cage door, yanked her out beyond the bars, then slammed it shut upon a suddenly sad and sorry young girl. "I'll deal with you later," I admonished before leading my beloved Melody from the stable to the house. On the way I stopped and untied her hands.

"Sybil, darling, You came just in time. That girl's a demon and far stronger than she looks. She would have tripped me and got me down then done the things she wanted to make me all hot and bothered and longing to be free. I wouldn't have thought it of her."

"Instead of supper I'll make sure she gets a good whipping. Oh, Melody darling, I'm so terribly sorry. I shouldn't have left you with her when your hands are tied the way they were. I was an absolute idiot."

In the course of making supper, our resentment cooled and I realized Peggy had hardly been guilty of a major sin. As usual, Melody gave me direction.

"It's quite acceptable to lock a pony in a stall without restraints, Sybil. So all we have to do is keep Peggy with her hands behind her back and leave me free to cope with her. I can handle her easily if I have my hands free."

"I know you can," I said irritably. "But I don't want you having to cope with her at all, I don't want you in that damned cage, I want you right here with me."

We were suddenly tight in each other's arms, our nudities thrusting and demanding, unhindered by the guard's harness tight within my skin. "This is all my fault," Melody moaned. "You wouldn't have bought Peggy if I hadn't suggested it. I don't want to be locked in a stall with her but otherwise she'll gossip with other ponies and the word will be out about you and I being together all night along. Oh damn and double damn! You had better whip me along with Peggy tonight, I need it more than she does!" She made a gesture of helplessness. "I simply didn't know how much I needed you, Sybil. I'll always need you, don't ever let me go!"

Melody and I discovered a sad and soulful young lady peering at us from between the bars. Peggy gave me no chance to say a word before she started in on me.

"Oh, Miss Charmers, why don't you put Melody in here and take me back to the house with you? I'd make you terribly happy, I'm every so good at making love." Her voice was eager.

It was obvious Peggy was a girl with whom you could never win. She obviously considered her suggestion a very good idea with which Melody and I should both agree. Since words now failed to make any difference, we handcuffed her with her wrists well above her head and to the bars of the stall. Secured thus, she gazed back over her shoulder with shinning eyes in an unmistakable dither of sexual excitation. Once again, Peggy Hawks sought a verbal victory, "It's ever so long since I've been whipped, Miss Charmers. This is going to be so wonderful and I'm so glad it's you. Please don't mind if I have an orgasm as you whip my bottom."

Melody and I shared a shrug and a grin. I cut at the pert and expectant young bottom with angry vigor. Peggy did not move but stood perfectly still as Melody and I watched the birth of the scarlet ridge of skin which was Peggy's only reaction to my blow. Finally she stated quietly, "Thank you, Miss Charmers. Please make the next one a little harder."

It was pure bravado, it had to be! But I cut five cruel strokes and got exactly the same response each time. The girl's control was amazing. I handed the thin crop to Melody and pointed to the unsuspecting back.

Peggy might have had orgasms aplenty when her bottom felt the cane, but it was different with her back. At the very first slice of the crop across her shoulders she yelped in dismay and tugged wildly at her wrists. She thrust her forehead harder into the bars and let out a robust scream as a second stroke curled around her rib cage. Number three brought tears and a sobbing admission, "I didn't think you'd

whip my back. Jeepers, it hurt so bad! Why don't you just whip my bottom. A bottom's where a girl is suppose to get whipped not other places."

She screamed lustily to terminate her complaint as the fourth cut of the crop sank into her skin. Thereafter there were no more words, only screams and gasps and other noises of distress. Peggy also regaled us with a dance of agony upon the straw. If her feet still hurt from the bastinado, there was no evidence of it now. We gave her twenty lashes and explained, severely, she would have received only ten had she held her tongue. We left her plastered against the bars while we went back to dinner. We did not even take her brandy when it was done.

Before bedtime Melody slipped out to the stable and unlocked the cuffs by which Peggy was half suspended, allowing her to sink down to the straw. She brought the handcuffs back with her and I locked them on her wrists in front while our eyes met in mute accord No two girls had ever understood each other better than Melody and I. On the following day we were told Miss Marjory Monet had escaped.

8

The Unbreakable Bond

Lenore arrived when Melody and I were halfway through breakfast. Smiling, she shook the finger of authority at Melody. "You're supposed to be locked in the stall, young lady. You two are impossible!" Then she turned to me. "I don't suppose you've heard what's happened? Marjory slipped out of her ball and chain − she's obviously run away."

Quick calculation told me Marjory still had a couple months on her sentence. I could well imagine that being out in the fields in the sun, that immense ball chained to her ankle, she had felt hopeless and took the first opportunity to flee. That meant that she was going to try to leave the Estate forever. If she was caught, those two months would still be there to serve, plus any additional time that would be tacked on. And there would be other, more dire punishments added.

"I know you're both in love with Marjory." Lenore made a forgiving motion with her arm. "You girls loving each other the way you do makes things terribly difficult. I don't suppose you would happen to have Marjory around anywhere?"

I waved the idea airily into limbo. "But please do make a search, darling. If you find her, bring her back for coffee before taking her to be whipped half to death."

Lenore accepted my offer. She knew I was in love with Marjory and would shield her if I could. She obviously thought it best to remove me from suspicion. When she returned from a long search, she demanded, "Who on earth is that you've got locked in that stall? The little bitch asked if I would mind nibbling her pussy. That

girl needs the whip. Not that she hasn't had it – she's well marked already."

I explained about Peggy, but she was small potatoes compared with the news Lenore had brought with her. My fellow Council member shook her finger once more at darling Melody. "You ought to be locked in there with her, Melody. Sybil is spoiling you outrageously. If the two of you don't watch out, I'll put you on charge and your owner will have to sentence you to something you won't enjoy. It would serve you right."

The upshot of the whole affair was the closing of my Court and my return with Lenore to take my place in the Council Chamber with Levina. Despite every excuse I could think of, Lenore insisted on Melody being locked in with Peggy for the period of my absence. She also insisted on handcuffs behind each back. I had never seen Melody less enthused. It was the first time I had sat as one of the three women who administered the affairs of the Estate. It had been understood I would serve only as long as Marjory served her sentence. The punishments she suffered must have been as bitter as gall to her proud spirit. I sensed her power as I sat in her seat, discussing her recapture with Levina and Lenore.

"We can't possibly fool with a woman blurting out our affairs to the police or the press," Levina said firmly. "The trouble is she knows the road out. Even on foot, God knows where she could be by now."

"Do you think she might go to Bill Trafford's for help?" I ventured.

"What! And get the soles of her feet beaten again?" Lenore scoffed.

"There's no way she'd go near that son of a bitch. I know I wouldn't."

"Marjory may do just that," said Levina. "She'll have no outside contacts. If she's desperate, it's a case of any port in a storm. We may as well pass the thought along to our outside authority."

Going home, I released Melody from the stall where she had been locked with Peggy while I was gone. I told her to harness my newly acquired pony to the buggy and we'd take a run. I was no longer deceived about Peggy's hurting feet – her wounds were perfectly healed.

"I wish you'd let me pull the buggy, Sybil," Melody said. "I need exercise after being in that stall all day with little bright eyes. She's like being locked in with an octopus."

"You mean you do the work and Peggy gets the free ride? No way!"

"You could leave her locked in the cage where she is – or you can cuff her hands behind her back, put a noose around her neck, and make her run along behind. You'd be in complete accord with Estate conventions."

It was quickly done. I stood and watched Peggy strap and buckle my beloved Melody between the shafts. I noted the pleasure on Peggy's face when Melody's forearms were clamped tight to either side. Clamping the bit on Melody's tongue was pure joy for the teenager. The way Peggy went about the whole thing made me feel guilty, but Melody's eyes were shining, her longing for a hard run along the road all too evident. When Peggy could tighten nothing more, I used the handcuffs to confine her hands behind her back and a piece of rope as a tether for her neck. She was not as concerned with the indignity as I would have guessed. No doubt the poor kid had spent most of her pony life under the pains and restraints engendered by her gift for irritating those by whom she was owned. As usual I felt guilty to behold her slender girlishness compelled to follow by buggy in its dust. When she caught my eye, she winked as though we shared some lewd secret.

Melody's joy in pulling my buggy infected me as well. The joy of motion and sense of power we shared was a never-ending delight. Sometimes she glanced back with a roguish eye and then redoubled her speed when I flicked the whip. It was a joyous game in which I completely forgot the tethered girl out back. When we reached our terminal point before returning home, the tethered maiden walked as far back as her rope would permit.

"Are you trying to break a record or something?" she demanded, as though in charge. "You damn near broke my neck pulling me that way. I can't possibly run that fast going home. May I sit in the buggy?"

The bit in Melody's mouth prevented her telling our youthful companion where to get off. I was not so handicapped and gave her a good dressing down. I instructed Melody to maintain the same pace during our return. Then I told Peggy she could sit down at the side of the road if she needed to rest. She ignored and contrived to arrange her tether to get as close as possible to Melody.

"You haven't whipped Melody at all," she complained. "A pony is suppose to be whipped every time she's taken for a run. They always whipped me!"

The child was exasperating but lovable. She was finding her servitude to me disappointing. I used this brief rest to explore that. "Peggy, I don't think you're happy. What's wrong? What is it you really want?"

"I was so happy when you bought me, Miss Charmers − I was the happiest girl on the Estate. I felt sure you would take me home so we could nibble and all, and then you'd lock me in a stall with Melody so she and I could nibble all night. But neither of you have nibbled me at all. I'm so frustrated I could just pop!"

"Peggy! Being a pony doesn't mean you enjoy twenty-four hour sex. Some ponies don't get any sex at all. Isn't there anything else you enjoy?"

"What else is there! If we were owned by men, they would be fucking us all the time. I don't see how it's any different because you're a girl." She tugged at the

handcuffs behind her back. "And I'm always kept fastened some way so I can't run away − I can't even play with myself! Don't you see what I mean!"

I saw very well what she meant: Peggy was a nymphomaniac. She might grow out of it, but in this first flood of womanhood she radiated sex in waves, female perfume implored attention. Everything about her was vibrant - palpitating with desire. I should never have whipped her. I often thought Melody and I carried our hunger for each other's loins too far, even for the Estate. But Peggy was way ahead of us, and I knew I could not possibly inflict the child upon an imprisoned Melody. I knew now I had no wish to imprison Melody at all. I unlocked the handcuffs from behind Peggy's back, freed her neck of the noose, and left her standing entirely free and utterly bewildered.

"There you are, darling, I give you your freedom. You don't owe me a thing, and you can do exactly as you please. I suggest you run home to mother and talk this thing over with her."

Peggy flung herself on the ground at my feet. "You mustn't! Oh no!" Her voice was frantic and choked with sobs. "Please, oh please! Sending me back to Mother is the most awful punishment you could inflict. I'll be disgraced. I'll be arrested and put in prison, and after they whip me they'll send me to the market to be sold again. And no one would buy me − I just know they wouldn't!"

I looked at Melody. She could not speak because of the bridle, but nodded and shrugged in confirmation of what the younger girl had said. It seemed like nonsense. Even on the Estate, a girl should be able to go back to her mother and strive for a fresh start without going to prison. I gently patted the young head and disengaged her arms to get back into the buggy, leaving Peggy weeping into her hands. I slapped the reins for Melody to turn the buggy and start for home. I felt like a bitch.

I did not look back. There is something heart-breaking about youthful feminine anguish. If Peggy put on a good enough show, she could probably extract anything she wanted from me. But I had given her freedom, surely that was enough.

We were halfway home before I was aware that Peggy was following. She had caught up and was doggedly matching Melody's pace in grim determination not to be left behind. I was angry. Surely the Estate could not be offended by the freedom of a pony. I stared fixedly ahead, but the youngster's labored breathing finally wore me down. I pulled on the reins, and when Melody came to a halt, I took the handcuffs and rope, and fastened Peggy as she had been before. The child glowed with happiness. I was once more bewildered by the Estate and its ways. Without Melody's confirming nod, I would not have given way, but at that moment I wanted to avoid the criticism of those who might raise an eyebrow at the sight of a naked pony running in freedom to my home. Wryly, I admitted to myself that my number two ponygirl had scored a victory.

Upon arrival home, I wasted no time in argument. I unharnessed Melody, took the bit from her mouth, and then the two of us took our panting young prisoner, hosed her down, and thrust her within the stall. We slammed the door, making good our escape before Peggy could think of things to say.

Melody and I went immediately to the bath as though to wash away a disagreeable experience. We both felt terribly sorry for the youngster, but knew of no other way of coping. At last I made my admission of guilt: "We'll have to take her to the market next Saturday and put her up for sale. Someone will buy her." Melody and I clung together in mutual sorrow. We both felt guilty, but neither wanted the emotional turmoil this lascivious nymphet would bring. Melody no longer chided me about the barred stall and the Estate's opinion she should spend much more time behind those bars. We loved each other, and that was that.

When we went to the lounge to have a drink, Marjory Monet was seated on the couch, thoughtfully sipping brandy.

It was a long while before the ecstasies of the reunion gave way to a factual accounting. "It was that damned pony who was suppose to look after me and keep me always chained," Marjory recounted irritably. "She failed to push the padlock all the way down to fasten me to that blasted iron ball. Halfway through the morning it fell off and I was free as air. I should have had enough sense to lock it on my ankle properly and gone on with my work. But I was so damned sick of the cane, and of getting whipped − I just wasn't thinking. I ran as if the devil was after me. Now, if they catch me, they'll reinstate my original six month sentence and send me back to my ball and chain." She looked from Melody to me and back again. "Darlings, I deserve everything they'll do to me, I've put you both in jeopardy."

"Forget it, darling. What have you been doing all day?"

"I knew this would be the first place they'd come. I was watching from the trees when Lenore searched the place. After she left, and you were gone too, I felt pretty safe, so I came in for a bath. And helped myself to some food and a little drink. What are you going to do with me?"

"Whatever you think best, Marjory dear. All you have to do is say."

"Shit, Sybil, it's not that simple. I don't know what to do, and you don't either. I'm making myself a bloody nuisance."

"Why don't you give yourself up, Mistress? The Council doesn't hate you, I'm sure they would be kind," Melody interjected softly.

"They'd be as kind as the code would let them," Marjory retorted. "But the Code says I have to go back to square one and be flogged as well. I expect you're right, though, it's the sensible thing to do. I simply can't face that punishment beginning again, going on and on." She buried her lovely face in her hands and wept.

Melody and I comforted the disgraced nudity. Melody and I wore no clothes, and Marjory was as naked as if in the cane field. Her labors there had honed her into a magnificent specimen of womanhood. As I admired her gorgeous curves and sleek planes, I saw also a vision of them trembling beneath the whip or on a horse. My poor one-time mistress had committed an unpardonable sin.

"I've debated about staying in hiding, and after the search finally ends, sort of creeping at night to the road and beyond. But I've no friends out there and no money. And the outside authority would be on the look-out. I'm stymied either way."

"What about Bill Trafford? He'd look after you."

"Sure he would!" Marjory's voice was bitter. "He'd chain me for life, whip me everyday, and screw my ass off at night. I'd be better off with the Council."

"Suppose my mistress admitted to knowing your whereabouts and tried to make terms with the Council?" Melody asked soberly. "Don't you think they'd put you back where you were and no questions asked?"

Marjory surveyed Melody with a sort of resigned disgust. "Melody, are you twisting Sybil around your little finger? I'll bet you are. Do you realize you're not wearing a single restraint?"

Melody flushed. So did I!

"We've been sort of busy and bothered," Melody admitted. "I do try to remember the handcuffs, but I'm afraid I forgot."

"It's Sybil who's supposed to keep you restrained, not you. Damn it, Melody, you know the rules!"

"Never mind about us," I interrupted. "It's you we've got to worry about, Marjory."

"Maybe, but you two are skating on thin ice. I'll bet you think that because you're a member of the Council you can get away with it. As far as Lenore and Levina are concerned, you probably could, but the other authority − the ones who run that little prison you were in − if they ever catch you, you'll find yourself behind bars and not wanting to sit down."

"All right, all right!" I accepted the hazard Melody and I might be in. "What we've got to worry about, Marjory, is you. From what you know of the circumstances, do you think it's any use my acting as an intermediary?"

"I still think you'd end up behind iron bars, with a whipped bottom. But it's a lovely idea if it would work. How many people know I've escaped?"

"Not many. Levina and Lenore are keeping it quiet. You're an embarrassment. Stay with us tonight, and I'll go talk with them tomorrow. You've been enjoying female attention?"

"Good gosh, no! That's the last thing they permit. I haven't felt a mouth or a tongue since this whole affair started."

I looked at Melody, and she looked at me. We thought alike. We handcuffed Marjory's wrists behind her back, escorted her to the stable, and locked her safely behind bars with Peggy Hawks. We almost ran back to the house.

The next day I had to attend court and perform my function as a Council member. This disposed of myself and also Melody, who would stand between the shafts of by buggy throughout the day. It left a couple of females in my stable, safely locked within a stall. When Melody and I thrust their early morning food between the bars, both Marjory and Peggy were in the deep sleep of sexual exhaustion. We smiled. At least we had solved the immediate problem of Peggy Hawks. She could feed on Marjory to her heart's content. We didn't wake them, feeling we had troubles enough.

I had come to play an amusing guessing game with myself in striving to assess the degree of a pony's guilt by the manner in which the guards had bound or chained her before leading her into my presence. Those who stood before me without restraint could almost be dismissed with a reprimand or the mildest of inflictions. Handcuffs came to denote a normal degree of delinquency to which any high-spirited pony might be subject. If the handcuffs were behind her back, I could expect something serious. If she was bound with cord, I could brace myself to deliver a stiff, heart-breaking sentence.

Angela Prowse stood naked for my inspection, totally unrestrained. She had an engaging smile and managed to impart a sense of motion to her appealing nudity by shifting her weight gently from foot to foot without every really moving enough to be told to stand still. She viewed me and my courtroom as if visiting a museum. When I read her charge, I tensed and viewed her with fresh interest.

"I know it's pretty bad," she agreed cheerfully. "I'm terribly sorry."

"Why aren't you restrained?"

"I'm afraid the guards have got to know me," she admitted brightly.

"I'm always guilty, so I never argue or give any trouble. I'm always grateful for being punished so I can get off to a fresh start."

"You enjoy being punished?"

"Oh, no! It hurts terribly, and I always cry. But it's such a lovely feeling when it's over."

I looked at her sheet once more. "You handcuffed your mistress to the bed while she was asleep, then went visiting. What have you got to say about that?"

"Not much, really." Angela appeared to be searching her mind for more evidence. "You see, we had gone to bed the way we always do, and were doing nice things to each other. My mistress hadn't bothered to handcuff me until we decided to go to sleep. We drifted into sleep without thinking, and when I woke up, there was my mistress, and there were the handcuffs. It seemed a shame not to use them. I mean, it was the chance of a lifetime! So I locked her wrists to the bed rail and ran over to the Roger's place to visit their ponies."

"Don't you realize what an outrageous thing that was − something no pony should even think of?"

"Well, not really. At the time it seemed the obvious thing to do. And I didn't think my mistress would get so pissed about it. I see now how wrong it was, and I'm terribly sorry."

"You're only sorry because you're going to be punished."

"Well, I expect you're right. I feel sure I'll be hurting real soon. I really am silly. I was never all that good in school, you know."

Angela was a delicious female package of woman and probably well aware of it. I took another look at her charges. "I suppose you know what I'm reading here?"

"I expect that's the one where I loosened the wheel on Mrs. Harper's buggy so it fell off halfway down the road. But how was I to know she'd tumble out and get all bruised! She made a big fuss about nothing." The young, appealing eyes sought mine. "Was it really all that bad, Miss Charmers?"

I sighed. One by one, I read the list of maiden misdeeds. Angela gave this chronicle of her sins only polite attention. Then I made a shrewd guess. "You've probably guessed what your punishment has to be, Angela − it's pretty bad."

"Well, sort of. Last time I was whipped, they told me what I'd get if I kept on the way I was. I guess I did keep on, didn't I? I never really thought about it."

"You most certainly did. Why on earth don't you stop and think?"

"I'll bet you're going to sentence me to have my feet whipped − that's what they said would happen."

"I have no choice, dear. In addition, you'll have to spend time in the cane fields.

You'll put in your time in the fields before the soles of your feet are whipped."

"That's because I want to be able to walk after my feet have been punished. That's pretty bad, isn't it? And I'll be thinking of my feet all the time I'm cutting the cane. Couldn't you give me a pardon or something, Miss Charmers?"

Poor Angela! She was a product of pony society. But the book told me what to do with her in no uncertain way. Delivering her with her printed sheet back to the guards, I was amused to note they instantly handcuffed her wrists behind her back. Now that Angela knew what she was going to get, she became suspect.

My mind turned to the mistress I had so long adored and was now locked in my stable. I got through the day somehow and then instantly went to my fellow Council members.

"I've got Marjory Monet safely locked in a cage in my stable," I told them. "We can all stop worrying."

The stunned silence was to be expected. Lenore's face was a picture of relief. Levina's held suspicion. "Are you certain you were not involved in her escape?" she demanded darkly. "I suppose now you realize the problem of getting her out of the Estate, so you had to back-track and come to terms – is that it?"

"The real guilt lies with the girl who failed to lock the padlock," I pointed out reasonably. "Marjory had been punished so long and so much she didn't stop to think. She just ran. She realizes now it was a mistake."

"She reverts to her original six-month sentence. Plus fifty lashes," Levina affirmed without debate.

Lenore was stricken. "But it's not a real escape at all," she protested. "If Marjory's given up voluntarily, we shouldn't be too cruel. Damn it, Levina, give the girl a break."

"I'll go and get her," I volunteered. "Bet you'd like to talk to her and hear what she has to say. I can keep her handcuffed so she doesn't do anything silly."

"You've kept her naked, I hope?"

"Of course. I haven't given her any privileges." I put my heart into my words. "Please forgive her. I beg of you, don't make her start her sentence all over again. Let me go and bring her to you."

"No!" Lenore's negative was like a pistol shot. "I couldn't bear to have her stare at us or hear her pleading. I loved her. I guess we both still do." She looked at Levina. "Let's give her a break. Why don't we deliver her to the prison authority and have her come up before Sybil for sentencing? That way everything would be open and

above board."

"Whip the soles of her feet."

"We can't do that either, not if she has to work in the cane fields. It takes a couple of weeks for the soles of a girl's feet to heal after being whipped."

"Damn it, Lenore! Do you want to give the idiot a medal for all the trouble she's caused?"

"I don't see why we're so concerned about sending her back to the cane field," I said. "Why not leave her where she is now, handcuffed and locked inside a cage? It's a sort of solitary confinement – not much fun."

"With you feeding her caviar and truffles, I suppose! Come off it, Sybil, we weren't born yesterday."

Levina brightened at a sudden thought. "How would it be if we ordered Marjory's feet thrashed, consign her to the regular prison, then have her replaced in the cane field by that young pony you're so much in love with – Melody Melrose?"

"No! Absolutely not! I'd sooner go out in the fields myself. Melody's totally innocent of anything."

"I'm sure that can be arranged, dear," Levina retorted acidly.

"Stop it! Stop this snapping at each other. Sybil's a member of the Council. We can't possibly send her out into the cane field with a bar and chain."

"We did it to Marjory, so what's the difference?"

"There's a difference. Sybil is doing so well with the court that we'd be crazy to condemn her like that. I say she stays where she is."

"Very well then, send her pretty pony instead."

"That's horrible. Melody hasn't done a thing to deserve such treatment." Levina sneered. "You all love that damned girl, don't you? She's got you under a spell. She's served more than half her pony term, and she's only been whipped once. A few weeks with that ball and chain would do her a world of good."

I could not bear the thought of darling Melody out in the cane field. She would probably survive better than most, but she was utterly innocent. "But it's Marjory Monet we're supposed to be talking about," I protested. "I don't see why Melody got into this discussion. She's the best pony on the Estate. No one's going to think well of the Council if we're mean without cause."

We spent several moments silently looking at each other as if waiting for further outbursts. But tempers had cooled and a general air of relief about Marjory's surrender was unmistakable.

"Very well," Levina conceded finally. "You two would out-vote me anyway, so let's instruct Sybil to take this troublesome female to the prison right away, and they can deliver her to the court for sentencing tomorrow." We left it at that. I wasn't exactly happy, but I was happier than when I came. Levina had succeeded in sticking me with the rotten job of sentencing. But I knew Marjory would understand and accept what she must without blaming me. I went back to the buggy and gave a report of the proceedings to an attentive pony. Melody and I looked at each other and shrugged in resignation to another maiden's pain.

I don't know what prompted the thought. I was ashamed of it afterwards, but it was such a beautifully simple solution to a problem I couldn't resist. When I tethered Marjory's neck to the buggy for her to walk behind, hands cuffed behind her back, her destination prison, I provided her with company by tethering Peggy by her side and destined for the same incarceration. The girl had obviously one of her facile love-attachments for her companion in the stall. Peggy's eyes were bright with pleasure over being included in whatever we were doing. I don't think it occurred to her it could be something bad. Marjory Monet accepted the youthful adoration with an amused shrug. Poor Melody trotted the whole collection of us into the tiny prison of the Estate where I filled out forms, signed others, then kissed all around with the assurance of meeting tomorrow. I drove back home in a thoughtful mood, wishing Melody the seat beside me and freedom to talk. Whenever Melody was fastened in the shafts, it left me lonely and longing. But, without urging from me or the whip, Melody sped back to the farmstead quicker than ever before. When I unharnessed her we, clung together and kissed urgently. I did not lock her back inside the stall.

I told my pony nothing of Levina's unkind suggestions. I understood them for what they were: a middle-aged woman's resentment against the youth and beauty she had lost. I wanted no clouds to darken the horizon for the pony I loved. She was sufficiently upset over Marjory and Marjory's punishment. She also admitted to guilt over Peggy, feeling she should have loved the girl more than Peggy had allowed. I laughed that one away, pointing out my ownership of the impossible nymphet would remain constant through any punishment.

As I drove to the courthouse for the fateful sentencing of the woman who had been my mistress, I realized how much a part of the Council I had become. Yesterday's disagreements had, if anything, strengthened my position. Regardless of what else happened to Marjory, I had at least absolved her of serving her six months all over again. I wondered if her affection for me would sustain the blow I would have to deal it in pronouncing the sentence Levina and Lenore insisted on. Marjory would pay for her brief and thoughtless freedom with agony. As for Peggy, I had a suspicion she was flexible enough to sustain almost any infliction with a smile.

I don't remember any of the other cases I dealt with that day − my memories are all of Marjory. Two guards led her into my office and placed her in the approved place before my desk. They checked the tightness of the handcuffs behind her back and then left. The first thing I did was to lock the door behind them. I then unlocked Marjory's handcuffs and sat with her on a couch.

"What are they going to do with me, Sybil?" She was breathless with anxiety.

I gave the poor darling the good news first and watched happiness erase the anxiety. "Only two more months to go!" she exclaimed. "Oh, darling, how can I ever thank you!"

"They wouldn't let you get off scot free. They insisted you be punished. I couldn't talk them out of it."

"Well, I suppose I deserve to be punished. I acted like an idiot − I should have known better. What's the bad news, darling?"

I took her hand as though to give her strength, longing to ease the blow I was about to deal. "In the morning you get the bastinado. Ten strokes on each foot, a total of twenty. You must sit on the horse for the whole afternoon. Not that round pole thing you and I once shared, but the brutal ugly edge of a plank. I expect you know."

It was very silent. Two girls who had once shared the physical ecstasies of love were now sundered by authority and pain. I placed the hand I held against my cheek and wet it with my tears. "Forgive me," I begged. "Oh darling, please forgive me."

She shrugged. "You haven't done anything, Sybil. You mustn't feel badly about this. I'm going to feel bad enough myself about it tomorrow. You mustn't be miserable too."

"What else can I be!" I demanded. "They've given you two truly awful punishments, and one ought to have been enough."

"They're pretty bad. I don't know how I'll stand up to either of them all day, but we have to remember the poor dears had to protect themselves, and I'm sure Levina doesn't think I'm getting enough. Levina ought to spend an hour or two upon the horse − it would make her human."

It was suddenly there, almost a tangible presence: the moment when we must part. My little court was no place to make love, and the guards would be wondering about the locked door. I handcuffed her once again, then held her one more time before unlocking the door.

"I'm on my way to prison," Marjory said with mock gaiety as the guards took her arms.

I gave myself no time for morbid mediation before pressing the buzzer to summon the next prisoner. I knew it would be Peggy Hawks. Her hands had also been locked behind her back, but she appeared to be enjoying the whole affair.

"Can you order my head cut off?" she asked breathlessly. "I'm so excited! Do I get whipped again?"

I had already thought the case over. The question I now asked would affirm my thoughts. "How would you like to spend two or three weeks with Miss Monet in a prison cell? After that you could go with her to work in the cane fields. You wouldn't have a chance to run away − there'd be a ball and chain locked to your ankle. What do you think?"

She was radiant − overjoyed. I might as well have offered her the wealth of the Indies and a tall dark, handsome man to boot. Her exclamation was positively awed. "Oh, Miss Charmers, that's marvelous! Can you really manage it for me?"

It was a gorgeous feeling to be able to bestow such happiness. The girl was absurd, of course, but terribly sincere. Ridiculous as she might be, she would be an immense comfort to Marjory in what the poor dear was about to suffer.

"It's already been arranged," I told her. "I do hope you'll have no regrets."

"How could I? Not when I'm with Miss Monet. I've never been to the cane fields. Several owners spoke of sending me there, but I never got to go. Now it's actually happening. Wow, am I lucky!"

Suddenly smitten by anxiety, she said, "I'm sure I get whipped somewhere along the line. How many strokes do I have to put up with, Miss Charmers?"

"You will not be whipped. Your time with Miss Monet is your sentence. But you do stand a chance of being whipped if you don't meet your cane quota each day. That is in your own hands, dear."

Peggy was tugging at her handcuffs. I suspect she wanted to fling her arms around my neck. I pressed the buzzer for the guard. I had never seen a maiden go to prison with more joy.

I sat in the silent room and asked myself what I could have done differently. I knew there was nothing. I felt a twinge of guilt over the disposal of Peggy Hawks, but the nymphet was remarkable enough in her erotic attachment to Marjory that she might well survive, in perfect happiness, a captivity other girls would dread. No doubt retribution would fall upon my head when she returned. But by that time Marjory would be a free woman and back in authority.

I almost ran back to my buggy and Melody. My poor pony was waiting patiently for

my return. I would forever wonder at the calm acceptance of their lot exhibited by every Estate pony. From somewhere they had absorbed a magic I had missed. I envied them, just as I envied my own pony's happiness in pounding the dirt with bare feet in the transport of my buggy and myself.

I dared not think of Marjory.

9

The Cane and the Crop

It was Melody who suggested we fight depression by a visit to the two girls locked within the little prison. She said that visits were permitted, and she was sure Marjory would be glad to see us. It had been arranged that Peggy Hawks occupy a separate cell in the day, but be delivered for Marjory's amusement after dark.

"Sybil, I'd love to visit Marjory, too. Could we manage it in a rented buggy?" She actually wiggled in embarrassment. "I've already arranged it. I hope you don't mind."

"Of course I don't. I really can't imagine what I'd do without you."

"Well, yes. But there's something else. I can't go into the prison as a free girl. I've got to be properly restrained."

"I'm sure you've thought of something?"

"Yes, I have, and you're making fun of me. Plain old handcuffs won't do. You'll have to tie my wrists and elbows behind my back. Or else use a chain arrangement I discovered in a closet. What would you prefer."

"Tied elbows hurt too much, let's look at the chain thing."

The chain arrangement was a pretty thing. I wondered what pony had worn it previously. It had anklets and chain sufficient long so the girl could walk but definitely not run! Then, from the anklets, there arose up two more chains to a ring from the ring two more attached to wristlets which were themselves joined by just enough linkage to allow the captive a slight bit of usefulness. When I locked them on Melody they demonstrated the impossibility of raising her clenched fists above her waist. If she wanted to scratch her nose, she had to sit down to gain the necessary slack. Standing erect she was completely helpless.

I spent awhile in admiration while Melody clinked her captive way up and down to proudly display her dependence upon whoever held the key. She even crouched down to scratch her nose to show me it was possible. But, once more on her feet, she admitted laughingly to a complete inability to contest my ownership in her

condition. We had trouble getting her into the rented buggy, the driver of which was a pony with ironed ankles who told us she didn't mind waiting and the harnessed ponies had no choice. Melody and I clinked a musical pathway to the prison door.

I had never seen a radiance so swiftly light up a girl's features as when Marjory saw us. Handcuffed, she had been dolefully sitting upon the hard bench provided for her slumbers. But now she came to greet us at the bars. The matron unlocked the doors and told us tersely, "Thirty minutes, that all."

We were all terribly glad we came. No doubt Peggy Hawks was chaffing at the bit in another cell but she would have to wait. We joyfully thrust our three nudities together and kissed something fierce. I wished Melody had been free of the chain costume but realized we could not have everything. We talked, we kissed, we did everything but speak of the waiting tomorrow.

"I've been trying to make sense of this." Marjory mused thoughtfully. "Here I am locked in a tiny cage of concrete and iron bars. There's no way I can get out. I'm here because someone said a few words and there's nothing I can do about that, either." She lifted her cuffed hands in a gesture of desperation. "I just have to stay here until tomorrow and then I'll be taken to some other place and be tortured. I know its going to happen, that's the kicker, I know it's going to happen!"

The same somber realization was upon us all. But Marjory's summation was dramatic. "Don't use that word, darling," I pleaded.

"What other word is there? You've had your feet whipped, Sybil, and you've sat on that damned plank's edge." In an effort to laugh away the gloom, Marjory said, "That pony of yours is marvelous. Where on earth did you find those lovely chains for here?"

Melody answered for me. In her naked chained loveliness she seemed far more appropriate an occupant of the cell than Marjory or I. She was indeed the forlorn maiden who would clutch the bars and stare into the distance. Instead she was a respectable visitor as per the Estate's demands. "She makes these look trifling," Marjory admitted, holding up her cuffed hands. "You've given me fresh hope, darling. If I can get through tomorrow, I'll maybe make it through that six months. I know I can make it if they send me back to that cane, I was real good at that. I hate that iron ball with a passion but I'd sooner be with it out there than in some damned dungeon. Where are they going to keep me while my feet heal?"

"I'm trying to get you consigned to my custody. Levina's against it, but then Levina's against anything that might make someone comfortable."

The thirty minutes seemed awfully short. When the door clanged shut with Melody and I on one side and Marjory on the other, I looked back on it with her standing there in the center of the concrete floor, her chained hands clutching herself below

naked breasts, a look of infinite longing on her face. Since our purpose was over and done with, Melody and I could not get out of that prison fast enough.

In the morning there was a knock upon my door. Melody hastily locked handcuffs upon herself and went to answer. She ushered in my fellow Council members.

"Are you sure you're feeling well, Sybil dear? You've actually got that girl of your's handcuffed!" Lenore said with mock sarcasm.

Melody blushed, I said nothing. What our visitors had to say was ample. "We're going to see Marjory punished," Levina informed cheerfully. "We want you along. There'll be a humiliating effect beneficial to the dear girl. She could stand a touch of humility."

Refusal was on my tongue but I caught sight of Lenore's tiny shake of the head. Aware of watching eyes, I locked leg irons on Melody's ankle and told her severely to do the housework. Her reply was a perfectly obedient "Yes, Mistress."

With the Council I, set out on a mission I knew I'd hate but which, like most Gothic horrors held fascination enough to generate my heat. I shrugged and went along.

I had been there before. Had I ever! I knew what to expect, but we arrived at a bad moment when Marjory's upturned sole had been cut for the first time. She was screaming at the full volume and struggling in helpless agony on the rug. Her breasts flattened then reformed as she twisted and jerked.

She was fastened in the way I knew so well, her legs and feet strapped immobile, her soles and feet pointed towards the sky. There was already one vivid mark on one sole. Two ponies attended her, each with a cane. They were spreading the cuts over a long period of time and we knew Marjory still had nineteen painful cuts to go. They explained to us sweetly how the punishment was so much worse when the blows were widely separated but without pattern. Each would cut the punished girl at a moment when she thought herself safe. As if speaking of the weather, they told us how Miss Marjory Monet was screaming exquisitely. They had never whipped a girl in better voice.

I suppose Marjory saw us but she gave no sign. She was entirely concerned with the pain in her feet. I have no doubt that the factor Levina so prized, the factor of being seen thus by those she loved, was in there somewhere, too. I know for sure I would not want an audience if it were me!

Marjory's bound hands were frantic behind her back. Then I noticed that the ponies had also bound her elbows together. I shuddered at the thought of how that must feel, the painful stress on your shoulders and the tight cords cutting into the flesh of your arm. And there was the additional out-thrusting of the breasts that normally results from bound elbows. In this case it acted to make her breasts take more punishment against the rough carpet under her. I wondered how the two girls

could do such things yet remain so sweetly innocent. The answer was, of course, the Estate. The Estate always gave them guidance and was guiding them now.

As if to demonstrate, one of them flashed back her bare arm to bring down the cane to impact upon helpless flesh. Once more Marjory's cycle of pain and scream and struggle ran its course. When her jerking body finally died down and she lay passive in her bonds even Levina had had enough. Thankfully I followed them back into the sun.

Over coffee Lenore and I would like to speak of other things but Levina would not have it. She commented upon every graphic detail to which we had been unhappy witnesses. "Those two ponies have brought the punishment to a fine art," she praised. "We should cane more ponies feet than we've been doing. It's a marvelously effective punishment, a punishment no girl's is ever going to forget. Dear Marjory is never going to forget what's happening right now for the rest of her life."

I told them what I had done about Peggy Hawks. I told them I would look after both during the healing process.

"They should be chained outdoors in some public place the whole time," Levina announced forcibly. "That park down town would be ideal. Load them with chains and let the public have a good look."

"But Marjory's a Council member. We have to remember her position after she's finished her time," Lenore said.

"That's another thing," Levina said slyly. "Why do we need her back? Why can't she be expelled? Sybil is doing very well with the court. Better than Marjory was. After she's served her time in the cane fields let's return her to private life. She can buy herself a couple of ponies and whip them to her heart's content."

We decided nothing. Marjory's future was of far less concern than Marjory's present condition. In the afternoon, and led by a triumphant Levina, we went to the place of punishment to further humiliate a woman I was fighting for. But I dared not be too pushy. I was the youngest member and knew Levina could expel me even faster than she would Marjory. I asked to be excused from our present mission but was told not to be silly.

Any girl who has served a time upon the horse will have a graphic memory indelibly etched in her mind. It all came back to me now as we gazed upon the solitary occupant of the huge room. Unconsciously the ponies who had placed Marjory in her position had created a masterpiece of form and position, a Gothic horror to send any girl into hysterics if she knew it a fate she was soon to suffer.

Miss Marjory Monet's legs were tautly tractioned to either side, her crotch was firmly planted upon the unforgiving edge of the plank which bore her weight. Her hands were bound behind her back and drawn high to keep her punishment

centered upon the most tender portion of a girl's body, a secret place designed for love.

Miss Marjory Monet was unloved now. For those who cherished her had to keep their peace, all others had abandoned her. The ponies were nowhere in sight. Being alone, the punishment would be more intense. If she received visitors, like ourselves, she would know the additional shame of being seen naked in a grotesque, pained position. As we approached she raised her head, the only part of herself she could control.

"Please let me down. I've had enough. Please don't make me sit here any longer."

She only spoke that once in the whole time we were there. I suppose she knew it hopeless. Pain was etched in every line of her face. In a grim and awful fascination we circled her tortured beauty and paused to examine upon each bound and tortured foot the evidence of the morning's punishment. It was terrible to see.

Poor Marjory made no further plea, she seemed even to not notice us at times. Her breathing was heavy and she emitted small gasps and moans as the plank's edge had its way within her sex. I was glad to get back outside and to note that even Levina felt ashamed over what she had forced us all to see.

Our Council duties were not yet done. We adjourned to Levina's for tea and over it decided to house the two delinquents, Miss Marjory Monet and Peggy Hawks, until they could be returned to prison. What was also decided was that the pony responsible for Marjory's escape would appear before me to earn a sentence.

I was depressed. Marjory was still sitting astride the horse and likely to remain there some hours yet. I wondered if tomorrow I could go easy on the pony who had failed to snap Marjory's padlock and thus started the whole chain of events. But that was tomorrow. I went to the stable to free Melody from her cage. On my way there I knew what I would do.

My sweetheart was beautifully asleep behind the bars, her nakedness an inviting sprawl, her handcuffed wrists forming a graceful circle of her arms upon the luxuriance of her golden hair. I lost no time but gave her an errand to borrow a book from Levina. The darling did not question my instruction, but did resist my effort to free her hands, pointing out the wisdom of keeping her always restrained within public view. She sped upon her task in one more of those joyous demonstrations of motion it was a delight to watch. I saw her out of sight then turned to run as fast as I could to the place of punishments and Marjory Monet. I was determined to free her and damn the consequences.

But when I reached the scene of her agony the horse was without a rider. The room was bare but some lengths of rope tossed hurriedly aside. Marjory's scent still lingered on the brutal edge where she had sat but that was all. I searched for the guards to ask questions but the guards were gone. If Marjory had been their only

prisoner, there would be no need for them to stay. I began to feel frightened.

From the beginning I had felt a falsity about my position on the Council. I was far too young. Levina was twice my age. Even Lenore was considerably my senior. My job of sentencing guilty ponies was pretty much cut and dry, their punishments pretty much dictated by the book. I had tried to influence decisions today, and perhaps I had, but in so doing had felt the weight of Levina's displeasure. Whenever I was with the woman I felt sure she was seeing me, not as I was, but in some horrible punishment. I would not have been a bit surprised had she demanded I endure a whipping at her hands every morning before opening my office. She bitterly resented my youth. To her the arrogance of my breasts and flat, firm body were an affront, places upon me she would love to order whipped. I knew I was being fanciful but fantasies are often close to truth!

Lenore was waiting for me when I got home. She was sipping brandy in my lounge, laughing now at the dismay on my fact. "Great minds think alike, darling. I had dear Marjory freed immediately upon our meeting breaking up. She's back at my place right now being properly looked after."

"But, Levina . . .?"

"That woman frightens you, doesn't she? Don't worry, Levina need never know. I'll have poor Marjory delivered to the prison and the tender mercies of your little nymphet pony sometime this evening. Don't worry, Levina will never know a thing. Cheer up, you look worried."

I tried to cheer up but there was a nagging thought in my mind. "But if Levina does find out about what you've done with Marjory, what do we do then?"

"Stick together, darling, that's all! The two of us outvote her. You haven't yet taken your status as a Council member seriously enough. We don't have to take shit from the poor woman, we can defeat her any time."

There was no use worrying further, Lenore was a tonic, one more woman I adored in this community of naked girls.

"You're not the only member of the Council Levina's got it in for. She's been trying to think up an excuse to get me whipped every since we've met." Lenore laughed gaily. "I expect its a part of her old age. We'll have to watch it when you and I get that far along that we don't whip every pony on the Estate. Levina once suggested to Marjory and I the idea of having a community whipping day, every pony on the Estate was to get so many strokes on the second Friday of every month. Marjory and I laughed her out of it but she insisted it was a good idea because she was certain ponies laughed at her behind her back − they probably did but so did Marjory and I!"

Lenore made me feel better. I still had visions of Marjory's caned feet but what was

done was done and we had best deal with things as they were. When Melody arrived, breathless and with the book, Lenore and I insisted she join us for what had become a pleasant social occasion. I knew my beautiful pony felt such familiarity as to be improper but when I added my own orders to Lenore's, Melody bowed to authority. She went to the bar and returned with a tray on which there were three drinks which she served to Lenore upon her knees in her usual but slightly mischievous manner. The third drink was for herself and she knelt before us in the sweetest of poses, holding her glass before her in chained hands, her eyes roguish in adoration of us both. The sweetness of such submission inspired Lenore to demand, "Sybil dear, why don't we have Melody locked in that lovely chain arrangement you used a while back? I'm sure Melody can dig it up."

Melody and I exchanged glances. She instantly put down her drink to flash her long legs upon a new errand. Minutes later, as I was busy with keys, my pony made a sweet admission to Lenore. "I've just been sent to your place to get a book, Mrs. Livingstone. You weren't there so I took it from your library and it's now in my Mistress' house. I hope you don't mind, but if you do I'll understand about being punished."

"If she's always like this, Sybil, I don't know how you bear it," she turned her attention to my pony on whom I was busily at work. "Of course I'd like to punish you, you delightful idiot. You know that as well as I do. You're just pushing your luck." Lenore sighed. "I'd love to whip you and whip you and whip you, you're the most whippable young woman I've ever know. But you're also the sweetest so there's no way I'm putting marks upon your skin. But I will enjoy seeing you in chains."

Melody was breathing fast. Anything I did to her caused her pulse to increase and her breasts to heave. She was standing, tense with delight, while I joined her feet and then her hands in what we had often referred to as "Fancy Dress Chains." The crisscross of links and the big controlling ring at the level of Melody's thighs was pure delight. There was really nothing fancy about them, they were unyielding to any maiden who sought release.

When I was done she posed prettily and deliberately before us both. Her clenched fists tugging up against the web of links and iron bands to give meaning and purpose to the restrains upon her limbs. She posed for perhaps a minute while Lenore and I adored her loveliness, then took her tray and went to the bar where, by means of some magical contortion of her chained body, returned with fresh drinks for us both.

"I should have given her to you, Sybil," Lenore said. "I should have kept her for myself."

There is a beauty somewhere in all human endeavors. It finds its finest flowering in the arts but on the Estate it reaches its highest form by maidens in restraint. If, like Melody, they possessed their own wicked knowledge of a mistresses reactions they could strike poses to melt female hearts. At such times it behooved the mistress to

make sure it did not make her the slave and the pony triumphant. As she posed before us, Melody had that power and Melody knew she had the power! But Melody was a wise girl and knew her place within the scheme of things and laughed at our rapture.

"If these few chains enchant you so much, there's others which would make me much more helpless. Shall I fetch them?"

We waved her submission aside. Melody was perfect as she was, we would not change a thing. But Melody, herself, was without mercy. Fixing Lenore with a steadfast gaze, she inquired, "About the book, Mrs. Livingstone, the one I've just borrowed without permission. I expect you'll want to punish me. Would you like me to fetch a crop or cane or whip?"

Lenore laughed at the impertinence so cunningly used. "If you mention punishment again, I'll use all three of those things on your pretty hide. Behave yourself, Melody, you're an absolute menace."

The three of us were happy and the happiness did not come out of the brandy bottle. Lenore and I found an endless pleasure in Melody chained and who exuded enough mischief to keep us alert. Even the lovely shackles did nothing to inhibit her magic, comporting herself in such ways as to compel a desire to either whip her bottom or take her to bed. Lenore said that since she had no excuse for whipping Melody's bottom, she had best go home. I took Melody upstairs, acceded to her demands she be left chained exactly as she was, promising me archly she would give complete satisfaction even thus inhibited.

She did!

10

Links and Love

"You must have been a pair of idiots to think I wouldn't find out!" Levina glared at her fellow Council members. "I can't be quite sure which of you two set Marjory free. But I know you had a hand in it, Lenore. I'll bet our junior member cut the ropes. I demand an accounting."

Lenore and I exchanged sad expressions of disgust. It had happened! Levina had been smarter than we thought and now we had to cope. In unison we said, "We thought Marjory had been punished enough. We agreed. We acted on a majority decision."

"You ganged up on me, that's what you did!" Levina sternly surveyed us both as if we were delinquent children. "You robbed Marjory Monet of several hours of well

deserved punishment. I trust one of you is prepared to take her place upon the horse?"

"Don't be silly," Lenore said. "Why don't we forget the whole thing? Marjory has been punished enough. The whipped feet she's nursing in prison ought to pay for any misdeed she's committed, and there's still the couple months she's going to spend out in the cane field."

"That's a slack way of thinking," Levina retorted. "The three of us reached a decision and we have to stand by it. Lenore, I want you to voluntarily accept three hours on the horse as a sign of good faith I can rely on."

"Drop dead!"

Levina snorted and turned the full weight of her disapproval upon me. "Are you prepared to be reasonable, Sybil? Are you willing to spend the three hours on the horse?"

"No."

"Very well, I will reduce my demand down to a severe whipping. Surely one or the other of you if prepared to make this trivial sacrifice on Marjory' s behalf. I think I'm being generous."

Levina really believed what she was saying. What she really wanted was to see a young woman prettier than herself in some sort of inflicted agony to compensate for her own middle-aged lack of glamor. Lenore and I stood firm.

"We won't do it, Levina, it's an outrageous suggestion."

"Very well. Since the two of you have banded together to oppose me, I'll get in touch with the outside authority and have this Council disbanded and the two of you arrested for violation of your trust. I simply refuse to be fobbed off with insults."

Except for Levina's heavy breathing the room was still. I stole a quick glance at Lenore. Levina's threat had hit home hard. I knew there were things about the Council and its operation of which I was not aware. I suddenly had a terrible vision of poor dear Lenore astride the horse or screaming as the soles of her feet were beaten with the cane. It was all horrible and needless. But Levina was a Force. I heard my own voice saying, "Okay, Levina, stop hammering at us. I'll volunteer to be whipped. I'm sure that will make you happy."

Levina was happy, there could be no doubt of that. Lenore was not. But her protests dissolved under the weight of Levina's satisfaction and my own submission. Levina had guards ready and waiting as though she had known the outcome of our meeting from the start. Each of the girls wore the same harness as myself, denoting

rank. Like all ponies, their hands were loving but very firm and very strong. They crossed my wrists behind my back and corded them in tight reproof of whatever sin I was supposed to have committed. They noosed my neck to lead me by a tether I would not dare fight. It was like old times.

Levina accompanied us to where my skin would be stripped. In her most comforting tones she assured me none would know of my ignominy other than the guards, Lenore and herself. I would remain a Council member in good standing. Lenore had refused to accompany us. In no uncertain terms she had told Levina she was being a sadistic bitch. Before she left she held me close to whisper, "You're doing this for me, Sybil, I know you are. I'll never forget it."

The business of tying my hands and noosing my neck was a ritual formality. I was pretty sure it was for Levina's enjoyment alone. The guards would have trusted me to walk with them to my punishment. When we reached the place where I was to be punished, they were embarrassed to have to untie me, and then request me to remove the harness of a guard. The straps could not have hindered the whip in its seeking of my skin, but Levina wanted me bare, bare, bare . . . !

I was next told to lie on the floor. It seemed a strange posture in which to be whipped but I shrugged and did as requested. The guards then slipped a rope around my right ankle. Thus began the strangest whipping a girl could ever have. I was positive it was an inspiration of Levina's and, as my world was turned upside down, I beheld her gloating features in rapt attention.

It was very simple. And very deadly. Once more the loving fingers crossed my wrists and bound them tight, this time in front, before I felt the relentless tug of the rope as it slowly raised my ankle off the floor to take it higher and higher until I swung free of the floor with a band of iron around the rope's cruel clasp. I had never been more disorganized in my life.

"I think twenty strokes will be sufficient for the dear child," Levina directed as if in regret for the agony I was about to suffer. "You may struggle all you wish, Sybil dear. Don't be bashful. It does not matter what motions you make, the whip will find you." Then, to the guards, "The blows must be hard, this is a strong and vigorous young woman who cannot be injured by the whip. I want the strokes well spaced apart to give young Sybil the fullest opportunity to evaluate her pain. You may now begin."

Everything was upside down. My ankles was screaming its protest against the tight rope. My bound hands were an embarrassment I simply did not know what to do with. However I held them seemed silly and ineffectual. But this I forgot as the first cut burned its way into my crotch to end its snapping impact in a gift of scarlet upon the right cheek of my bare bottom. In instant response I did everything Levina desired: I screamed in shock, I twisted and turned like a puppet on its string, kicking wildly with my one free leg, and bending up to strive to touch the first of the twenty wounds I would receive. The effort exposed my back and a guard too full

advantage to implant her leather thong squarely across my skin. I screamed again and twisted in purposeful motions which hopefully might absorb pain. I knew myself totally delivered to Levina's lust for marked, burning flesh.

I could not tell if the studied pauses between the strokes made my punishment easier or more difficult to bear. Most certainly it prolonged the time I was suspended upside down with wildly waving limps and a nude body utterly delivered to my enemy. I was not a heroine, I was far from brave. Several times in my wild gyrations I caught Levina's eye, knowing she could read the pleading in my own. But she simply nodded approvingly to make me scream in anger as well as pain. Boy, did I scream! In a pathetic effort to prevent the lash entering my secret place I raised my one free foot and clamped it hard against its fastened twin. I tried to lie in passive acceptance, perhaps if I ceased to wiggle, my back and bottom might offer more attractive invitation to the whip, thus saving those parts of myself I feared for most. I managed to stay thus for a couple of vicious strokes which seemed harder than ever because of my immobility. Then I relapsed into the frantic contortions of a female animal without reason.

I soon lost count of the number of times the leather found my flesh. Levina had done me an unconscious kindness in allowing me to know the number of blows I would receive. Twenty was bad, especially as hard as the guards were impacting them upon my helpless skin. But twenty strokes do not kill a girl and at some time in the distant future they would cease. I clung to this knowledge as the thong splatted itself again and again to revel gleefully in my cries of anguish. My bound hands sought for something to hold or comfort but there was nothing.

When I was freed and helped to stand upright, I shivered and trembled in the aftermath of shock while my hands were untied and my harness placed in their grasp. I was thankful beyond words for the ending of Levina's triumph but was forced to brush away the salt of wetness from my cheeks. I was about to say something acid to Levina but she was gone.

The guards who had whipped me were sweet. It was they who strapped and buckled me back into my harness and into the world, a strange world in which there was no pain.

It was fortunate the delinquent damsels who stood before my desk could see only my front, my punished and purple streaked back and bottom were hidden from their view. Where the thong had overlapped to mark my belly or the slope of a breast my harness modified the marks. And in any case the poor girls were too concerned with their own misfortune to notice mine.

One by one they came to stand trembling upon the appointed place. Most were scared out of their wits because, like most ponies, their behavior had been without blemish until this one fatal mistake which had brought them to stand naked before Estate justice. As usual, all were restrained in some manner by handcuffs or the use of cord. The guards left no doubt in these delinquent minds as to their fate. Their

concern with me was as to how severe that fate would be and how prolonged their pain would be.

I had pains enough of my own. Not the terrible searing agony of the whip biting my skin but the tender aftermath of my twenty stripes. I could not sit in comfort on my weals but had to shift this way and that to seek an easement I could not find. My back was wickedly tender, its travail unimproved by the harness of a guard. I adored that harness and would not part with it because of pain. It was buckled tight within my skin to be a part of me. And if it added to my pain, it was a discomfort I would willingly bear.

Sometimes my bare arm would friction the seared scarlet of a thong cut on the slope of my right breasts, then I would wince but the flame between my thighs would fire afresh. Unwillingly I admitted to myself that Levina's whipping of my bare skin while I hung suspended by a single ankle had been a shocking erotic experience. I wondered if this response was mine alone or common to every girl beneath the whip. I would have asked Melody but Melody had been whipped so little I could not consider her an authority. It was in this mood I dealt with the delinquents.

Her name was Daisy Green. I wondered why the guards had cuffed her wrists behind her back. She had no record of misbehavior, her only sin being that of failing to lock the padlock which secured Marjory's ankle to the iron ball. She was another who twisted uneasily against the shinning bonds of metal joining her hands. I liked her instantly. Her greeting was simply and direct, "Please don't have me whipped, Miss Charmers. Please don't have me whipped, I know I couldn't bear it!"

"Have you ever been whipped, Daisy?" I asked gently.

"No, of course I haven't! Being whipped is something I've worked to avoid. I've been a pony for seven years and no owner has ever had to punish me. I'm totally obedient." She appeared to consider the length of her service. "I've only three years to go before I cease being a pony. Please don't whip me now."

"But you do have to be punished, dear."

"Well, yes, I suppose so." She looked at me soulfully. "I didn't leave that padlocked unlocked on purpose, Miss Charmers, I guess I was sort of absent minded. And Miss Monet and I have liked each other every since they sent her out into the cane field. I've always felt sorry for her."

"And your sympathy prompted you to leave her ankle unlocked?"

"Oh no . . . ! Really! That wasn't it at all! Miss Monet is ever so sweet but I'd never dream of setting her free on purpose." Daisy shuffled her feet and continued her plea. "Couldn't I just say I'm sorry, or something?"

I sighed. There was something sweet and appealing about Daisy. I expected she could charm the pants off any girl (or man). I had given up striving for a harsh articulation in dealing with my delinquents, quite simply I said, "That's silly, Daisy, and you know it. You also know you have to be punished. Look, if you're so frightened of the whip, why don't you suggest a different punishment?"

Daisy was obsessed with her phobia. She was tracing patterns with her big toe upon the rug and giving me quick nervous glances of assessment. "If I hadn't seen the overseers whip girls, I guess I wouldn't be so scared, Miss Charmers. They tie a girl's hands together and hoist her up so her toes just barely miss the ground. Then they whip her as she swings back and forth and twists and turns. They don't mind a bit where they hit and some girls are welted all over the place." Her shocked voice took on a tone of the scandalous. "Sometimes an overseer pulls the poor girl's leg off to one side so another one can whip up inside were it hurts the most. I've watched them do that to Miss Monet. The next morning when I locked her leg to the ball I was sort of right close and was able to see how her pussy was red and swollen."

She looked at me earnestly. "If you do have me whipped, Miss Charmers, could you tell them not to hang me up so my feet are off the ground, and not to whip up inside my legs. I don't think I've been bad enough for either of those things."

"Have you ever been tied up, Daisy?"

"Just my hands behind my back, Miss Charmers. Owners are suppose to restrain a girl like that once in a while when they lock us in our stall. I think it's done to let us know we're ponies and to behave ourselves. That's all."

"You've never been tied up so you can't move for a long, long time?"

"Gosh, no. I don't think I would like that."

It was a compromise I hoped Levina wouldn't investigate. I sentenced the awestruck young maiden to be bound tightly to a tree in a secluded place for a period of twelve hours. I thought I was being generous but she obviously disagreed. As the guards led her away she bestowed upon me the most reproachful glance I had ever seen. I was in a pensive mood as I returned to my buggy and Melody. I was concerned only with getting home as quickly as possible to avoid the shocked glances by the public of my whipped back and bottom. My weals were at the height of their flower and were quite something to behold. If I had been merely a pony I could have taken the glances without much alarm. But as a member of the Council to be whipped as I have been whipped was a disgrace indeed, a shame I could not easily explain. However, I did allow Melody to run me the long way around to enable her to stretch her lovely legs in the leaping strides she so loved. When I unharnessed her and took the bridle from her head and the metal from her mouth the first thing she said was, "Mistress, you'll be angry with me. I have a confession . . ."

I could never be angry with Melody and told her so. Hidden from the world in my lounge she demanded to be handcuffed in case of visitors then, when I had locked her wrists securely in shinning steel, she bounced happily to the bar to make our before dinner cocktails. Kneeling before me with her own she made her confession, "I've had it two days, Sybil darling. I sort of picked it up when I went to Lenore's for that book. I was all alone and I knew where she kept it." She bestowed upon me a faintly troubled gaze. "I'm talking about the little black box our Master gave me so we could communicate."

"Okay, Melody, what are you worried about?" Melody wiggled in the manner of my delinquents in the Court. "I've been having a battle with myself, Sybil. I want to throw the damned thing away. I don't ever want to have anything to do with men again. And I don't want a man to take you away . . . And, anyway, it's dangerous. If Levina ever found out . . . !"

I was suddenly aflame with a female lusting for The Male! It would be so marvelous to feel Bill Trafford's arms around me once again and to let him lead me into that wonderful land were only a male phallus can guide a girl to heart's desire. Melody's objections would vanish when she saw him again. She was no more immune to Bill Trafford's masculinity than I. He could own us both. And rescue us from Levina's hostility. Levina had whipped me today and would probably whip me again tomorrow, if given an excuse. As I moved my guards harness became more potent on my wounds. I wanted out!

"But, Melody, Bill won't be waiting and listening after all this time. He'll think he's lost us."

"He will if he loves you."

Melody was always right. I did not argue. The call time was nine pm by Estate clocks, not far distant, but rather than cool our heels in a suspenseful wait, I harnessed Melody to the buggy and drove her to the little prisons where Marjory languished with her wounded feet. Melody gloried in the run and I gloried in Melody and wondered with a carnal thrill if I would have to have her bound and gagged to take with me if Bill Trafford actually did affect a rescue. I tried not to get excited about the possibility. Nevertheless, my expectation grew and the time neared.

What I found behind the bars gave me something else to thing about.

Marjory was strapped down upon the wooden bench. The straps and the bench were sometimes used to secure a girl for punishment but now held Marjory's nakedness in the firm grip of leather, her wrists strapped down to either side and her feet strapped wide apart. Peggy was feeding upon her hungrily.

"I fixed Miss Monet that way because I was curious to see how long that kid can

keep working on her like she's doing now." The matron chuckled in genuine amusement. "She's been eating steady all day and looks good for all night, too."

Looked at through the bars it was a strange scene, almost bizarre. Marjory could make no real motion, the straps held her tight and firm for delivery to Peggy's fingers and tongue. The way she was strapped down resulted in prominent breasts now wet from Peggy's mouth, their nipples hard and huge and almost red from friction. Peggy spared us no more than a sideways glance and a brief nod before returning to her favorite task. When Marjory saw me, she strained upward to lift her head in a pitiful helplessness to plead, "Sybil, darling, thank heavens you've come! Get this demon of a girl off me and let me loose. Pleaseeeeeeeee!"

I turned to the cheerful matron, as absorbed in what she was watching as Peggy was herself. "You're not supposed to play favorites like this," I told her severely. "Let Miss Monet loose and handcuffed that damned girl's ankles the same as you've got her wrists. That way she'll have to behave."

"It's not the way you think, Miss Charmers. Yesterday I had Peggy strapped to the bench so Miss Monet could do what she pleased to her. It's not my fault if she didn't want to eat steadily all day."

"But can't you see Peggy's driving Marjory crazy. If that were happening to me, I'd go right up the wall. Surely you know what it's like to be eaten by someone who doesn't stop when they should!"

"She won't pay attention to me," Marjory moaned. "The little devil's killing me. Please, please take her away."

The amused jailer unlocked the door and used a key on one of Peggy's locked wrists. She then dragged the protesting young woman to the opposite wall and locked the free cuff to a ring in the wall.

"It's not fair!" Peggy pouted. "You keep me strapped down to that bench until bed time. I've been cheated."

I tugged at the straps and buckles myself to free a sexually exhausted woman. Marjory tried to stand but fell back, wincing to hold out her arms for my embrace. After being kept in a state of constant arousal all day, the pungency of her woman scent filled the little cell and enveloped me as did the loving arms of my one-time mistress. From the opposite wall Peggy glared.

"Have you got an empty cell?" I demanded.

"There's only a couple of cells in the whole place, Miss Charmers, and there's two ponies in the other one now. Miss Monet is going to be lonely if I put Peggy in with the other two. But, if you want, I'll stop strapping them down during the days, and keep Peggy chained so Miss Monet can handle her easily?" The matron was an

amenable soul.

"Do that."

"But I'll never get to have any fun!" Peggy complained bitterly. "After Miss Monet has played a little while she gets tired and says she's had enough." She looked from one of us to the other. "She's so silly. No girl ever gets tired of eating another girl, I ought to know, I do it all the time. I mean . . . What else is there for a girl to do!"

I did the best I could. I ordered Marjory confined only by handcuffs but young Peggy was to be handcuffed both wrist and ankles to inhibit her feeding on her prey. "Thanks, darling, you've saved my life." Marjory was breathing heavily, obviously trying to cope with jangled nerves. "That little so-and-so has me bothered to a point where I can't think straight. Please don't touch my nipples. I won't want them touched again for a week."

"Sybil, how on the earth did you get those marks!" I explained about my marks and how the whip came to find my body. And of Levina's part in the story. I also told her how badly the Council needed her back. We loved and cuddled for a long time beneath Peggy's disapproving stare. But somehow I could not bring myself to tell her of the little black box waiting for nine p.m.

I gave Melody a brief run-down on my prison visit while she slowly pulled my buggy home. There wasn't much to tell, so I mischievously flicked her with the whip and told her to show me what she could do. By the time I had unharnessed and handcuffed her, I could think of nothing but the little box.

Melody refused to let me take the handcuffs from her wrists while she played with the little buttons and controls. We were both tense with excitement as the hour came and her fingers flew busily to transmit the code. Almost instantly Bill Trafford's voice invaded us from outer space.

"Where the devil have you been! I've come here every night and couldn't raise a whisper. What goes?"

Breathlessly, Melody and I took turns telling him of events. At the end he snapped, "I'll round up some men. I'll pick you up the day after tomorrow. Be ready!"

The little black box went dead. Melody and I sat silently in shock. My pulse was thudding in pure joy, but Melody brought me back into the world as she said, "I won't be going with you, Mistress. We tried it once before and it didn't work. I belong on the Estate. I'm a pony − a damn good pony. I'm not much good at anything else. Please forgive me."

I have rarely been firm with Melody, but I was now glad I had full title to her. "Those are handcuffs you're wearing, aren't they, darling?"

"Of course they are, Sybil!" She raised her joined hands to look at the silver bracelets on her wrists. "You know I'm handcuffed, why ask?"

In answer, I fetched leg irons and locked them on her slim ankles. "I would have preferred you come willingly, but I know how you feel. Until the helicopter comes, I'll keep you in irons so I can handle you easily."

"Very well, Mistress," she said demurely. "Take me as a prisoner, but be sure to keep me locked or I'll run away." She kicked at one hobbled foot. "I expect these will do nicely. Thanks a million."

The three guards came for us when I was getting ready to take Melody to the buggy and drive to the court. They made a formal announcement that we were under arrest and they would have to tie my hands behind my back.

I think it could have happened only on the Estate. The three guards loved us and we loved them, we were ponies together. It did not occur to either Melody or I to put up a fight. Not that we could possibly have won but it seemed so feeble to simply surrender without a try for freedom. Melody was already well secured and I stood erect and breathing heavily while my hands were placed palm to palm and tied with pony efficiency. Then, to my disgust, other bands of rope circled my elbows and pulled them tight together.

"We'll use six strands so as not to stop the circulation, Miss Charmers," they assured me earnestly as they tugged away to embed the cords in my flesh and knot them tight. Neither Melody or I had any doubts as to where we were going.

Levina was in her glory. "You're a ridiculous pair to imagine that wireless communication would not be intercepted," she told us happily. "I listened to the same message as you. And when your paramour arrives, I'll give him a piece of my mine he'll not easily forget." Her chuckle made me wince. "Needless to say, you two will not be meeting him."

I wanted to cry. My disappointment was dire and my bound elbows were hurting horribly. I knew they were intended to hurt so I made no useless complaint. There was nothing much I could do about anything except to stand still in misery while pony fingers loosened the buckles and straps of my guard's harness and took it from me to leave me as naked as Melody. I watched it put away, quite likely I would never wear it again.

"We have a safe place for you," Levina assured us. "The guards will take you. They know exactly what to do."

They knew for sure! They locked iron collars on our necks, broad heavy bands of metal to make space for which they ruthlessly cut away the lovely silver bands which had previously been an unseen bond to keep within the Estate. Some how I was pained at loosing it.

They next took the irons from Melody's ankles and roped us to the back of the buggy to compel us to one more ignominious march into a fresh captivity. As we marched Melody wept, certain we were going to be whipped. I did not cry. I was certain the whip would be used on us often in the future. But I also sensed in Levina's triumph some awful and sinister travail we would find waiting for us at journey's end. We plodded unhappily where we were led.

It seemed the cane fields might be out destination but we passed them by on the dusty road by the building where the cane is crushed. At ground level along one side was an open space without a wall. Inside, somewhere in the gloom, was the hiding place where Melody and I would be kept from our beloved master.

It was very simple. Once out of the sun light we had a perfect view of a machine with which we were to become intimate. There was nothing new about it, simply four poles radiating from a central shaft. A pony was chained to each of the poles by her neck and they all strained in unison to turn the shaft. Presumedly up above cane was being crushed. Melody and I were formally delivered to the overseers of this macabre enslavement. Two girls were unlocked from the poles and led away. Our iron collars were padlocked in their place.

The sweating nudity of those who toiled regarded us with intense curiosity but made no sound of greeting. Our new guards were typical ponies, explaining to us how hard we must now work and at the same time pleading for obedience and good behavior. Each showed us the whip suspended from her harness above her hip, assuring us with utmost seriousness they would use these whips upon us if we shirked our task or decided to be difficult. They brightened up considerably as they explained how our helplessness would deny both escape and disobedience. It was all very pony-like and distinctly of the Estate.

We said, yes, we understood and would strive to give satisfaction. Our ankles were then ironed and our hands and arms freed. Melody and I stood by our poles, completely free save for the length of chain from the collar on our neck made fast to the wood, and the length of chain joining our ankles. It was neat and tidy and wickedly efficient. The whole thing took only a few minutes before a smiling guard cracked her whip and the shaft started once more.

I think I would have been happier had I been more stringently tied or fastened. There was something tantalizing about being so nearly free but condemned to another's will by the metal around our necks.

I wondered how long this had been going on, I had never heard of it before and wondered, too, what sins the other ponies had committed to be thus condemned. The cane field was a picnic compared to this.

The whip cracked, we responded like trained animals, clutching the pole with both hands to heave with all our strength. It took heroic efforts to give the shaft

momentum. But once that was achieved we settled down to a stay grind of heave and thrust to the tune of the clanking of the chains upon our feet.

Melody had been fastened to the pole in front of mine so I could see her muscles ripple and swell as the obeyed the whip. My whipped skin had already drawn attention. In consideration of it my guards asked me, politely, to work hard and give no trouble so that would not have to add to marks already collected. I did what they told me. How the hell could any of us do anything else!

The floor we trod sloped towards a drain. When we were allowed to pause to catch our breath, our sweat-streaked were hosed down with cold water that actually felt good. Leaning hard against the icy thrust I fingered the iron around my neck and examined the heavy links of chain. It was a though this short tether was designed only to tease, to mock and to frustrate a maiden's longing for release. Without the key she could stand against the pole forever. There was no spoken word but the crack of the whip was our command. We sighed but returned our attention to the pole.

Evening brought the answer to the questions we had been unable to ask while we were at work. The padlock at our collar was unlocked but the collar itself remained. Perhaps it would be there forever, it certainly felt like it. Since our leg irons prevented us from running and allowed only a slow walk, none of us even thought of escape or of asserting ourselves. In a vast adjoining chamber there was a large cage. Watching with a whip the overseers marched us through the open door to join four other maidens. There was bread and water and an apple for each but Melody and I were too exhausted for food or for questions. We hugged together and went to sleep.

Our pony prisoners had little to tell us in the morning. They had sinned and were now paying the price. Only a few expected early release, the rest were resigned to being captive to the shaft and to the pole a long, long time. They were sad and dispirited but in great physical condition. The skin of all were scared and marked. They said it was impossible to not be absent-minded or day-dream on the job and thus collect fresh scarlet from the lash. Like all ponies they were kind and concerned and promised to give us much pleasure when we were not so tired.

Obediently all four shuffled to stand by the pole until our necks were locked. It was a very simple life.

Our second day was like the first. Because we were not yet toughened by our labors, Melody and I more often felt the snap of the thong upon our skin.

The big cage was the one saving grace in our enslavement. There were twelve girls of the around the clock operations. There thus remained eight of us in the cage, our feet sadly hobbled but the rest of us free. There was love and laughter and much comparing of whip marks on our skin. The food was sparse to keep us lean. We were shockingly obedient and trudged our shackled the way back and forth

between our labors and the cage like mechanical dolls. With locked feet it was useless to resist. None did.

Hope is cruel! Melody and I fostered it all through the morning of the day Bill Trafford was to rescue us. I cherished a wild hope that he would force Levina to tell him of our whereabouts. But that was unlikely. Our best hope was Lenore. It was a hope that died that afternoon.

So fierce were her struggles it took three guards to force her to a pole and lock her to it. Lenore was obviously angry and, I suspect, frightened. She had been stripped as naked as the rest of us and stood there clutching her short chain tether like an animal. When she beheld Melody and I as helpless as herself, she was suddenly less fierce. It was as if the wind had gone from her sails. When our round began again, she pushed as the rest of us while the lash cut up viciously between her shackled feet. Looking at the poor darling I did not so much see a naked beauty in travail but rather beheld the triumphant features of a victorious Levina. Levina had us all in the hollow of her hand.

Poor Lenore! She got herself horribly whipped that first day. Every time the leather cut her skin she squealed in anger and fought the collar on her neck until a second blow quieted her and evoked a pitiful sob of defeat as she once more obeyed the compulsion of the pole.

Towards the end of afternoon our company was joined by Miss Marjory Monet.

I tried to tell our guards of the cruelty of making Marjory work thus before the proper healing of her whipped feet. I was told to keep quiet. The guards showed her the mercy of few stripes as the other three labored more frantically to turn the shaft. When evening came all four of us were tethered neck to neck and taken to stand before a desk behind which sat the one remaining Council member, Levina. She surveyed our sweat-drenched helplessness with approval.

"This is were you belong and this is where you're going to stay a long, long time." Her voice was alive with pleasure. "I'm been merciful enough to make sure the four of you serve the same shift. I'm instituting a new practice for you alone. Each Monday morning you will each received a mild whipping to remind you of my continuing interest on your behaviour'. Don't thank me, it's a pleasure."

We said no thanks. We simple stood as we were forced to do for her enjoyment. Few women could ever have known such a victory as Levina did now. The guards looked bored, probably wanting to put us back in the cage and go for their evening meal. But Levina was not yet finished.

"By the way, Sybil, this damned nuisance of a man, Bill Trafford, is out there with his helicopter waiting for you. You must have been crazy to suppose your message would not be intercepted. I spoke with him the next day and promised that he could take you alone from the Estate. The rest of you belong to me."

We shuffled uneasily and exchanged glances, knowing there was more to come. I stood in shocked surprise as the guards unlocked my feet and freed my neck while Levina spewed out another dose of gall. "You have been nothing but a nuisance, Sybil, I shall be happy to be rid of you. I've asked Trafford to give you a good thrashing when he gets you home and follow it up with others."

She chuckled evilly. "You won't find Mr. Trafford quite the white knight you've dreamed about. My buggy is outside, go and sit in it and wait for me. I'll drive you to where he's waiting. Run along."

I couldn't run along, I couldn't do anything. My mind was in the saddest turmoil of my life. The absence of bonds left me thrice naked. I heard my voice from far away.

"I won't go unless the others come with me. You mustn't keep them in this slavery. You mustn't!"

"I make no terms, Sybil. Get out to that buggy. Your three sweethearts belong to me."

In agony I gazed from face to face to dwell with yearning upon my darling Melody who stood as deuce as ever for me to see the swelling contours of her darling breasts. "Give me Melody," I pleaded desperately. "She's mine by law. Let me have her."

"No!"

"Hurry, Sybil, run while you can." The three of them said it in unison. Once more my voice came as from a great distance. "No, I won't go and leave them here like this. It's all four of us or nothing, Levina. Please let them go."

It was a long and pregnant silence. Levina's motion to the guards was almost imperceptible. I stood trembling but in a vast flood of relief as my iron collar was once more tethered and the leg irons locked upon my ankles once again. It is possible I may regret what I have done.

But not right now.

Novels by F. E. Campbell

Monica*	Sweet Slavery*
Melynda and Mister Wilberforce*	Lorinda*
The Siblings*	Suburban Submission*
The Prisoner of Ismaul*	Diana*
Monica: Part 2*	Chain Me Forever (HIT 143)

Melynda: Part 2*
The Siblings,: Part 2*
The Prisoner of Ismaul: Part 2*
Miranda*
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Captive of the Priory*
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Miranda: Part 2*
Dorinda: Part 2*
The Girl Behind the Wall: Part 2*
Chains of Jehdra*
Moira in Jeopardy*
Wanda and the Whip*
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The Girl on the J-Bar-S*
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No Escape (HIT 177)
Thorn (HIT 178)
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FETTERS ARE FOREVER

BY F. E. CAMPBELL

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