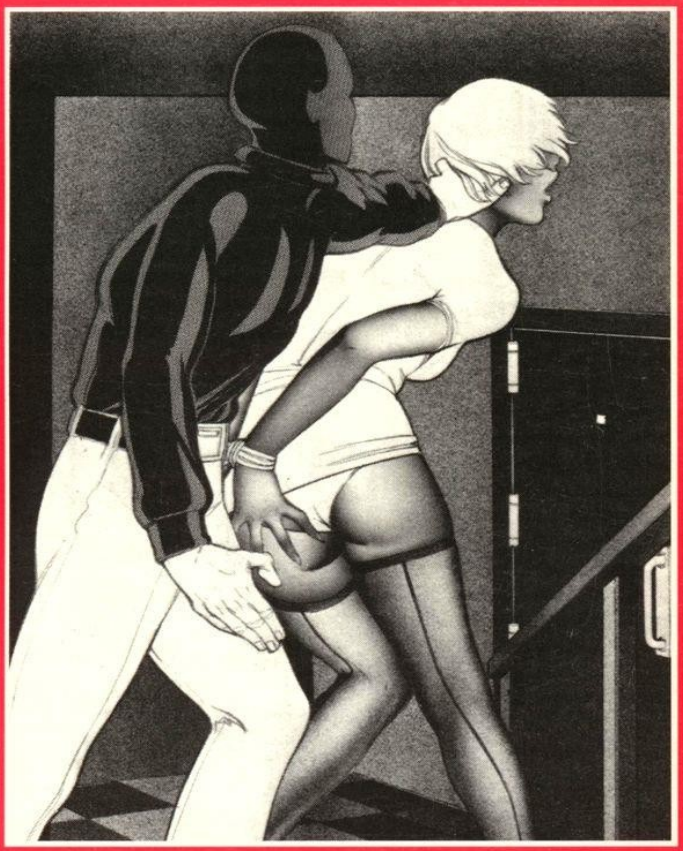
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SLAVE OF SHALIMA



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Slave of Shalima

by F. E. Campbell

Chapter 1

Castaway

I remember someone once telling me the sea was the loneliest thing in the world and now I know they're right. My dingy had been drifting two nights and day towards a compass point I could not name. The tiny craft was equipped with oars but I could not use them for my wrists were handcuffed behind my back and there was no way I could ever get them free. I had struggled and twisted and tugged most of the first day until my skin was chafed and had cried its protest. I had then reverted to sitting as calmly as I could on the only seat to assess the circumstances of my life, a life most probably coming to an end.

Rankin had been cheerful as he bit my wrists with the shining steel of handcuffs before dumping me in the tiny craft which could survive not storm, but which he assured me would drift onto some distance shore for which he had a name I've now forgotten. He said I'd be bound to be picked up or run adrift on an island. When I asked him what would happen if that were not so, he simply shrugged and repeated that the boat would have to end up somewhere. "If you refuse to play, then you'll have to pay, sweetheart. Look, girl, I'm losing a nice little dingy and a pair of handcuffs because you're obstinate. Goodbye, kid. And good luck!"

It had been hard to believe but I knelt in the little boat and watched the sleek hull of Rankin Teller's very large, very expensive yacht slide by to leave me alone with the Pacific. I felt certain he would stop his big ship within a few minutes and return to give me one more ultimatum. If he had, I'm not sure what I would have done. I was scared half out of my wits as I watched the disappearing ship. The good weather and kindly sea would not last, and the dingy which now protected me from the jaws of sharks would not survive and angry waves if the ocean changed its mood.

As though to emphasize my peril, a sharks fin cut the water only a few feet from my tiny craft. A very large sharks fin. It circled for a while while I fought chained wrists in frantic efforts to escape. If I could have gotten my hands free, I could have at least used the oars. But freedom was not for my hands and arms. As I gazed after the disappearing speck on the horizon and the vastness of an ocean holding in store goodness knows what horrors, I knew myself the most frightened girl in the world.

That was yesterday. The container of water Rankin had left me was now sadly depleted. He had also allowed me to wear a torn and tattered summer frock as protection from the sun. I drew what comfort I could from both these mercies but they were a frail comfort. And they were partly offset by the handcuffs, a restraint I had never before known

or dreamed of. Handcuffs were for criminals, not proper girls like me.

I won't make a dramatic affair out of the sharks. There was always one or two keeping an eye on me but they made no effort to overturn the boat even though some of them were certainly large enough. I tried to pretend they weren't there. I also tried not to think of what other sea monsters lurked below that green surface. Once more I sought relief for my parched throat. It was when I lifted my head and moistened my lips that I saw the first trace of a smudge on the horizon. It seemed far too large for a ship and was undoubtedly land. I could have wept with joy. From the beginning I was unable to tell if the dingy was moving or in what direction. Obviously Rankin Teller's story about a current must be true. It took an agonizingly long time before the island took shape. There followed a further stretch of anxiety in case the current and wind pushed me away from the island. But they held good and soon my tiny boat was nearing a sandy beach and being lifted gently ashore by small breakers. I leapt joyfully from the boat and grabbed the tethering rope in joined hands to pull the boat as far up the sandy beach as I could. I couldn't say why but I felt that I should save my tiny craft. Perhaps I would need it in the future.

I stood there and looked back across the waves and knew myself the beneficiary of a miracle. I knew I was on an island. This beach was part of a sizeable chunk of land.

There were trees and rocks and a tiny stream of fresh water from which I drank by laying myself out on the ground.

Having survived the Pacific Ocean, I now must face a fresh unknown, a forest which I would have dearly loved to walk in had I not been handcuffed. It was glorious to walk and to be rid of the rolling feeling of the sea, even if I had no hands, I was at least a thousand percent better off. I marked up the beach and into the trees and there found, of all things, a path!

I was still afraid but now there was curiosity about where this path led to. I followed it.

She was suddenly standing on the path ahead of me like a nymphet of the forest but very much a being of flesh and blood. She was probably fifteen, dark haired and dark eyed, and completely nude. Her wrists were joined by handcuffs more like pretty bracelets. Her voice was alive with laughter.

“You’re Celie Collins. And you can call me Allie. We’ve been expecting you. I’ll bet you’re hungry.”

Elfin feet twinkled along the path and elfin fingers sweetly teased my breasts to come to rest on my shoulders. While I stood there in shocked disbelief, I was affectionately kissed. Her handcuffs had a somewhat longer chain than mine, and this exquisite sprite from nowhere seemed unconscious of restraint. Dazed, I muttered, “I’m starving and I

don't know where I am." In a burst of thankfulness I added, "Gosh, am I glad to see you."

"And we're ever so glad to see you," Allie said with equal feeling. "Marjory has told me to bath and feed you, and to get rid of that silly frock before the two of you meet. You're going to love it here, I'm sure you are."

Allie's skin was polished gold upon an alive young body, whose perky breasts and narrow waist were everything a wood nymphet should be.

"Celie, there's all sorts of wonderful things you have to see." Allie bubbled over with all sorts of information as we walked. The place was named Palm and consisted of a couple of square miles of land, and owned by what I gathered was the total authority of a woman named Marjory. Almost everything left me wondering. But the last thing I wanted to do was end the flow of information. I longed for free hands but refrained from asking if Allie could confer this boon. I thought it reasonable to suppose that had she possessed a key to handcuffs, she would not have allowed her own wrists to remain locked together. As far as Allie seemed to be concerned, it must have been the most natural thing in the world for visitors to arrive with their hands cuffed behind their backs.

I was beginning to wonder when all those wonderful things I simply had to see would materialize, when quite suddenly the forest yielded to a delightful area of well-kept

lawn. At its furthest edge was a huge, sprawling house which owed nothing to any school of design but which was obviously designed for personal and individual living. This whole area of green covered at least ten acres and contained only one tree, a tree quite close to where we stood. It was an enormous Banyan, providing adequate shade for a structure that left me gasping in disbelief. It was a huge cage which circled the huge tree making an iron-barred prison pretty much in the shape of a doughnut. Inside the prison were four totally naked girls who, as we drew closer, displayed an indolent acceptance of a strange captivity. None of the four were free—all had their elbows constrained behind their back by what I can only describe as a metal clamp which could be locked in varying degrees of restraint to join the elbows tight together or allow some distance between them but still secure them behind the wearer's back. It was far from pleasing in its similarity to birds with clipped wings. I was pretty sure it either hurt or was damned uncomfortable.

"They're so lucky," Allie sighed. "Marjory does different things to them all the time but mostly keeps them in the cage. The new ones seem to find this difficult but I think it's wonderful." She giggled delightedly. "I talk to them a lot, and sometimes Marjory agrees to putting me inside the cage with them. They're all my friends and they'll be your friends, too."

That should have been my cue to turn around and go back to the dingy and seek another island. I might actually have done this had I possessed hands, but with wrists safely locked behind my back I realized such an act impractical. Instead, I asked as politely as I could, “What have the poor things done to deserve such an imprisonment? They don’t look the least bit happy.”

I realized I had said the wrong thing when the fingers on my arm clasped tighter. “But Celie, you can’t expect them to be laughing all the time. They are, however, tremendously interested in everything that goes on. Right now they’re coming to the bars to have a look at you. Don’t be nervous, just talk to them naturally. I’ll sort of introduce you but afterwards you can ask your own questions. I’ll bet you’ve got some.”

I had lots of questions but what I needed then was a good cup of coffee. And maybe a meal. But my need of food and a bath was set to one side by the naked girls inside the strangest cage I had ever seen. They got their greeting in first, and it didn’t do a thing for my morale.

“Where did you get her, Allie? Will you be putting her in here with us?”

At close range I could see how beautiful they were, lovely of face and figure. Laughing at them through the bars, Allie made the introductions to which the responses were far from reassuring.

“Welcome to the club, Celie.”

“You’d best run as hard as you can, sweetheart, while you can.”

With Allie’s fingers tight gripped upon my arm, all I could manage was indignation. “I drifted ashore on this island and Allie came to meet me. I don’t know where I am or what goes. Aren’t your arms hurting with those clamps on your elbows?”

“They hurt a bit but we’ve gotten used to them. Tomorrow there’ll be something else. Marjory is endless inventive.” There was gay, silvery laughter. “You’ll find out, darling.”

I was not so dumb that I wasn’t putting two and two together. It was not hard to figure that Rankin Teller’s cruelty in casting me adrift had something to do with the girls inside the cage. It would be stretching coincidence to believe it simply happened by chance. These girls in the cage knew things I did not. Cautiously, I inquired of the girl holding my arm, “Did these four girls come ashore the same as I? Has this Marjory of yours have some connection with Rankin Teller?”

“You’re supposed to ask them the questions, not me. I don’t answer anything because Marjory does it so much better. But if you haven’t anything else to ask these darlings, we’ll go up to the house and get you fed and bathed.”

The first thing I got was a cup of coffee by a maid who saw nothing wrong in my condition. Allie held the cup to my lips and I was too damned grateful to make complaints. The bathing process was far more illuminating since it transpired I was to be bathed by Allie with my role purely passive. I would sit or stand as directed to be soaped and rubbed down in a way I must admit I found rather comforting. I'd never been bathed by someone else in my life, and I found young Allie's hands possessing a magic entirely new. She had cut my skimpy clothing off with a pair of scissors and my new nakedness made me feel even more strange. Yet, I sensed that the best thing would be for me to keep quiet and wait for things to happen. The handcuffs had taken away my power to protest, so why take a chance on losing friends? Allie's hands were loving and mischievous, and I sensed in her an unusual sexuality for a girl so young.

I was vigorously toweled with special attention to those portions of me that sent erotic tingles through my body. By the time I sat before a mirror to have her do my hair, my nipples were rigid and my sex happily generating heat. When Allie announced herself satisfied and that I was to join Marjory at dinner, my exclamation was spontaneous, "But I have to have something to wear! I can't possibly have dinner with a woman I've never met while I'm this naked."

“Of course you can,” Allie said cheerfully. “I do, so why can’t you? Clothes are silly in this climate, and with bodies like you possess, clothes would be indecent. Come along, darling, Marjory’s waiting.”

“But I’m handcuffed and helpless!”

“Marjory won’t mind a bit, she wants you like that.”

“Don’t be difficult Celie, Marjory and I want to be kind if you’ll just do as you’re told.”

It was suddenly there, a presence I had sensed even before seeing the cage with its prisoners. Some strange authority was force behind all this. I was expected to do as I was told in the manner of a child who knew no better. But when I thought of revolt, I realized once more how this chain of events from the moment Rankin had clasped the handcuffs on my wrists was a force guiding me and more powerful than I. Allie was sweet and had treated me with tenderness. Once more defeated, I allowed her fingers to guide me to the person I had to suppose was the final authority on Palm Island.

Marjory was simply a mature edition of the girl who held my arm. There was the same dark hair and dark eyes, and a slender perfection of figure. The difference between them was that Marjory wore clothes, which, while appearing to cover everything, artfully drew attention to everything they may have been supposed to conceal. Her age may

have been thirty and she exuded vibrations and warmth which enveloped me as she swept forward and took me in her arms. Never in my life have I been more competently kissed. Good will possessed us all, and I was thinking of reviving the subject of the handcuffs behind my back, but Marjory was a jump ahead.

“Allie, darling, please look after Celie’s hands. Here’s a key.”

I could have kissed her again and fallen on my knees in gratitude, except that things didn’t turn out as I supposed. When Allie unlocked my wrist, she gently brought both arms forward and clicked the cuff back on as tightly as before. Marjory just about summed it up, “We’re about to have dinner, Celie, my dear, and it would be nice for you to use your hands. Allie could feed you if you were completely helpless but this is a get-acquainted occasion and I want everything to be comfortable. Please do sit down.”

If I had to be handcuffed, it’s much better in front than in back. For a couple of days I’d been longing to get rid of the steel bands on my wrists. Now, with hands joined together in front, I simply didn’t know what to do with them. They felt silly and awkward. I felt myself blushing but allowed Allie to propel me to the chair on Marjory’s right. I wouldn’t dare complain about handcuffs because I had the feeling if I did, they would immediately go back the way they had been before. But after I said thank you for my hands, I added, tentatively, “I feel really terribly coming to

you like this, without clothes. I've never been naked in public before. Not in my whole life."

Marjory's laugh was rich and genuine. "But we're not the public, Celie, dear, you see how beautiful Allie is in the nude, and you're something very special, too. I couldn't possibly bear to have any of my girls covered up. Allie tells me you saw my beauties in the cage. Wouldn't you agree they'd look silly if they were fully dressed?"

I was trapped by trying to be civil. To break this venire of good will was something I could not do. Everything pointed to nudity and restraints being a part of normal life on Palm Island. I sat down with my cuffed hands hidden in my lap, but it instantly appeared I was not allowed to be demure.

"Keep your hands were we can see them, Celie, dear," Marjory ordered sharply. "I cannot tolerate girl's playing with themselves, and they'll do it at the most unlikely moments if you give them the chance. I want to warn you now that fingering your clit will not be tolerated."

Such a frank prohibition was something I hadn't expected. Flushed, and feeling inadequate, I put my fingers up on the table, and muttered, "I wasn't even dreaming of such a thing."

"Then everything's wonderful, darling," my hostess said sweetly. "Now I have to tell you not to panic when George brings up the dinner."

“George!” My blush was growing.

“George is the butler, dear. He wears clothes and you’ll see him around quite a lot. He will do what you ask within reason. I don’t suppose he’ll want you in his bed immediately because he’s pretty well looked after by the girls you saw in the cage. Well, anyway, when George shows up, I don’t want you playing the shrinking violet.”

There would have to be an understanding between, and more particularly and understanding on my part as to what bizarre amounted to in this place. But I soon discovered I handled the attentions of the family butler remarkably well. George was used to newly arrived naked girls. At least I assumed he was since he gave no evidence of surprise or interest. He was a handsome black man with a voice that sounded educated. He served our needs in a polished manner.

My next confrontation was with the steel bands around my wrists. They gave me a tremendous amount of freedom but never quite enough. I could use the knife and fork by being careful, but my main handicap was mental. I was a naked and handcuffed young girl at dinner in a foreign place. When I lifted something to my face, I had to use both hands and this simple motion was watched with interest by both Allie and Marjory. By now my blush had reached a considerable shade of red.

“Allie tells me you had been cast adrift in the ocean in a dingy and drifted up on our beach by chance.” I could tell Marjory was making conversations.

“I’m not sure there was any chance about it.” I took my courage in hand and added, “I’m sure you know Rankin Teller, and I’m sure both of you knew that when he put me in that little boat and handcuffed my wrists, I was going to end up here in your possession.” I faced Marjory with disillusioned eyes.

“Come, dear, I’m sure you don’t believe such nonsense. Let’s have a pleasant dinner without probing each other’s minds. I don’t suppose you’ve ever been chained or tied up, Celie? But if you have, please tell us, we’d love to know about it.”

“No, I haven’t, and I can’t understand these handcuffs one little bit. It baffles me why Allie is so pleased with them.”

“Why don’t you ask the dear child, she’ll tell you anything you want to know?”

Allie looked bewildered. “But I’ve always worn handcuffs,” she said as if explaining the obvious. “I got my first pair as a birthday present when I was six years old. And I’ve worn them ever since.” She giggled happily. “Sometimes Marjory has to give me a larger pair because I’m still growing. We keep the ones I’ve outgrown in a little box. I sometimes take them out and look at them. Marjory is so sweet, she

spends all sorts of money buying me the most gorgeous handcuffs, like the pair I'm wearing now. I don't know why you look so startled, Celie. Girls are supposed to wear handcuffs. Don't they wear handcuffs where you come from?"

I let the subject drop. Obviously it would lead nowhere. I suspected the condition I was in was one of ignorance being bliss. I let Marjory continue.

"The story of Palm Island is fairly simple," she explained. "Seriously, I had a grandfather who was immensely rich, so rich money scarcely meant anything to him. He bought this island because of the climate, and he built this house so he could live here whenever he chose. He also imported enough young women to attend his every need. In return he settled large sums of money on us and kept us naked because of his belief it was a girl's natural condition. I was one of these girls, and when Grandpa died, he left me Palm Island and a rather large income to maintain it. I'm terribly lucky, I don't pretend I'm not."

"You mean your own grandfather kept you chained and in a cage!" I was aghast.

"You've got a gift for false interpretations, Celie, my pet." She was unruffled by my disapproval. "It's a habit we'll have to break you of. If you look at Palm Island from the proper viewpoint, you'll see that everything is perfectly correct."

“I wouldn’t go away from here, not for the whole world!” Allie was looking at me as if unable to understand a female so obtuse as I.

I let it drop. It was as though there existed a transparent wall I could not surmount even though I really wanted these people as my friends. I turned my full attention upon a pair of hands in steel. I was terribly ashamed of being forced to wear these restraints and, even though Allie also wore handcuffs (in apparent joy), I sensed between us a great divide. Every time I clinked my cuffs in movement, I felt like a criminal being transported to jail. And it was easy to see Palm Island as exactly that, I could not leave it on my own power. Even though my dingy awaited on the beach, I lacked the courage to put it out to sea.

“When we finish dinner, George will serve coffee and we can sit outside in the shade and talk about a few things.” Marjory would have said more had we not been interrupted by a girl, a girl as fully naked as Allie or myself. But she was totally free of any kind of restraint. She casually walked in as if part of the family, only to announce that she wanted only dessert and would join us for coffee. I stared at the nude loveliness in disbelief. She was one of the four girls I had seen in the cage.

Marjory made a formal introduction. The girl’s name was Janet. She kissed me in casual affection and I kissed back.

She then sat down at the table and accepted a dish from George. It was all so damned natural, I thought I'd scream.

"I thought I'd do some more work on that picture I'm painting," Janet said as though the words were of small account. "There'll probably be an hour of descent light after coffee." Janet looked at my astonishment and smiled. "I'm trying to be an artist," she explained. "And some of my work isn't all that bad. I'll show you if you'd be interested."

"But you were in the cage!" I blurted out. "You were locked in there with three other girls. I… I don't understand!"

"That's when we said our first hello." Janet grinned at me. "You looked so wonderfully puzzled."

"You were wearing some sort of metal device that locked on your elbows."

"That's right, dear, it's an invention of Marjory's. Isn't she clever!" Janet laughed at me. "Like I told you at the cage, we hurt just a little and they're most beautifully frustrating. There's no way a girl can get them off."

I looked at Marjory. "Tell me I'm dreaming. Tell me this isn't real. Tell me this is all a joke and you're all quietly laughing." I felt my blush returning.

My words vanished into thin air. Janet and Marjory took up a conversation about our nude visitor's art, while Allie winked at me as though we shared a secret but at the same

time knew when to hold our tongues. If I were baffled before, I was twice as baffled now.

Coffee in the garden was wonderful. So wonderful it left me wishing I was not handcuffed, not naked, and was somewhere far away. Janet and our hostess continued their conversation until Janet abruptly rose and said she had better catch the light while it was exactly right. Marjory looked at me with a lifted eyebrow and I knew this was the moment, a tense moment softened by Allie's girlish giggle and Marjory's gentle question, "I'm sure there'll be questions you want to ask, Celie. Go right ahead."

I felt myself pushed into a focus from which I was likely to emerge feeling boorish and insensitive. But the questions were too demanding to be ignored. "Why must I be handcuffed?" I asked as simply as I could.

"I guess there's more than one reason," Marjory said thoughtfully. "But I positively adore seeing a girl wear those things. I've kept Allie handcuffed most all of her life."

"Isn't that a bit kinky?"

"Don't use that word again, Celie. Nothing is kinky if it's beautiful. And, of course, there's another reason—handcuffs on a girl's wrist keep her aware of her condition."

"You mean tell her she's a prisoner?"

“You should try and avoid these too definite conclusions, Celie. Their real purpose is to say you belong to me.”

I was breathing heavily, and more than a little scared. Everything about Palm Island was bizarre, with some girls running around free, some chained. But everyone basking in the benevolence of Marjory’s quiet smile. With a bitterness I could not hide, I demanded, “So when do you put me in the cage? And get my elbows clamped together?”

“Oh, that!” My question was greeted with amusement. “You may never get inside that cage, Celie. For a while I want you close. I’ll do all sorts of things to you I’m sure you’ll complain about.”

“What sorts of things?”

“Small discomforts to teach sulky girls how to behave. They’ll improve you very much.”

It was all so vague I wasn’t getting anywhere. I then asked, “Tell me about Janet. Why is she privileged to walk around completely free?”

“You’ll walk around completely free, too, dear. Once you’ve got over this initial shock. Your time in the dingy must have been traumatic, and I’ll make all sorts of allowances for you.”

“How long will you keep me prisoner?”

“There’s no deadlines or dates on Palm Island.”

“I’m not a lesbian, I hope that’s not a part of it. That’s something I won’t do.”

“If I want your tongue, dear, I’ll train you for it. In the meantime, you’re not a lesbian.”

It seemed silly to continue. My chained hands probably told me all I needed to know. I was curious to know about the “small discomforts” but would probably be happier not knowing. Wearily, I looked at my hostess, “Marjory, can’t you understand how much better we could communicate if you gave me back my hands and let me have clothes? Please, Marjory, it’s not asking much.”

“You’ll learn not to ask questions like that, Celie, dear.” Marjory poured me another cup of coffee. “We’ll get you properly started tomorrow morning. Tomorrow morning you’ll be whipped for the first time. And after that’s been done to you, you’ll find yourself seeing everything in a new and clearer light.”

“Whipped! I’ve never been whipped in my life!”

“That’s the trouble, dear, we now must make up for lost time. No girl understands herself as female until she’s had a session with the cane and the crop. And there’s a whip I’ll use on you that isn’t too severe.” Marjory grinned at my pained expression. “Months from now, darling, you’ll look back at the moment and the way you’re feeling right now and you’ll laugh. Take my word for it.”

“But you don’t simply whip people, not just like that. Not the way you’re telling me. In fact, you don’t whip people at all. That’s illegal.” I stared from one to the other in bewilderment.

“Everyone wants to whip a girl. Haven’t you heard? Allie’s been whipped just for being a girl, haven’t you, Allie?”

“I can’t count how many times,” Allie assured me seriously. “My skin isn’t marked right now because Marjory hasn’t whipped me for at least a month. She’s been whipping some of the other girls.” There was her girlish giggled again. “There’s marks on Janet from her last time. I’m surprised you didn’t notice.”

“Allie’s my kid sister, Celie. I’ve got every right to whip her whenever I chose. You and I aren’t related, Celie, but it works the same way. Why don’t you two girls run off to bed. I’m sure Allie will answer your questions better than I.”

It was a dismissal and mention of bed told me I was shockingly tired. Allie and I had no need to undress, we were already naked and I presumed we would sleep that way. With a touch of shyness, Allie brought me up to date. “Marjory’s given me the key and made me responsible for you throughout the night,” she told me. “I’m afraid I have to move your hands.”

I didn't catch on until Allie removed one cuff and quickly gathered my arms behind my back. Before I could struggle, there came the click of handcuffs and I was a prisoner after a very brief bit of freedom. My chance to fight was over almost before I realized it was coming.

"Do you have to do that? I'm so terribly tired of handcuffs."

"You know I do, darling." Her voice was gentle. "You're so new to all of this that you might do something foolish if you had more freedom." She wiggled and looked embarrassed. "Before we go to sleep, Celie, dear, I just have to ask you something. It's simply why you have to make all this fuss about being handcuffed or whipped." She gazed at me yearningly. "Back where you grew up and came from aren't girls naked all the time, and don't they wear lovely handcuffs like I do? And aren't they whipped whenever someone wants to whip them? And whipped again if they've been bad?"

The child was looking at me so earnestly that I caught a glimpse of how she was seeing things. Palm Island was normal and there was nothing unusual about the handcuffs on her wrists. For Allie, Marjory's authority was absolute. "Of course, a girl's not treated like that," I said hotly. "The idea is ridiculous! Marjory gets away with it here because the rest of the world never sees this place. Do you realize, darling, that in the rest of the world Marjory would be considered a criminal and put in prison for years and years. I

wish you could understand how wrong it is to rob girls of part of their lives and keep them captives in a cage to be played with because they look so pretty. I don't know why those other girls put up with it, I'm certainly getting out of this situation first chance I get." Allie was looking at me in a way I could only construe as pity. Her locked arms went up over my head and down over my shoulders to clasp me tight.

"Poor, dear, Celie," she whispered, "you've got everything wrong. It's just the outside world that's out of step, not Palm Island."

She wiggled against me delightfully in what I thought might be sympathy. "Celie, I'm going to take off your handcuffs and tie your hands behind your back with some nice, strong cord. It will be something of mine on you, and something you can't get rid of. I think for a girl to have her hands tied is so much less impersonal than handcuffs. But, of course, when Marjory gets you some lovely handcuffs like I wear, you'll fall in love with them the same as me."

Laughingly we disengaged. Without being told to, I held out my hands, but Allie was still Marjory's sister and shook one finger at me. "You're going to be free for a few moments, Celie dear, promise you're going to stand still for me to tie your wrists?"

She was such a darling child I could not resist. I'll admit the thought had crossed my mind of making a dash for the

door but inside I surrendered with meek, “Okay, Allie, I promise.”

The girl looked at me shrewdly before using the tiny key. I was permitted to stretch my arms a few times before being turned around, my wrists crossed to accept the bit of cord, and to start breathing heavily at the touch of youthful fingers on my skin along with the twists and tugs of the cord as it sealed my hands even more solid than the steel had. Never in my life had I been tied up and this was a strange blend of despair and what I considered an untimely excitation of the senses. Allie did a remarkably competent job, unhindered by linked hands. For Allie I was simply Marjory’s property to do with as she chose. With my wrists tight tied, I knew handcuffs would have been more comfortable but did not complain. Instead I turned around and laughed as I said, “I’ll bet you’ve tied up hundreds of girls, Allie. And I’ll bet I can never wiggle loose.”

“Of course you can’t, Celie, dear. I know how to tie a girl’s hands. Now, let’s get to bed, you must be dead tired.”

She pushed me playfully so that I fell back on my freshly bound hands. Joining her in laugher as any couple of girls might do, there was still something on my mind.

“How do you expect me to go to sleep, Allie, when my mind is full of visions of being whipped tomorrow morning? Tell me it isn’t going to happen.”

“Oh, it will happen, love, and it will be just the way Marjory has promised. You’ll feel a lot better afterwards.”

“That doesn’t make me feel better now.” Allie cuddled close, pulling a single cover over out nakedness before thrusting her belly hard against my bound hands. I knew she wanted to reach over and cup my breasts but even she was denied this by the irons she so proudly wore.

We slept.

I didn’t enjoy breakfast but Marjory was cheerful and bright about every subject except the one that frightened me half to death. Allie, too, avoided mentioning whips and canes and prompted me to join in on the pleasant clatter the two of them so easily maintained. In order that I feed myself, my wrists were now handcuffed before me, which, after the strictures of the night, made me feel ridiculously free. So far as I could see, those handcuffs were the only bright spot in my day.

I had expected at least a dungeon or something equally appropriate for punishing a girl. But well ahead of time I was taken to Marjory’s own bedroom, which appeared to be equipped for many other things besides slumber. Everything was electrically controlled, and when Allie positioned me dead center on a large area of costly rug, I saw no visible menace until she pressed a button on the wall and down from above descended a massive metal cylinder with a cross piece at its bottom that might have been thirty

inches across with leather straps and buckles at each end. I did not have to ask its purpose. It was stopped at the level of my eyes so I could watch myself made helpless. Allie unlocked the handcuffs so I was again totally free, but also totally unwilling to do anything about it. As though in a trance, I raised first one hand and then the other, fitting the slenderness of my wrist within the leather cuff while Allie buckled and tugged to insure a snug and almost painful confinement of each wrist. I was quickly left standing naked with hands well secured and well apart and cursing myself for not having put up at least a token fight. I could indeed well believe there was some magic at work on this strange island, and where it now appeared I was the property of a woman named Marjory and her younger sister Allie.

The pressing of a second button above the first caused the bar to rise, taking my arms with it. It did not come to a stop until I was standing with my heels just slightly off the floor and my body nicely stretched. The balls of my feet were still solid on the rug so I would be able to move my body some. I wondered why I was not lifted totally of the floor. That would have seemed more appropriate to the torture of a girl.

“Marjory wants you to have enough room to wiggle and dance about a bit,” Allie answered my unspoken question. “She calls it the expressions of pain, and I’ve always found it sort of nice when it happens to me. I sure wouldn’t want

to be tied so I couldn't move at all. Darling, you look simply gorgeous."

The posture in which I was held accentuated everything feminine I possessed from my toes to the fingers. Allie was quick to point out how my figure was enhanced, "Aren't your tits lovely? Mine get the same way, every girl's does, they sort of stick out like that. I've been told the same thing happens when a man makes love to a girl."

There really wasn't much for me to say, it was too late to beg for freedom. Soon Marjory would come with her whips and canes and things, but for a little while the precious moments belonged to Allie and me. I could do nothing but she put her handcuffs over my head to hold me while she wickedly frictioned her nipples against mine, an exercise I found outrageously exciting. It was probably just as well the four girl prisoners choose that moment to come in to watch the newcomer receive her first whipping. None of them were free, a couple had their elbows hard joined behind their backs with Marjory's special clamp, while the rest were simply handcuffed behind their back.

"If they weren't fastened the way you see, they'd give you the darnedest time," Allie informed wisely. "Their fingers and lips and tongues would give you six orgasms before Marjory and the men arrived."

"Men! What men? No one told me…"

All of them laughed at my dismay while a fresh voice informed, “George and the gardener always get in on these affairs. They get the damnedest erections and you can bet each one will select a girl to bring it down to size. It’s a privilege the men have here on Palm Island. You can bet they’ll take you to some private place the first chance they get.”

At that moment Marjory arrived and sent Allie to fetch the cook and housemaid. All the servants were native to the islands, and when all were assembled to behold the whipping of a naked girl, they took the whole scene rather casually, as if it were a very common occurrence. I feared it was.

The concern of the men was purely carnal, to be confronted with a naked bound girl would have a predictable result with any male anywhere. George and the gardener grinned at me.

Marjory ran her fingers up and down my bare skin, kissed me, and said good morning for the second time. She then manipulated my puss with a firm hand in much the same spirit as she had kissed my lips. She then disappeared in back to say ridiculously, “Celie, dear, I’m going to start off caning your bottom. I hope you don’t mind. Here we go.”

I had had a good look at the cane and it had seemed innocent enough. But the way it burned itself into my bottom flooded my mind with visions of fictional punishments I

had read. I could suddenly recall all those descriptions of how a girl's seat would be branded, scolded, burned, and cut as she received each stroke of the instrument. Marjory's cane was all these things, and more. I hadn't believed such pain existed, or that it would be administered by a girl who had shown evidence of being fond of me. The second impact came while I was still struggling to contain my screams from number one. The cane seemed a living thing, wrapping itself around the contours of my bottom. Obviously I had not previously understood what a bottom was really for. I had just assumed it was a good place to sit on, and to wiggle at men. Lustily I screamed.

Marjory now took a few moments to marshal her prisoners and staff into a semi-circular audience standing close enough to catch every nuance of physical expression I could not control. She paused long enough to once more cup my pussy and pat my cheek, which gave me time to plead, "Please, Marjory, don't so hard! I simply can't bear it…"

Evidently punished girls were not supposed to plead. Number three and number four were every bit as terrible as number one and two. I found myself doing a frantic dance which in no way made my flesh less accessible. With the fifth stroke I actually raised myself from the floor to contort in mid air. I screamed and pleaded in a manner to soften any heart except the one now marking my skin. Af-

ter number six, Marjory said gently, “You’re making a terrible lot of noise, darling, you’d best be gagged.”

At that moment a gag in my mouth was the last thing I desired. But I got gagged anyway in a manner which to me seemed unbelievably awful. In a matter of fact fashion, Marjory removed her scanty briefs and went from girl to girl holding it against their pussy that it might soak up any juices excreted there. When that was performed, the panties were rather wet and smelled of girl.

“Open up, darling, this is a really lovely idea,” Marjory said as she held the panties to my lips. “It’s a gift from each of us to you. I’m sure you’ll be grateful.”

“I won’t open my mouth, I simply won’t. That’s too horrible!” I clamped my teeth and drew as far away from the offending wad as possible. But Marjory simply pinched one of my nipples which sent lightning bolts of pain shooting through my body. “When you open your mouth, darling,” she informed, “I’ll stop. Please do be sensible.”

My reaction was exactly as desired. The sudden pain was so terrible I opened my mouth which was immediately stuffed full of the wad. The flavor was not as bad as I had supposed but I was still shamed and disgusted. A moment later a strap was passed between my teeth and buckled very tightly behind my head. My lips were parted, I couldn’t make much noise, and words were out of the question.

I flung my head from side to side in futile rebellion before gazing deep into Marjory's eyes which were laughing at the distaste mirrored on my features. My strapped wrists burned as I wiggled this way and that in struggles that did no good.

Suddenly her face was gone and a second later the whipping of my bottom resumed. I could not scream but my lips fought at the leather they could not eject, and which bit the corners of my mouth. By now my bottom was on fire with a blazing I was sure meant blood. I was later disappointed and shocked to find that the whipping had not broken the skin. I received a total of fifteen strokes with the cane. It seemed far more and lasted forever, during which time I have only a recollection of trashing feet and legs and the repeated lifting of my weight from off the rug, frantic efforts that grew slowly weaker as my certainty that I was going to be whipped to death grew stronger.

While I was firmly gagged, everyone else present was free to comment as they chose, and I have to give the girls credit for abstaining from jeers and four letter words. They limited themselves to an appreciation of the artistic qualities of what they beheld. Apparently in their eyes my struggling nudity was beautiful beyond imagining, and my sad sounds and the flinging back and forth of my hair held a merit of its own. I suppose each of them was remembering when she had received her first whipping. When the caning of my seat came to an end, the cook fetched coffee in

what turned out to be only an intermission. Allie took the gag from between my lips and extracted the shameful wad of panty from my mouth. She held the cup to my lips and I drank thankfully.

When no one left and I still stood with hands above my head, I asked, “Isn’t over? Please tell me there isn’t anymore.”

“It’s just half time,” Marjory whispered as though bestowing good news. “We’re all going to leave you alone for thirty minutes then gather again to watch me whip your breasts and front. It’s quite different, and will complete this part of your education. Would you like a shot of something stronger than coffee?”

“Yes, oh, yes! But I can’t stand any more. Is my bottom badly cut?”

“It isn’t cut at all, you silly girl. It’s beautifully marked, if that’s what you mean. And there won’t be blood on your breasts when I’m finished with them. Here’s a shot of brandy.”

I drank the brandy and pleaded until threatened with the gag. I was supposed to find it restful to stand as I was to await and to think about the second half of my introduction to Palm Island. Marjory’s bedroom was suddenly very quiet. Allie only stayed behind to talk to me.

I looked up at strapped wrists and wished I could rip that leather off them. The coffee and the brandy worked miracles and I felt a lot better by the time the second half was ready to begin.

I knew I would no longer contest the gag, it saved me from the shame of screams. No doubt it would be replaced for the second half of my punishment. And that was the only word I could think of to describe it. I kept remembering Allie's laughing assurance that what was being done to me would change my life. And I was forced to admit that the pain given me thus far had indeed made me more receptive to the authority by which Marjory held me enthralled. I tried to sleep but the thirty minutes vanished like a flash and there again was my faithful audience. When Marjory once more inserted the panties into my mouth, I didn't fight it. I accepted the shame and was thankful that I would not scream aloud. When the brutal strap was tight, all I did was toss my head two times as though assuring myself my gag was there to stay. Marjory's gentle whisper, "I'm ready to whip your breasts now, darling," told of the adoration of my naked body. I caught her eyes and found in them only love.

It was worse, much worse, in a way I would not have believed possible. She used a different instrument, a small whip of soft leather but it still scolded my tender flesh in a terrible way. Perhaps the pain was less than what had burned my bottom but a girl is very sensitive about her

breasts and to see and feel them being cut by the leather thong was terrible. Sometimes she slashed them across the middle, sometimes the whip came down on my tender globes. And a few strokes even slashed upward to give the under sides of my large breasts marks and pain. I screamed into the panties and lifted myself by strapped wrists to kick wildly at nothing. I flung my body from side to side in useless attempts to escape the horrible pain.

“Open your legs, darling, get them wide apart, we mustn’t forget your sex.” Marjory’s voice was vibrant with joy.

I had no thought to disobey and spread my legs wide open. There came a series of fiery cuts to make me dance in pain again. I could not believe such pain can be experienced in the place that usually gives such pleasure.

I don’t remember the count of strokes on my breasts but my pussy took five hard ones, I felt each impact will all of my being. It was the most horrible time of my life.

Thus I was whipped for the very first time.

Chapter 2

The Discipline of Palm Island

There was nothing casual about my initiation into the strangest captivity a girl could ever find. I was whipped almost into unconsciousness, so bad was the pain. I was far too weary for the motions of agony by the end and stood passively to hang from strapped wrists. There was a little time in which everything was a blur and the bite of the lash left me alone. I was kissed and kissed again but not released. When I again became aware of events around me, I found myself once more in Marjory's bedroom and unable to move from where I stood. I didn't much care because I was pretty sure I'd be chained or tied anyway whenever Marjory chose to release my hands from these straps. I simply stood and dreamed about the pain I'd suffered and what Marjory might do with me next. My mouth was still filled with Marjory's panties, the tight strap still cut at my lips, and my body burned with terrible aches. My bottom was on fire and my breasts throbbed and hurt. And there was a terrible ache in my pussy, terrible enough to make me wonder if I would ever gain pleasure from that part of me again. I was a sad little girl.

But the worst part was over, I told myself. And the promise came back to me and I knew it was right—I felt better! It was as though a load had been lifted from my shoulders and I was starting everything again fresh and clean and ab-

solved of sin. I didn't find anything remarkable about this sensation because, no doubt, every girl ever punished felt that way when it was over. But what was remarkable for me was the rapidly diminishing pain of cane and whip. My fevered imagination had supposed the agony would last for days but it was gradually fading into a weary ache.

Walking might be painful but I didn't worry about that because I couldn't walk!

At that point I became aware that my loins were warm from more than just the whipping I had received there. Amazingly I recognized that my sex was responding as if I had been sexually teased, not tortured! I had read that the flesh of whipped maidens responded erotically even to the point of causing the girl to desire the same infliction again. I had dismissed the notion then and I dismissed it now. No doubt there was some explanation for the way I felt, but it was a pleasurable feeling about which I could certainly not complain. Still I found it strange that such pain could generate a sexual excitement.

I looked up at the wrists still firmly strapped and buckled and found myself admiring the neat and tidy strictures by which I was forced to stand with my hands held high. There was something artistic about the way my encircled wrists pulled my arms straight up. No doubt such nonsense was a sign of recovery. By the time Marjory showed up again, I was back to normal.

“What an idiot I was to forget the gag,” she apologized. “But I’ll bet it did you good to have it in your mouth all this time. Now you know what every girl tastes like. Here, I’ll pull my panties out and put them in the wash.” She unbuckled the strap and plucked the offensive cloth from my mouth. Then my bruised lips were kissed again and again, and my nakedness was hugged. Mischievous fingers roamed over my body, exploring erotic zones as well as whip marks. I gasped in a strange and unexpected pleasure at such touches. Finally she backed away to meet me eye to eye. “I’m sure you’re wondering what happens next, darling. Did you enjoy being whipped?”

I did not answer her question, it seemed all together too silly. I suppose I could have been polite and said, “Yes, it was wonderful!” but that would have been even more silly. All I managed was to say, “I’m so tired, Marjory, can I get my arms back and sit down?”

“Of course you can, darling.” Marjory held up a length of cord for my inspection. “I brought this especially to celebrate the occasion.” She pressed the button on the wall until my wrists were lowered to the level of my eyes. A moment later they were free and the bar was up and out of sight. Marjory massaged my wrists briefly before turning me around and crossing those wrists. “This is the first time I’ve tied you darling,” she said. “I’m very good at tying up girls, and I promise you’ll never wiggle yourself out of any

knot of mine. A nice length of cord is a pleasant change from handcuffs. I'm sure you'll agree."

I was turned and again kissed when my hands were secured. I blurted out a question, "Why did you do that horrible thing with your panties. I've read about it but it's not something you do to a girl you love, or even a friend. It's just plain horrible."

"You see, darling, it did you some good! It's gorgeously humiliating and you should have seen the look on your face! But enough of that. Besides, it's just part of your training." Marjory ran her fingertips gently over my caned skin. When I winced and gasped, she pointed out reasonably enough, "See, darling, it's a good thing you don't wear clothes. Your skin is very tender on your bottom and breasts. And in between your thighs… Clothes would simply be another punishment. Come along and have lunch with Allie and me. You can sit at her side and she'll feed you. I'm leaving your hands the way you are. You don't know it but you're really too adorable for words."

I had been right about the walking, it rippled my skin to make it hurt, especially between my legs. When Marjory motioned me to a chair at the table, I gasped out an embarrassed, "But I can't possibly sit down!"

"Yes, you can, dear. In fact, I insist on it. Push her down, Allie, and let's have no nonsense about it."

There was a flat fire and then a slow burn with I handled with only a moan or two because I was finding an ally in the lovely heat beginning in my secret place, a heat with power to counter pain and leave me feeling good. Also pretty humble. I had never been whipped before and so presumed it was all a part of what had been done to me. Rejecting the idea of asking Marjory if this was always the case when girls were punished, I kept quiet.

I was told that after lunch Allie would get me started on a holiday afternoon. I was being given the freedom of Palm Island and could roam where ever I chose or sleep. “It’s a reward for good behavior,” Marjory explained. “You put on the most marvelous display while I was whipping you, and you stayed away from hysterics and threats. You’re a most definite asset in my group of girls. Run along, but be sure to be back before dinner.”

With Allie’s fingers on my arm, I was guided out into the sunlight to a small tool shed which proved to contain what Allie lovingly described as “girlish restraints.” She carefully selected a pair of anklets joined by a great many links of chain. The whole thing was heavy and might have been ominous had it not been so expensively made. I stood still for Allie to fit them on my ankles where they fitted like a glove. Laughingly, I kicked one foot to behold a swirl of silver links which sang a metallic tune. In puzzlement at the length of chain, I asked the reason.

“Because it looks good, darling,” Allie assured me in perfect seriousness. “Every time you take a step the chain will do a sort of dance to tell you how proud it is to hobble such pretty feet.”

“You’re just making that up.”

“But it’s true, dear. Why don’t you go for a trial run?”

“I can’t possibly run. I’ll trip on my face.” I took a few cautious steps and realized someone had spent a lot of money to insure my feet being hobbled. Returning in anxious caution, I pointed out, “But Allie, if I trip and fall I’m going to hurt myself. Please give me back my hands so I can fall and not hurt anything.”

My teenage jailer considered my request. “I suppose you’re right, darling. I’m not supposed to untie any of Marjory’s knots but we don’t want you hurt and we do want you to have an enjoyable walk. You’ve become a part of Palm Island and you ought to have a look at it. Turn around.”

Even the simple act of turning around produced the metallic response. But I didn’t care, I was going to have my hands again for the rest of the day. With Allie holding the discarded cord and laughing at my enthusiasm, I massaged my wrists and said far too many thank you’s. I then was told to run along.

It was the strangest feeling. As I walked across the grass, I tripped and fell a couple of times but freed hands saved

me. Each time when I looked back, Allie was still watching. We waved in a sort of reassurance until the trees hid me from sight. There were several paths but I chose the one that Allie had used to lead me from the beach. I wanted to see the cage and also find out if my dingy was where I'd left it. Since the path was smooth I made good time, developing a technique in which I stumbled less and less. Often I kicked out at the shining links to see them swirl and hear their response. I was beginning to enjoy myself.

The cage was empty and that was a disappointment. I had looked forward to chatting with the girls without authority present. I felt sure they had things to tell me that Allie would keep silent about. I was not a bit sure about this halcyon island fantasy. Somewhere, unseen, were forces and powers to affect my life. Perhaps I was just being trained so I could be sold to some middle east brothel. Or they never intend to let me go. A lifetime sentence, and I didn't even do any crime other than to tell Rankin I didn't want to jump into bed with him. Knowing nothing about anything, I easily conceived any possibility. In the meantime I was a naked girl with chained feet learning how to walk.

The cage was irresistible. I clinked my way to the door and found the bars unlocked. Cautiously I swung it wide so I could step inside a place I saw as a prison but which these islanders apparently saw as an amusing pause for girl talk. I spurred my chain to its very best effort as I progressed slowly to savor whatever aura captive girls might have left

behind. A walk around the edges of the cage took a fair amount of time as the cage was larger than it looked. I found only a torn nylon and a battered shoe to show any human had ever been in here. The door was still opened when I returned to it. I clinked out of it, turned around, and wondered what girlish hopes had been shattered against those iron bars.

I had to walk half way to the beach before feeling better. The dingy was still there but it had been pulled way up, beyond the highest tide, and was basking in the sun as if waiting for my return. Giggling over the handicap of chained feet, I managed to get back in and sit as I had sat during my terrible trip. On this occasion I did not even notice the pain of sitting down.

The heat was still there, a comforting warmth in which I viewed my shackled feet, my dingy, and the island in a glow of benevolent tolerance. It was warm in the sun, and I soon slipped sideways into sleep.

I don't think it was more than an hour when I awoke. Nothing had changed so I sat a while longer to dream my dreams, which were mostly a song of thankfulness over not becoming a lunch for sharks. I swung my feet over the side and continued my exploration up the beach. Strangely, I had become a very happy girl.

I found a path and then another. Without them I could not have penetrated the forest for my chain would have been

constantly snagged to make me helpless. As it was I picked the third path and kicked my links down the dirty path. I felt like singing.

Marjory's grandpa must have had a thing about cages. This one was much, much smaller and held a naked girl who clutched its bars with chained hands to watch with astonishment my approach. When I was close enough she said as though talking about the weather, "I'm Natalie. I was there when you were whipped this morning. Remember me?"

I remembered well. She was a dark and flashing eyed beauty, fully up to the best standards of Palm Island. I showed her my whipped skin but she wasn't all that interested because she had seen whipped skin before. In fact, she turned around so I could see the fading wounds on her own back and bottom. "What you're looking at isn't an initiation, Celie, dear," she explained without concern. "I wrinkled my nose at Marjory when she wasn't looking and what you see now is what I got for it. Please be careful. But those marks you've got are gorgeous, and I do envy you that first time. Didn't you find it wonderful?"

"No, I didn't. It was too awful to even talk about, Natalie."

"You'll find it a lot easier to take next time," she said casually. "Sometimes I've wanted it so badly I've provoked darling Marjory into having me whipped. It's the most won-

derful aphrodisiac in the world. Don't tell me you're not horny?"

"I certainly am not and I'd do anything to keep from being whipped again. That horny thing you're talking about is simply because you want a man." Slyly, I added, "Doesn't George or the gardener pick you for their favors once in a while?"

"Hell, no! Those bastards have got a thing about a couple of the girls, those are all they use. A couple of us girls complained to Marjory about it but she says it's simply the luck of the draw and surely we're old enough to know how to play with each other."

I might have said the same thing because here was a beautiful creature who, if she raised no spark in the local men, would certainly do so in a girl. I was beginning to have suspicions about Marjory but did not say so. Instead I asked, "How long have you been here on Palm Island?"

"Oh, I've forgotten. Probably three or four years. I've been whipped more times than I can remember. It's a lovely place and I wouldn't leave it for the whole world."

"Isn't that a contradiction?"

"I suppose it is," Natalie said without concern.

“This place turns everything upside down. I’ve got so I simply love being inside this cage and wearing these handcuffs. Has it got to you yet?”

“Don’t be silly! No girl loves something like that.”

“Well, I do. I expect what you really need is to be whipped again. Don’t worry, you’ll get it sooner or later.”

I would not get answers from Natalie. I did, however, have a terrible feeling that I was looking at myself in time to come. Hopefully, I inquired, “Can I let you out of that cage? Is there a key around?”

“Of course not. There’s never a key when you want it. And if you let me out, I don’t know what I’d do then except come back inside and slam the door. Marjory takes a dim view of girls who manage to escape any situation she puts us in. I’m pretty sure I’m here for the day so don’t think you have to stay around on my account. I’m not the sad and solitary prisoner you seem to think me. If you keep on up this path you’ll find one or two other things of interest. Run along, darling.”

I could not begin to understand her satisfaction in being handcuffed and caged but that was her affair, and I resumed my exploration of the path, feeling pleased and self-satisfied over heated loins and Natalie’s suggestion about feeling horny. If this was being horny, I was all for it. But strangely, I had no desire for a man. The last thing I wanted

was George to chose me to penetrate. Thinking back to what I knew of male equipment, I felt only disgust. And I was still not certain my recently whipped sex would function without pain during normal sex.

This one was tied on what appeared to be a sacrificial rock, but which was actually a simple product of some natural process, into which had been driven a number of ringbolts to enable a girl to be bound on the hard, rough surface in a dozen different ways. This one was nakedly spread with her arms above her head and special attention given to the binding of her feet far apart, which left her legs wide spread. Additional ropes were tied to her knees to spread them wide, leaving her private sex wide open and exposed. It was a pretty little mound of which its owner was obviously proud, because her first words left me thinking she was insane, “Do you like my cunt, darling? Most people would do things with it but I’ve been tied like this ever since you were whipped this morning and no one’s passed by. Would you like to untie me, I’m terribly bored.”

At least it was a change. I recognized her as one more of the girls who had witnessed my shame. She said her name was Gloria and she loved being played with. It came as something of a shock to realize I had free hands and was able to do as she asked. But I was cautious enough to demand, “I’d love to untie you, Gloria, but is it allowed? I mean, what would happen to us then?”

“Don’t be so fussy. We’d both be whipped, of course.”

“I was whipped this morning, I don’t want to be whipped again.”

“Well, I do. If you look, you won’t find a mark on my skin anywhere. I haven’t been whipped in the longest time. And those silly men chose Janet and Elsie to screw after they got a hard-on after watching you get whipped. I expect you saw Natalie in her cage, and you see me here like this. We weren’t chosen. Please let me loose so I’ll earn a punishment.”

“But I’d be punished, too!”

“Yes, I expect that’s true. Would you mind?” Here I was again back at the unexplainable. Here were gorgeous girls who all appeared mentally deviant the way a friend of mine used to describe as “not having all their marbles.” My first impulse was to tear at the knots which held this beautiful girl spread-eagled on the rock, but I fought it. It was not my fault if she felt erotically aroused. And what I had learned of Palm Island so far left me thinking that she should stay tied. The prospect of she and I being whipped together if I let her loose was something I did not have the courage to face. I told Gloria this, then turned and continued on my way so that I would not have to argue the impossible with her. She called after me, “You’ll be sorry, darling. One day you’ll want the whip as bad as me.”

I simply shrugged and did not look back. I felt a bitch and did not enjoy the forest as much as I should have. My mind was filled with the girls and the shocking situations they found themselves in. And how they seemed to like those terrible situations. I was defeated in my wish to help. It appeared that no one on Palm Island needed help except me. And my walk, even with chained feet, had done me good. The exercise had made my wounds feel better. I could do nothing about the warmth in my loins. And when I found myself thinking of the attentions of George and Hank, I angrily expelled such notions from my mind. Seeing my fellow captives as brainwashed from being on Palm Island far too long. They were more than prey to Marjory's smile. But I had fallen victim to Marjory myself, so who was I to preach?

Elsie was sitting naked on the grass. Beside her was a sizable iron ball with a chain running from it to the shackle on her ankle. She stood up and greeted me with laughter. "Look at the fix they've got me in, Celie," she said as if exhibiting something of great value. "This damned ball weighs eighty pounds, and the key to the shackle is a mile back down the road. I'm supposed to push or carry this damned ball that far in order to get loose. If I'm still attached to it at five o'clock, I get whipped." She paused. "It's so nice to get to know you. I was present when you got whipped this morning. I must say you put on a marvelous performance. I suppose that was your first time?"

“And I hope my last,” I retorted bitterly. “I’ve never known such awful pain in all my life.” I paused to look at the massive hunk of iron. “But, Elsie, if you’ve got to move that ball that far, shouldn’t you get going? You’ll never do it sitting down.”

“I moved it about ten feet and decided that was plenty. I decided I’d rather be whipped. That’s why I was sitting down.”

“But being whipped is terrible punishment. Look, if I give you a hand, can the two of us work it down the path?”

“That’s sweet of you, Celie. But the chain is far too short and there’s no way I want to try picking it up. At the best I’d probably get half way and then be whipped anyway. Let’s sit down and talk about something else.”

I went to where Elsie stood and bent down to her ball. I got the best grip I could but the iron ball defeated my efforts to lift it. I took a deep breath and tried again, this time getting it two or three inches off the ground.

“They told me it weighed eighty pounds,” she said, “for all I care it could weigh a ton. They’re laughing at us.”

I turned my attention to the chain and the heavy band of steel around Elsie’s slim ankle. Everything was solid and fit perfectly. The keyhole in the shackle laughed up at me. Cautiously I lowered my injured seat to the grass.

“If you can’t get your feet free, how would you expect to get this off me?” she asked reasonably. “But they’re terribly attractive on a girl’s ankle, don’t you think. Marjory must have spent a fortune to make us pretty.”

I looked at her but she was serious. She added, “I haven’t been whipped for about ten days. I expect you’ve seen the last of my marks.” She giggled. “I’m looking forward to it.”

Here we went again! “You have to be kidding,” I protested. “No girl can possibly want to be hurt the way I was this morning!” I paused to give her another look. “But you’re absolutely right about these ankle chains, they’re beautiful in their own way. If we ever escaped from this island, we could start a new trend.”

“We can’t escape, no girl ever has. I don’t want to anymore, I know when I’m well off. And it will be the same with you if you give it time. Palm Island is beautiful and the things they do to us are cute. It’s a good thing us girls have got George and Hank to help us out because everything Marjory or that younger sister of hers does makes us girls horny as all get out. You wait awhile, darling, and you’ll be rubbing up against those two middle aged old farts, yourself.”

I had to laugh. Elsie was dry with the joke always on herself. Slyly, I interjected, “I hear those two only favor you and Janet. What you get, the other girls don’t.”

“We’re simply nice to the old boys and laugh at their jokes. And we ask their advice on how to be good girls. It’s the oldest female trick in the world. I’m surprised Gloria and Natalie haven’t caught on. I’d put them wise about how to act but Janet and I don’t want to share the wealth. Hank and George aren’t as young as they used to be. They’re pretty good, but at their best men are pretty limited. By the way, if you want to watch me whipped this evening, I’m sure Marjory will let you. She’s terribly sweet.”

Here it was again, a jumble of reactions I could scarcely understand. I could almost laugh about George and Hank but there was nothing laughable about whips and canes. Meeting impossible head on, I demanded, “You can’t possibly be telling the truth when you talk about your enjoyment in being whipped. I don’t believe you want to be whipped this evening any more than I do. I can understand your giving up the battle with this iron ball, that makes sense. But I’d be in a dither of apprehension if I were in your shoes.”

“If you were in my shackle,” she corrected. “Look, I know you can’t really understand the attitude us girls have towards punishment. But you’re new and you’ll pick it up as you go along. I’m sure your feet aren’t chained as a punishment, it’s just another of Marjory’s cute ideas. But I’ll bet you don’t feel half as bad about it as you would have out back in the world you came from.”

“Well… Maybe not. But everything is so different. Have you and the others reconciled yourselves to being prisoners here for life?”

“Of course we have, silly! It’s a perpetual holiday. The only black cloud on our horizon is when Marjory sells one of us. The girl simply disappears and that’s the last we see of her. But she’s always replaced by another, just like you!”

“You mean Marjory actually sells girls? Wouldn’t that make her a slave trader?” I shivered at the thought.

“I suppose there are many names you could use. But every once in a while a man will show up and we’ll be paraded for his inspection. What you have to play for is to be Marjory’s favorite. That girl never has to stand in line.” Elsie giggled. “We’re always hoping young Allie will absent-mindedly get in the line up some time and get herself sold. It’s just a pleasant little fantasy because Allie’s a real sweet kid. Have you decided to come and watch me get whipped?”

“You seem to want me to, so I’ll ask Marjory’s permission.”

“You do that, darling. I hope I can kick the way you did. But I’m sure I’ll put on a pretty good show. Look, isn’t it time you were headed back? I don’t suppose you’ll break any speed records the way you’re fixed.”

I raised Elsie’s shackled ankle to my lips and kissed it in some sort of emotion I can’t explain. But it seemed pleasant

to my companion for when we lightly kissed as girls do, we had nothing more to say. When I looked back at the end of a hundred yards, she was still sitting there and gave me a wave. My links swirled as I resumed my march.

Allie freed my ironed ankles, but first took the precaution of handcuffing my wrists. I was thus robbed of that wonderful moment of complete freedom from rope or chain. She did it in the manner one used to keeping girls from having such minor freedom. “I’ll give you a bath, darling, and then it will be dinner time. I suppose you’ve met all the girls, what do you think of them?”

“They’re all crazy! They seem to like the horrible way they’re treated.”

“Of course they do, Celie. I like it, Marjory likes it. They know how lucky they are to be… Chosen.”

“Don’t you mean kidnapped?”

“That’s an awful word, Celie. Would you tell someone you’d been kidnapped?”

“Was I really kidnapped? It seemed to me I was sort of collected on the beach.”

“You were already handcuffed, Celie dear, so it made everything so easy. When a girl is handcuffed the way you were, it’s a sort of introduction, as though you’d arrived with good references. See what I mean?”

I could see what she meant but refrained from getting myself in another tangle of attitudes. I had to admit I could become addicted to Allie giving me a bath. It was a delightful pleasure which no one could really criticize. True, she soaped my pussy much more than necessary, but that felt good. But girls are inclined to do that to each other anyplace. Her attentions added to the fire I already carried deep inside, but I refused to consider it or mention it. I simply went along with this bubbly young thing to join Marjory in the dining room where, over a cocktail, I was made to recount my adventures of the afternoon. I was assured I did remarkably well to cover such a distance with ironed feet. As usual, everything was as jolly as all get out.

Everything was rich and pleasant and luxurious, which tended to make me forget the handcuffs and recall the captive girl's opinion that we never had it so good. As far as I knew I wasn't going to be punished for anything so I could just be an honored guest. I worked hard at it until I remembered the girl who would be whipped that evening. Timidly, I asked, "May I please be present when Elsie is punished later this evening? She seemed to want me there to watch."

"And what are you going to watch, dear?"

"She's going to be whipped, isn't she? That's what she expects."

“Does she now! I think we’d better give that young lady a surprise. She’s all together too fond of corporal punishment. If I remember, she was whipped about ten days ago.” Marjory gave me a shrew glance. “Remember, dear, it can become addictive. I don’t suppose you believe that now but you will. Sure you can watch Elsie’s punishment, but you’ll find it a bore. Come along, we’ll have coffee in the lounge.”

“Did I say something I shouldn’t?” I asked after Allie had given us our cups. “I mean I wouldn’t want to get Elsie into trouble. She seemed a nice girl, I liked her.”

“Do I detect a hint of disapproval?”

“Oh, no!” I should keep my mouth shut about these things.

“Well… Let’s forget it until it’s time to go downstairs. In the meantime, you can tell us about your life on Rankin’s yacht.”

“There isn’t much to tell. He took away my clothes in front of all his other guests. I struggled but it did no good. Then to make me more easily accessible, he put those handcuffs on my wrists behind my back the way you found me. When I kicked a couple of his friends in a place where it hurts a man, that’s when he dumped me in the dingy and cast me adrift. When I was invited for a cruise, I didn’t expect that he would try to turn me into the main attraction at a gang bang.”

“Were you the only loose girl he had on board?”

“There were half a dozen who didn’t have escorts and most weren’t any happier than I. Probably they’re floating around in dinghies across the Pacific. I’m sure Rankin had enough handcuffs to secure an army of girls.” I cocked a questioning eye. “I sort of had the feeling Rankin knew where he was sending me. Isn’t there some sort of current that’s predictable?”

“Darling, I’m the one who asks the questions. Your story sounds about par for the course. And now, since you’re so interested, I’ll ask Allie to take you to where Elsie gets her big surprise. Run along, darlings.”

This time it was not a bedroom. A highly amused young woman led me down a flight of stairs and a long corridor with doors on each side. Allie took me to one door and opened it. Inside was a pleasant room with high windows providing some fading sunlight to help remove the taint of being below ground. The room contained nothing except a girl and a box. The girl was Elsie and her hands had been tied behind her back. Her presence appeared voluntary for I saw no chain by which she was compelled to stand. She was obviously pleased to see us but her greeting was loaded with apprehension. For me it was a simple “Hi, pussycat,” but for Allie it was an urgent plea, “Darling, please whip me. Don’t punishment me some other way.”

“Why do you want to be whipped, Elsie, as if I didn’t know.”

“You don’t have to be kind about it, Allie. Or doesn’t she wish to bother with it?”

“She knows how much you adore being whipped, Elsie dear, so this time you’ll get punished another way.”

Elsie let out with a wail of despair. “When I was told to come to this room, I knew you’d lock me in this lousy box. But, Allie, darling, can’t you persuade Marjory to give me twice as many strips with the whip? I’ll go crazy in that box.”

The box didn’t seem all that bad to me, I would certainly have chosen it in preference to being whipped. But I was seeing only half of the picture. Poor Elsie was quite frantic and was tearing at bound wrists as though her life depended upon getting them apart. “I don’t mind that lousy box so much,” she demanded of Allie, “but it’s what you put inside there with me. What’s it going to be this time?”

I gathered that Elsie was prone to punishment. She had seen everything before and it was now a case of trying to cut her loose. I do not know if it was fear or a belief she could soften Allie’s heart that now drove her to her knees as a pitiful prisoner begging for mercy. Kneeling there, the made one of the prettiest pictures of a girl I have ever seen. Her voice throbbed with pain. “I’ll go crazy, honest I will. Please whip me instead. I know I get a charge out of being whipped, but it lasts less than ten strokes and after that I’m hurting the same as anyone else. Please…!”

It was hard to realize that Allie, who was stripped naked and handcuffed the same as the rest of us, should hold so much power in her hands. But she lifted up the lid of the massive crate to demand, “Get in here, Elsie, and stop your beefing! You know perfectly well you earned a punishment, so why complain about getting it. Get inside!”

Poor Elsie looked at Allie then at me, but there was nothing I could do but stand and watch as she sat on the edge of the box to swing her legs up and over the side so she could stand within. All the time her hands wiggled and strained at the ropes holding them. “I don’t mind being shut inside this box,” she told us. “But I know you’re going to put something in there with me. What is it?”

“You’re being given a choice, darling.” Allie was enjoying her position of power. “We’ve got a box full of those big ants. We’ve also got several mice. Or you can have that cute little dog the cook keeps for a pet. But, of course, we all know what a little doggie does to a girl whose legs are tied wide apart. Does anything appeal to you?”

“The dog,” Elsie said decisively. “I’ll take the dog. I don’t want ants and mice up my puss. I don’t want that dog, either. I think you’re being terribly mean.” Then she added, “Can I have my hands free?”

“Don’t be silly, of course you can’t. Now sit down and let me do the straps. This isn’t your first time, you know what to do.”

She sat down to allow Allie to move a portion of the top separate from the lid. The result was a flushed and anxious face above a neck locked firmly by two boards with a hole cut in the middle. Her hands were already behind her back so I realized how helpless she was going to be. But Allie raised each ankle and strapped it high up on the side of the box so that Elsie's sex was wide open and staring at us. "If that damned dog bites my pussy off, it's going to be all your fault," Elsie stated bitterly. "I think you and Marjory are being terribly mean to me." After a second she added, obviously with little hope, "Are you sure you wouldn't rather whip me?"

Allie was unfailingly cheerful. I could tell this was a task she had done many times before. "If you keep on asking to be whipped, darling, I'll be glad to whip you after you've had the box punishment. But it won't be simply those ten strokes you get such a charge out of. I'd say about thirty stripes would be about right…? And some of them up between your legs…? Would you like that, dear?"

Elsie simply sniffed and keep silent. While Allie went to fetch the dog, I asked in real concern, "Do this sort of thing happen very often? I mean, this sort of punishment?"

"It wouldn't be happening now if I'd had a lick of sense," Elsie admitted sadly. "I expect I would have hauled that damned ball back to the key if I'd really tried. But being whipped isn't all that bad a punishment for me and I

hadn't expected this. I'm going to hate every minute I'm fastened in here, and Fido's snout and tongue working over my pussy. That dog's been trained, you know, to go right for a girl's cunt and lick it until she's ready to scream. Marjory's cute, she knows what girls don't like."

The dog was a friendly terrier and, judging by his waging tail and the way he ran around and around the box, I felt pretty sure he'd kept other girls company. He knew what was going to happen. Allie dropped him in the box and closed and locked the lid. Elsie's punishment had begun.

"You said you wanted to watch Elsie's punishment, and here you are. Stick around as long as you like, I can't be bothered so I'll go back upstairs. I expect you'll want to be a real heroine and get your hands loose so you can get Elsie out of there. But I'll put a stop to those notions right now. Come here, Celie, while I put your hands behind your back. It's by far the best place for them."

The exchange was swift, there wasn't much I could do. In the space of a minute I was alone in the big room and the box containing a naked and obscenely spread girl. Angrily I tugged at the handcuffs which made me helpless but, as usual, they were far too tight and I was now veteran enough in captivity not to chafe my wrists needlessly. What I was most interested in was Elsie's flushed features as her head swung this way and that in rebellion against her con-

finement. It didn't take much imagination to know what was taking place inside the box.

"The little son of a bitch has had been like this before," Elsie said in between gasps. "He's damned clever, and if you stay here and watch, you'll see me have about fifteen orgasms in a row."

"But does he hurt you?"

"Sometimes he bites a little. But he doesn't hurt in the way you're thinking. Gosh, Celie, I wish I'd worked at the damned ball. Ohhhh!"

"I did offer to help."

"Oh, sure, but I was expecting to be whipped. It just goes to show a girl shouldn't be too certain of anything on this damned island. Ohhhh! God, that's terrible and wonderful at the same time!"

"Can't you get your hands loose? If you could, you could just push the dog away." I knew it was a sorry effort but it was all I could do.

"Don't make me laugh. No girl on the island has ever worked her hands loose. Or her feet, or her neck, or anything else. You ought to know that by now. Oh, damn, I don't think this lousy dog ever stops for breath. I'm wide open and I can't do a thing about it."

The box and what was inside was not conducive to conversation. I knew myself watching in anxiety as Elsie's face mirrored what was taking place below. I watched her blossom into one orgasm and then another. As though anxious to keep me informed, she gasped the outrageous details as to what Fido was doing. Elsie was not short on communication, nor was she unwilling to use the most graphic terms. "I'd be enjoying this if it wasn't such a shaming act." She paused for a few moments to close her eyes and arch her head backward as far as it would go. I think it was orgasm number three. I could just imagine her trying to arch her body inside its confinement as the strong emotion swept over her nerves. "Look, Celie," she finally gasped out, "if you ever draw this punishment, maybe you should decide on the mice or the ants. What I mean is, a couple of orgasms is wonderful but when it goes on and one I start to curl up inside and there's not a thing I can do about it. This is one time I really wish I could close my legs."

I wondered how much sympathy I should offer. Elsie was probably always in trouble. Had I been in her place, I would have chosen Fido against the whip. A small, perverted part of my mind whispered that such a punishment might be considered no punishment at all! That small part wondered how this helpless girl must be feeling and even went so far as to wonder when I might find my body held helpless open for Fido's attention.

When I made a modest query, she retorted in a gasping voice, “This is only the second time Fido’s had me. I haven’t got used to this. Maybe I never will. I don’t think a girl could ever get used to this. Ohhhh! Maybe you should go away, Celie. I’m embarrassed to be doing this in front of you. Gosh!”

The last word marked the beginning of orgasm number four. I was amazed that she could be reaching orgasms so fast. And that little, nasty part of my mind wondered if I could do that, too!

A time later she returned to his world. “Stay if you want,” she gasped out, “but I’ll behave shamefully.”

Feeling equally shamed and disloyal, I tiptoed from the room.

Chapter 3

A Tree, a Beach, and a Chained Girl

"You're beautifully predictable, Celie. I wondered how long it would take you to show up." Marjory wrinkled her nose with amusement. "Come on, girl, let's have it. You think Elsie's going to die in that box, or maybe you're going to offer to take her place. I've heard it all before, you know, so make it good."

It was a bad beginning. I wiggled my nakedness and blushed in embarrassment. "I couldn't bear it," I said as forcible as I could. "What you're doing to Elsie is indecent and obscene. It's terrible and not to be done to a girl. Not the kind of thing I would have expected of you. Please release her, she's had enough."

"How do you know she's had enough?"

"I've been down there watching. Some of it was horrible. She can't move and that dog does what he likes with her."

"Yes, that's the punishment. I'm sure Elsie will extract some pleasure."

I knew myself against a brick wall. Once again the whole business of captive girls and whips and punishments got the best of me. "You make me hate it here," I blurted out in anger. "This island's a beautiful place but you make it ugly with girls in cages, and whippings, and horrible punishm-

ents like that box! Please, Marjory, I don't belong here, let me go!"

"You're being silly, Celie, you belong here just as much as any other girl. If you're really all that unhappy, I can arrange to sell you to a brothel. Would you be happier there?"

"You know I wouldn't. Don't you see that. I've only been here a couple days and what I can see of my future scares me. Please release Elsie from that box."

"Would you care to take her place?" If I had wiggled before, I wiggled twice as much now.

Marjory held all the cards and all any of us girls could do was to get used to defeat. I wailed, "Of course I don't want to be put in that box. I think it's awful and horrible and shouldn't happen to any girl. Please forgive poor Elsie."

Marjory was enjoying herself. I really did think that she had heard all this before. With a sweetness that governed most of her speech, she slyly suggested, "I expect I could offer you other ways to buy Elsie's release. How about another whipping? Or that lovely skin still unmarked. There's you back, you know. And that hurts worse than your bottom."

I was curling up inside in pure fear, my mind a tumult of emotions. With the instinct of a child, I threw myself at Marjory's legs and thrust my head hard into her lap, trying

to get my face out of sight. I had no hands, they were safely chained where I could not use them and spent my anger as best I could by wetting her dress with tears and offending her ears with sobs I could not control. Her fingers began a play with my hair until their tender touch brought me back. Her voice was soft and infinitely warm.

“You silly goose, I should have known better than to let you go down there and watch. You’re new and take everything so seriously. But I’ll let you get away with something just this once.”

Marjory pressed a buzzer and when Allie appeared, issued a crisp command, “Allie, my pet, go and get that ridiculous girl out of that box, and put the dog back where it belongs. And give Elsie the whipping she claims she wants. You know Elsie, so give her as many strokes as you think she deserves. I really don’t care if it’s six or sixty. Then let her go completely free. That will make a nice contrast and show the silly girl we have a heart.”

I had listened and learned. Marjory pushed down my flood of thanks. “You should be happy now, Celie. But don’t think you can cozen me again. In some ways you’re a sweet child who easily wiggled herself into my heart. Try to keep it that way. Here, I’ll release your hands so you’ll have a bit of freedom, too. But I suggest you don’t go down and watch Elsie’s whipping. I don’t want you running up here and complaining about that, too.”

I could have kissed Marjory's feet. I scrambled erect, turned my back, and, when my hands were free, I said with a terrible sincerity, "Thanks don't seem enough, Marjory. Is there anything I can say or do?"

"The only thing I want of you, darling, is that you be happy. Never champion naughty girls, and never be naughty yourself. I expect Allie will want to sleep with you tonight and you can tell her you don't have to be chained. Tomorrow is another day and I'll put you through a series of discomforts and restraints until you become like one of my girls. It really does get into your blood and you become one of us. It shouldn't take all that long."

After breakfast the following day, it was not Allie, who took my arm, but Gloria, who was as naked as me. When we got out of the house she laughed at my bewilderment, explaining that the girls are often made to punish each other. And that even everyone's favorite, young Allie was not immune. She told me Allie often got herself into trouble. We were all one happy family.

I was happy and suddenly knew I was happy. Elsie had served her sentence, breakfast was a delight, and Gloria's hand was not clutching my arm but held one of mine in the manner of two girls out for a walk.

"Am I supposed to do something to you, or are you going to do something to me?" I asked doubtfully. "Surely we haven't been given this freedom just to have a walk?"

“I’m going to do something to you, Celie. You probably won’t like it much because it’s shockingly frustrating, but it’s in pleasant surrounds and could be a lot worse. You’ll do what you’re told?”

“Oh, sure, I’ve been all over and over that. I can’t get off this island and it isn’t worth it to try and hide in the bushes. I’ll let you tie me.”

The clearing had two young saplings. From each a rope was hung and at its end a noose. My day of discomfort was now predictable.

“I’ll show you how it works,” Gloria said reasonably as she grabbed one of the ropes, planted her foot against the slender trunk. The tree bend. When she let go the rope, the tree straightened back up to send the noose dancing.

I got the drift and gazed at my companion in woeful resignation.

“It’s even worse than you’re thinking,” she laughed. “Stand in between there and give me one of your hands.”

“You mean you’re not going to tie my wrist but just leave it in a noose? A common old slip knot?” I asked as she raised my arm to the circlet. She had to bend the tree over once more. When it sprang back my hand and arm went with it. I was then dragged to one side and the process repeated with my other hand and the other tree, to leave me in the middle with both saplings bent and pulling on my arms.

The pull wasn't painful but it was enough to keep the slip knot tight. If I pulled the tree the tree came. I could even do this both hands at once. But when I let go each tree sprang back.

"You see, darling, it's always taut so your wrists don't have to be tied. You can tug at the noose all you like but you'll never get your hand free. These two trees are like springs. Do you want to chat a while or should I leave you to it?"

"Don't leave me like this, Gloria. Gee, I can't do a damned thing. I'm expected to stand her with my arms up in the air all day? Jeepers, this is no way to spend a day!"

"Don't fuss, darling, I said you probably wouldn't like it. I've had this one done to me and it's frustrating as all get out. Why don't you try and get loose? I know you can't but you still have to find that out for yourself."

I needed no encouragement. I twisted and tugged and squirmed, but could never achieve enough slack to get the rope off my wrist. Abjectly, I agreed, "So, okay, Gloria, I have to stand and put up with it. But won't the tug of these trees begin to hurt after a while?"

"Sure they will, but that's part of your Palm Island day. You can bet Marjory's up in the house and laughing. Would you like me to make you come? If I go about it slowly, we can kill maybe half an hour of your day."

I looked into Gloria's eager eyes and knew how easy it would be to say yes. In fact, I would have welcomed her playful fingers for the full term of my sentence, the whole day. But I was pretty sure I'd feel worse afterwards to be thus shamed. Dismally I expressed my thanks and regrets, then watched Gloria's lovely bottom wiggle as she walked back to the house. I was alone.

Whenever I felt like it, I pulled and then the tree pulled back. Try as I would I could get no slack and therefore not free myself. Once in a while I gave myself the luxury of a scream, which didn't help much beyond relieving some frustration. Slowly the hours passed.

I was overjoyed when Marjory walked into view to make a routine inspection of a girl in training to be a slave. Everything was now predictable, and my greeting was not very original, "Please untie me, Marjory! There's no way I can get out of these ropes. Please set me free."

Marjory had heard it before. She put her finger on my lips and said, "Naughty, naughty! You're not supposed to demand freedom when you know fully well your sentence is not yet over. Would you like me to play with your pussy and those lovely tits?"

"No, please don't! I'd only feel worse afterward. I've been standing like this for hours, surely you wouldn't be breaking any rules by setting me free?"

“Aren’t you enjoying it, darling?” The question hit me like a blow because when I came to think of it, I’d been having fun. Every time I pulled, the tree pulled back. And every time I jumped around, it achieved nothing more than to stoke the fire burning in my loins. The heat was now very much a part of me and ceased to be remarkable. But in my silly contest with two trees, it made my inevitable defeat bearable in a way that once would not have happened. In surly fashion, I retorted, “So I’ve become infected, I’m getting pleasure in this sort of thing, just like your other girls. But I still would hate to be whipped. Yes, I had some fun, but I but I still wish you’d let me loose.”

“You haven’t been with us long enough, dear,” Marjory said softly as she took possession of the area between my legs and bent her head to reach my nipples with her lips. Her free hand amused itself with my other breasts. It was a powerful stimulus against which I had no defense other than to kick and I knew better than to do that. Soon I was gasping and moaning as girls do when granted orgasm. I will admit her fingers and tongue were very good. Very good indeed! But whenever my gasping told her I was close to that orgasm, she withdrew her palm from my sex and took to kissing my lips instead. I’m ashamed to tell of how hungrily I kissed her back. Taking her time, Marjory eventually brought me to the promised orgasm into which I exploded with all the force she desired. Panting and fighting

chafed wrists, I was left alone to serve out the balance of my day.

The little trees played with me as children might play with dolls. No matter how I pulled, they always won the contest because I would tire out but they would not. In defeat I simply stood between the slender trunks to hope for nothing more than release. I was eager to return to the big house and Marjory's tenderness.

When Allie finally set me free, I could have cried aloud with joy I had gotten to where I could now really enjoy our formal dinner. Marjory was a fine hostess and Allie could be relied upon for giggles. Casually that evening there was inserted into our conversation one more shock.

"Allie has a favor she wants to ask of you," informed Marjory as she eyed my handcuffs with approval. "Allie, go ahead and tell her your good news."

Allie blushed but managed her standard giggle as she said, demurely, "I've been a bad girl and I have to be whipped, Celie. Marjory thinks it would be a nice idea if it were you who gives me my punishment. Please say you will, I'd like that so much."

They were laughing at me but I was not certain why. Probably it was the expression on my face for I was once more confused. "I couldn't possibly whip you, Allie," I said. "I wouldn't know how. And, anyway, I couldn't possibly

bring myself to be that unkind to you. Tell me you're joking."

Allie's blush deepened. "Honest, Celie, we're not joking. I called Marjory a four letter word and said a few other things I should have kept quiet about. I really do deserve to be whipped and you mustn't let it bother you."

"The other girls have whipped each other at one time or another. I made certain of this because it's part of your training," Marjory explained. "After your first embarrassment wears off, you'll enjoy whipping the little so and so. Allie enjoys being whipped so you don't have to feel guilty about that."

"I absolutely love the first few stripes across where I sit down," Allie interrupted. "When you're doing it to me, you can tell. Marjory's being awful sweet about it."

It was crazy. My first instinct was to refuse, but they were both looking at me so lovingly that I could not have said no to anything they wanted. Absurdly there flashed through my mind the memory of the afternoon spent standing between two little trees and my body very much available. In my loneliness I had considered the idea of Allie mischievously cutting a few switches and using them to whip my pussy. I had dismissed the erotic vision as just a fantasy generated by overheated sex. And now, as I envisioned the vibrant teenager looking at me with such sparkling eyes, I knew that, for better or worse, I was stuck with a job I

would have once deemed impossible. My sex burned brightly.

“I am not going to the bedroom because I want you two girls to do the job together. You won’t need me, Celie, because Allie can tell you anything you want to know. It’s a lovely idea and she’s such a sweetheart. If I didn’t punish her once in a while, she’d just become too much.”

“Well, if you don’t mind me making a fool of myself…”

“Before we talk,” Marjory sparkled at us, “I want to tell you, Celie, that you absolutely must whip Allie between her legs. She doesn’t like that so it’s highly beneficial. Isn’t that right, Allie?”

The teenager sniffed and wrinkled her nose in distaste but said nothing. Marjory had evidently touched a nerve and we now switched the conversation to fresh subjects with Allie beaming at my embarrassment and me unable to think of much else. I wondered if I would be able to go through with it, but in the light of Marjory’s assurance that if my strokes lacked vigor, I would receive the same punishment myself.

I didn’t enjoy the coffee all that much. It was the first time I had seen Allie without her pretty handcuffs, but she carried them in her hand as we climbed the stairs to Marjory’s bedroom. “You have to put them on me the first moment it’s all over,” she explained as she put them on the dresser.

“I didn’t want Marjory to take them off, it feels so funny. Celie, darling, I’m so grateful you’re not being silly about this.”

I was instructed on using the controls and with a little practice managed the up or down movements of the cylinder of memory. Now I was going to strap Allie’s wrists where mine had once been. It was all beautiful and at the same time terribly cruel. The girl I was going to have to whip threw her arms around me before sedately standing on the fatal spot and fitting the young, slender wrists within the straps. Both of us were breathing heavily.

While I tugged at the straps we were standing close. I was flooded with vibrations while the teenager stuck out her slender wrists. And perhaps she felt my own vibes in return. Both of us were smelling strongly of girl scent in wave after wave. When I pressed the button to raise the darling’s arms, I knew I had never seen anything more beautiful.

“Your courage holding up okay?” my victim inquired. “We mustn’t let Marjory down so I’ll have to have some fairly good marks to show when we go back downstairs.”

“Who said anything about going downstairs?” Allie was suddenly afire.

“Oh, darling, you are catching on! You mean you’ll keep me strapped up like this and whip me until bedtime!”

I felt a tingle race over my spine and my sex grew warmer. “Is that what you want, you little silly thing?”

“Of course it is, darling. I’d love the first half and hate the second. It’s a beautiful contrast. But I really would like to save that whipping up between my legs for the second half, if you don’t mind. It belongs there for sure. I hate it!”

There was a fine array of instruments for the marking of a girl’s skin. I was in a dither of apprehension along with a natural distaste for hurting this vibrant young creature I had strapped up. I chose the slenderest of the riding crops and, without a pause for thought, slashed it as hard as I could across the young bottom. The line of impact was first white, then red, and then crimson. I stared in horror at what I had done. The girl I had cropped tensed as though thrusting at an invisible barrier. She was suddenly panting and emitting small sounds I could not name. But while I stood transfixed, she looked back over an arm to show eyes bright with mischief and to whisper, “That was gorgeous, darling. Give me another.”

My second blow was less panic stricken than the first but under an impulse I could not control, it was every bit as severe. With a gasp of pain, Allie accused, “You’ve done this before, Celie. You’re so good at it, this can’t possibly be your first time.”

I was suddenly very much in charge. I did not have to answer questions. And, to tell the truth, I was very much on

fire from the two wicked lines I had placed on her tender skin. With a force I'm ashamed of, I struck again to leave a third imprint. The result was the same, a scarlet line formed. I paused to meet this amazing child face to face, to say without thinking, "I've used a whip before in my life. There must be something wrong with me. I'm terrible ashamed but I loved it! Each of those terrible strokes was wonderful!"

I took the panting girl in my arms to whisper in her ear, "Nobody's told me how many strokes I'm supposed to give you. Tell me the number."

"There isn't any number, Celie, dear, just so long as you put enough marks on me to show that I've been properly whipped. Just think of it, I'm all yours!"

I realized the lovely teenager was infected like all the rest. And I must be infected because of the joy I felt in punishing this girl. I was almost panting as I envisioned how I could make her scream and leap in agony. Between us there was a force I could not understand.

Perhaps to ease my conscience, I demanded, "Do you really want me to go on whipping you like this? Tell me the truth."

"Of course I do!" Allie's tone was enthusiastic. "If this is really your first time, you'd better give me a stroke or two with everything in the collections. Don't ignore the straps,

they give a quite different kind of pain. Get going, darling, follow the urge."

In some sort of carnal orgy I can't explain, I cut at the pretty young bottom with one wicked thing after another and found myself intrigued with the truly wicked crack with which the leather straps kissed the tender young bottom. Allie's tolerance was hard to understand, but her sounds and motions were pure beauty. And if I slowed, she always gave me encouragement to continue. She assured me she deserved her punishment. Dazed in disbelief, I did as I was told while the glow spread hot and heavy in my loins.

I could tell when Allie wasn't enjoying it anymore. Especially when a sad, young voice told me it was time to stop thrashing her bottom and find another target. I walked around in front and this time beheld a young woman desperately holding on to courage. My judgment was instant. "You've had enough, Allie. Why can't we leave it at that?"

"Because Marjory said you were to put some of the strokes up between my legs."

I shuttered, remembering my own pain. "Does that hurt you?" I asked, wondering if it was the same terrible pain for all girls.

"Oh, yes! It's the most terrible thing in the world! But, Celie, please don't quit on me now."

I stood there with legs wide spread and panting almost as much as poor Allie. There was a narrow leather strap in my hand. Something told me that it would be a better whip to use on her pussy than one of those thin thongs that would cut the flesh. But that narrow strap would hurt, I just knew it.

“Is this the best whip to use between your legs, Allie?” I asked.

“Use whatever you think best,” was her reply. I saw fear in her eyes, but heard not a word of protest or instructions to use some other instrument.

Tapping her thighs with the strap, I ordered, “Open your legs.”

The teenager spread her legs wide as she could, which wasn’t too wide considering that her wrists were high over her head and wouldn’t come down. When she reached the maximum width, I took my stance before her and let the strap’s end fall loosely to the floor. Our eyes met and riveted together. There was an exchange of messages, although later I couldn’t put into words what we said. She knew she was going to suffer pain, pain beyond those earlier strokes which had brought her some sort of pleasure. This would be real pain and she would hurt. My eyes told her that I understood but would never think of holding my hand or easing the strength of my stroke. If a girl is to be

whipped on her sex, it should be as hard as my arm could make it.

I swung the strap upward. It cracked and Allie screamed. For a few seconds she danced on air, feet wildly jerking around with no real purpose, just a reaction to incredible pain. I wondered if I had looked like that when my pussy was whipped. I just stood there, stunned, as I watched her contort.

When her dance calmed down, she turned her tear-filled eyes towards me and calmly said, “Thank you. I deserved that.”

I gasped as shivers ran along my spine. I had never in my life expected there could be such intense emotions and feelings.

“Are you going to hit me there again,” a meek, frightened little voice asked me.

By way of reply the leather strap in my hand ascended and the teenager again danced on air, her cry of agony echoing off the bare walls. I sucked in air and wanted to throw myself on the floor to grab my own sex with both hands. I don’t think I had ever been so sexually excited in my life.

Twice more my strap cracked into her soft flesh, bringing agony to the teenage nudity, and incredible pleasure to me. Finally, I did throw down the whip and went to the floor to lay on my back with legs wide spread and up in the air,

knees bend. I quickly thrust a finger into my pussy and began a rapid, hard thrusting that quickly brought me to a mind-blowing climax.

Both Allie and I calmed down at the same time, two panting, moaning girls, lost in their own worlds of pleasure. At the time I hadn't cared whether the whole world was watching, but as I came down from the sexual high, I was ashamed to act this way in front of Allie. But if Allie had seen me do that shameful act of masturbation, she did not say so, neither then nor later. Her eyes were closed and her breathing heavy, whether from the agony of her burning sex or some kind of high of her own, I could not say. Perhaps both. Probably both.

I crawled over to the strapped girl and looked closely at her sex. The flesh was red and swollen and looked terribly sensitive and painful. It was beautiful in its own, strange way.

I was strangely proud of my work and told myself that Marjory could not possibly fault my work. I wrapped my arms around her legs and held the sweating girl tight against my own body. We shared something I couldn't put into words. Perhaps it was love.

It felt right to leave her hanging there after I finished hugging her body to mine. I backed off to look at her body hanging limply from the straps around wrists. She wearily looked up and said casually, "Marjory will be pleased. I wasn't enjoying that last bit at all. You can do what you like

with me this evening. I want you to do whatever pleases you the most. But, please, no more of the whip. Right now, I don't care if I never see another whip again."

I reached down and clasped the handful of her mound, hot from the impact of leather. When I massaged that part of her, she threw her head back and moaned loudly, while thrusting her hips forward to push against my hand. I quickly brought this teenage girl to a climax. I suspected she had been very close because it had taken only a few seconds to make her cry out with ecstasy and arch her body against my hand. I pressed back and squeezed to make her pleasure as real and intense as I could. Somehow doing that for her made me feel better about having whipped the poor girl.

I left Allie strapped tight for only long enough to let her loveliness seep into my consciousness, feasting my eyes on the youthfulness of her, and the strapped wrists on which she tugged from time to time as if to assure herself she was still prisoner. My sense of power vanished when I unbuckled the straps, and clicked snug the pretty handcuffs on Allie's pretty wrists. Everything was now back to normal and the bracelets confining her hands were a badge of office. I felt myself humbled and ashamed and in a mood to offer my own skin that she might be avenged. But Allie laughed away my silly notion and contented herself by using my handcuffs to lock my ankles tight together. It was thus we slept.

Whipping Marjory's young sister affected me far more than it affected her. Allie was her usual self the next day despite the purple lines and swollen puss. I was facing a fact that on Palm Island there was a force, some terrible power, which entered a girl's blood to generate the heat which made us all long for the bite of the lash, or the opportunity to inflict it on another girl. I asked Marjory about it and she simply smiled.

I felt sorry for Allie at breakfast where she was forced to sit on her whipped bottom and do her best to avoid gasps and winces. After the meal, Natalie showed up, beautifully naked and totally without restraint. I was passed into her care. She was carrying handcuffs and I offered my wrists without being told to. Natalie wore a necklace of small gold links including a small handcuff key. She squeezed my bare arm in reassurance and led me from the house while I wondered what sort of "mild discomfort" I was going to have to endure for the day. Natalie was bubbling over with gossip as we walked towards the trees.

"You got the job of whipping young Allie, didn't you?" She chuckled as though the subject was amusing. "Did you enjoy it? Was slashing that cane across that pretty little bottom a lot of fun?"

"Yes, I did, and I don't know why," I admitted. "There's some awful influence at work on this island which makes

girls want to whip or be whipped. What in the world is wrong with us?"

"None of us know but after you've been here for a while, you get grateful we get whipped and punished often. What you call "the influence" makes it bearable. And I suppose if we're honest about, our sex is constantly warm so we're looking forward to the next time. I'm glad it's affected you the same way."

"Why on earth would Marjory have her young sister whipped? Neither of them want to talk about it."

"Because young Allie has hot pants, just the same as the rest of us. She doesn't wear any pants but the heat is there just the same. Marjory wasn't angry, she was being kind."

"The poor kid hated being whipped up between her legs, she admitted it."

"I think that's done for contrast, and it's done to all of us. Otherwise it wouldn't really be punishment, would it?" Natalie laughed in rueful admission. "If I knew I was going to be whipped when I get back to the house after looking after you, I wouldn't feel all that bad. I would probably be pleasantly excited. I know that doesn't make sense but let's not worry about it."

It was a twisted old tree that had survived the sea and the wind a long, long time. It was only about ten feet high, but had many branches, none of them large, escaping its trunk

as though searching for a kinder place in which to grow. In front of it was the ocean and the pounding surf, behind it was the forest. Natalie picked up a rock and used it to demonstrate how hard and solid the ancient tree had become. And giving me a suspicion how my day would be spent.

“It’s a different beach from where you came ashore, Celie, but it’s a pretty place, I’ve always liked it. I suppose you know what comes next.”

“I can guess.” My left hand was freed and the empty cuff snapped tight around a twisted branch at the level of my head. Natalie stepped back with an air of accomplishment.

“That’s all there is to it, darling,” she told me simply. “If you can get out of that handcuff, you’re free to go back to the house.”

“You know that’s impossible!”

“I’d stay and talk, Celie, dear, but I’ve been told to go right back and just leave you alone to enjoy the view.” She kissed me and turned away.

“Natalie, don’t go! Don’t you realize I can’t sit down?”

“That’s the frustration bit, Celie. Sorry!” It seems the lot of captive maidens to forever be watching their captor walking away. I longed to once more scream outrage as the forest swallowed the girl who had put me here. I stamped a

bare foot against hot sand and hurt my wrists with a tug against cold steel. When I first fury diminished to a wry acceptance of my lot, I examined the ancient tree and the handcuff. I found no sympathy or weakness in either one. I experimented with sitting down but that was impossible. I couldn't even kneel. And, as if to mock my plight, the handcuff with my wrist was very much in evidence whichever way I looked. It was a situation in which a girl longs to scream.

The sun and sound of surf was soothing. I leaned back against a couple of branches and admitted to myself things could be a lot worse. I had not been promised the whip, the dungeon, or anything else in the line of what Palm Island described training. In the evening when I was freed, I'd have a lovely dinner with Marjory and the girls. And no doubt sometime during the day I would be visited by one or more of the girls. I was certain I would be brought lunch. Starvation wasn't one of the punishment on Palm Island.

I felt pretty comfortable and even chuckled at the thought that one hand had been left free just in case I felt the need to play with myself. Just to help the time pass, you understand. Maybe I had it good!

In the reverie taking possession of me I felt guilt over how little I thought of my previous life in the outer world. Memory of friends and relatives and the city where I had

worked and lived were somehow fainter than they should be. Perhaps that “influence” that changed girls on Palm Island also changed their memories, softening the images and making the outside world seem less real than this island in the sun. Somehow I knew I would never see any of my friends or even my over-priced, small apartment again. Palm Island rapidly becomes a girl’s home.

If someone tells you it’s impossible to sleep while standing up, tell them they’re wrong. Leaning against branches and the support of my shackled wrist held me up and I dozed. When I came awake it was to find my first inkling of disaster—a faint dot on the ocean’s horizon. It grew slowly and I felt fear gulch my heart.

I was wide awake now. I cannot tell why I felt only fear at the steady approach of a ship which might, after all, be able to rescue myself and all the others. But, prompted by apprehension, I called for help, screaming into the trees which absorbed my pitiful cries.

In pure panic I tugged in a frenzy against the handcuff on my wrist, bracing my foot against the tree and pulling with all I had. But the handcuff laughed and hurt my wrist until I had to concede defeat.

The ocean’s rim is twenty miles distant. I gave up trying to stand and wait, and reverted to a frightened maiden struggling against her bonds in emotional rather than logical attempts to escape. But freedom was not allowed me. I would

not be running back to the house to warn Marjory of this approaching ship.

I even worked a sizable rock free from the sand with my foot and used it to try and smash the handcuff from the tree. It was all useless. The rock crumbled but the steel did not. At the end I was as firmly attached to the ancient tree as when Natalie said goodbye.

Every time I looked at the ship, it was closer, seemingly directed to the place where I stood in frustration. By the time the approaching ship had begun to take shape, it seemed an arrow pointed at my heart.

It was not long before the ship stopped not far off shore, dropping its anchor, and launching a small power boat. I could make out three men as the small craft bounced over the waves straight at me. No doubt they knew I was there. I ceased to struggle. The small craft was pulled high on the beach and three amused males walked over. Rankin Teller was as sardonic as ever as he removed his cap to tender me a courtly bow. He inquired politely, “Miss Celie Collins, I presume?”

“You know damned well I’m not Doctor Livingston!” I retorted sharply, unmindful of the effect. “Please go away, please leave me alone.”

Rankin cocked an amused eyebrow. “You wish to stay attached to that tree? I would have thought you would be grateful for a spot of male attention.”

“Yes, I would. But not you. Look, Rankin, you damn near sent me to my death in that little dingy. Don’t pretend to be concerned about me now.”

“Oh, but I am, dear girl. You were never in danger. That little dingy brought you to Palm Island as surely as if it had been Rankin’s Pride itself. I’m sure you got a kindly welcome. Or did you discover a key and attach yourself to this tree?”

“It’s none of your business. Go away.”

“You know I won’t.” I didn’t like the way he was looking at my breasts. “I know all about Palm Island. Including all about Marjory Magnus, and her pretty little sister, who I’m waiting impatiently to grow up. Would you like to be released?”

“No, go away.” It was one of the crewmen who observed jauntily,

“She’s still got those lovely tits and breasts, boss. And I think her pussy is half as big again as when she was on the ship.”

“She’s been whipped something fierce,” said another. “I’ll bet you she thinks twice before saying no.”

No one was in a hurry to do anything. Rankin seemed content to stare at my nudity and I couldn't hide a thing and didn't try. When he told me to turn around so he could judge how well I'd been whipped, I shrugged at him and did as I was told. I was scared to death.

"Shall we leave this one as she is while we go and collect the others?" Rankin waved the suggestion aside. "We'll take her with us, I want her to see what goes. But you can fix her hands, you've got a key."

My wrist was released from the tree, I was turned around, and both wrists locked snug behind my back. For a girl this is agony because everything she had is open for view, she can shield nothing. I stood there, naked and helpless and humble, awaiting the pleasure of the Male. My new captors were evidently familiar with the path. I longed to cry but did not want to show the weakness before these men. Remembering the treatment I had received on board his ship, I had no desire either to cross this man. He may say that I was safe in that dingy but I remembered some pretty large sharks for whom I would have been but a snack. If the boat had been tipped by a wave… Or by one of those huge sharks itself…

My worst fears were confirmed. Rankin was familiar with everything. We found Marjory in her office without hindrance from either staff or the girls. She looked up from

what she was doing to stare in dismay. “Haven’t I given you enough, Rankin? What do you want now?”

“You’ve got four girls and this one here. By the way, her name’s Celie, in case you don’t know. I’ve got a sale for all five. You can kiss them goodbye.”

It was all slow motion. Marjory was breathing heavily and marshaling her thoughts. Bitterly, she said, “I’ll give you one girl as a gift. Isn’t that enough?”

“You know damned well it isn’t enough. The market’s booming and you’ve got a quality product. I’ll cut you in for half of whatever I get but I want the girls.”

I was very much just an observer, my main function seeming to be standing with my arms behind my back so the two crewmen could enjoy my nudity. But my concern was with what Marjory would do.

“You’ve been sensible before, Rankin,” she said. “But you’re being unreasonable now. I don’t have to agree to what you offer. I refuse.”

“Then I’ll use force. Those two middle aged old assholes you use as a butler and gardener will be no problem. If they resist, I’ll kill them. Smarten up girl, the deal I’m offering isn’t all that bad. And I happen to know you’ve got another consignment on the way.”

“I’m entitled to more than half.”

“You’ve got no choice, woman. I’ll just take what I want. Including that young sister of yours. Your little sister would be worth a fortune, she’s probably still virgin.”

Rankin was hitting Marjory with one broadside after another. I saw her flinch when Allie was mentioned and I’m sure Rankin saw it, too. Marjory still tried to reason. “If you do this to me now, it’s the end of our relationship. You can’t be expecting any more girls from me.”

“I won’t. I’ll quit while I’m winning. You’ve been useful but you get yourself too emotionally involved with your girls. Are you going to be reasonable?”

“Not if you steal my sister and Celie. You steal them and I’ll fight you with everything I’ve got.”

“Don’t be a horse’s ass, Marjory. You don’t have a hope. We can tie you and gag you right now, here in this office, then go about the job of rounding up all the girls. I’m sure I’ll find most of them firmly and securely bound or chained in some manner. That is your custom, isn’t it? You really laid on our welcome with little trixie here with one hand to that tree. You couldn’t have been expecting visitors.”

Marjory’s breasts were heaving and I could see defeat in her eyes. One of the crew took handcuffs from his pocket and dangled them before her. I cursed my impotence and those male eyes which constantly every female feature I possessed. It was Marjory who broke the silence, “I’ll buy

Celie and Allie from you. We both have an idea of what they'll fetch on your market. I'll write you a check."

"No go, but keep trying."

"There's only one other thing I have to offer, myself. Is it me you want?"

"You're offering to spread your legs for these two pretty broads." Rankin laughed delightedly. "There's more to you than I ever figured, Marjory."

"Do you accept?"

"Hell, no. You're forgetting I'm not the least bit short of tail. But you give me an idea."

"What is it?" Marjory voice was toneless.

"Do a strip for us then ask me to give you a good thrashing. I expect you've still got that gimmick up in your bedroom?"

I could tell Marjory hadn't been expecting the demand but she evidently knew Rankin better than I. Her reply was instant, "I could say yes, but how can I trust you?"

"A deal's a deal, girlie. There's no way I've going to leave this little girl behind. You can keep your little sister, but I'll take Celie. After I've given you the thrashing of your life."

"I've never been thrashed."

"Then it will be a real novelty for you."

“Why do you insist upon taking Celie?”

“Hell, the girl was mine in the first place. I put her in that dingy to teach her a lesson. I’m taking her back to the ship to see how well she learned it.” Rankin leered pleasurably at Marjory’s tight, thin lips and stony eyes. “It makes the deal simple, you bitch. You keep little sister and I get to whip your ass. I figure you get the best of the deal.”

Three men stared at two females until Marjory stood up behind her desk to say, without a tremor, “Very well, I accept your terms.” She turned to me to say, “I’m sorry, Celie, I did the best I could.”

My mind was a turmoil of emotions as we went up the stairs from the office to her bedroom. Rankin evidently knew his way around. But his men were so preoccupied with my breasts and bottom that, had I gone off in another direction, they would have followed. But I could have cared less. My mind was filled with disbelief as we mounted the stairs to meet with a frightful fate.

Miss Marjory was going to be whipped.

Chapter 4

Damsels in Despair

It was not my first time in the ship's brig. Rankin had chained me here before casting me adrift. I knew the heavy irons were a sort of window dressing, an infliction by which virtuous young ladies were shown the error in their insistence upon remaining virtuous. My wrists were joined, my ankles were joined, and an iron collar around my neck was attached to the hull by a heavy length of chain which actually permitted a good deal of freedom. But the weight of the heavy irons made that unattractive. Rankin made quite certain that any girl he put in the brig would not forget she was a prisoner.

I was not alone in that prison. The girl with me was one I remembered coming on board with a handsome blonde Swede. She was, however, a direct contrast to the tall blonde man, being of only medium height, with dark features, black hair, and flashing dark eyes. Her name was Margot, and she was a heavily chained as I. And as naked.

"Right after they put you in that dingy and cast you adrift," she told me heatedly, "I was informed that I would be expected to spread my legs that any man on board might 'enjoy me' anytime he wished." She sounded disgusted. "I refused, of course. That's when Rankin threw me in here. I'll stay chained up like this until I agree to spread my legs, they told me. But it's horrible in here."

“Well, at least you can get out by saying the word,” I ventured.

“Well, that might have been but there was also a deadline. It passed yesterday. Rankin has hinted that I would be whipped before the whole crew. Perhaps I should have given in.”

I thought about the fact that the crew could have just tied her down and taken her all they wanted, but didn’t say a thing. Perhaps Margot was thinking the same.

“When I came on board, I was prepared to go to bed with Eric. And I was even looking forward to it. But when they ordered that Kathy girl to strip and then made her dance around as they whipped at her behind, I knew this wasn’t the kind of crowd I would like. And Eric was just as bad as the rest. When they handcuffed you and cast you adrift in that boat, I told Eric I didn’t want him touching me again. That’s when they picked on me to be the next one to strip and become everyone’s plaything. I refused, and here I am.” She still sounded defiant.

I sighed and rested as best I could in the heavy chains and hard bench. My mind flashed back to earlier that very morning when Rankin has forced Marjory into a deal she didn’t want. I could still remember the steps going up to her bedroom, hard against my bare feet. And the way she stripped to reveal a very good body. Rankin even made

comments, crude, to be sure, but there was admiration behind his tone.

I had to stand by as an observer, unable to flee or to do a thing to stop the coming whipping of the woman who held all of us on Palm Island enthralled. When she casually tossed aside the panties, she turned expectantly to the three men crowding around.

“Beg for it,” Rankin said with a hiss, enjoying his domination over this woman. Marjory swallowed hard and tried to keep the hate and anger out of her voice.

“Please, Mr. Teller, I wish you to thrash me. I want you to fasten me so I can’t get away, then whip or cane my bare skin in whatever way may give you pleasure.” Her voice fell silent until she added, for good measure, “Please whip me as hard as you can.”

It was Rankin’s day! I watched the naked Marjory step to the spot where I once stood and I watched Rankin use the controls with an expert hand. Very soon the beautiful Marjory stood with wrists tight strapped and raised above her head. She looked so beautiful and so brave, I longed to cry.

I have told of other whippings but the wounding of Marjory’s skin is something too scared to recount. Rankin was a real bastard throughout, testing this instrument or that, or concentrating on one portion of the lovely curves and then another. Strangely he refrained from thrashing Marjory up

between her legs. It was Marjory herself who won the show. I simply do not know what force or power she possessed that enabled her to stand throughout multiple cuts and slashes of canes and crops with her cheek pressed hard against one raised arm, accepting agony with only the trembling of muscles beneath her skin. Never once did she scream. Again and again the leather etched its marks against her flesh.

When it was over, Rankin kept his word. Marjory was released and escorted back to her office. That was all.

Rankin's hobby is the punishment of girls. He adores whipping us and feeds hungrily upon our nakedness. I cannot explain Rankin, but he is probably right in his assertion that, if other men had the money, they would do the same. Rankin loves to tell the only gauge of anything is the bottom line. If that is so, a girl should stay away from any man who has more than a hundred dollars in the bank.

The following day I was released from the hateful brig and allowed to step out in the sunshine without handcuffs or rope. I would once have gloried in the freedom but a girl on Rankin's yacht has no thought of glory but only of what comes next. The man who released me told me to go to Rankin's office. I kissed the still defiant Margot and did as I was told.

“Did you enjoy walking up here, Celie?” Rankin asked by way of greeting. “It’s a lovely day. And it’s better than the brig.”

“Yes.”

“I suppose you realize you could walk right back down again? And this time find a couple more chains to keep you amused. That is, if you don’t come up with some more answers?”

“I suspected that.”

“Well, sweetheart, there’s only so many girls a man can screw. We rounded up those four little pretties Marjory hated to part with. I don’t give them any choice, I tie them down. The only reason they didn’t get in the brig was that they seem pretty well resigned. Marjory did a good job of breaking them in.”

“You really are a bastard, Rankin! What have you got saved up for me?”

“I’m going to have one of the boys print the word ‘AVAILABLE’ across your belly and then you can mingle with the guests and enjoy yourself. There’s only one simple little thing by which you’ll pay for your room and board, whenever I or one of my crew or guests wants you to lay down and spread your legs, you’ll do it. And you’ll do it as though you’re getting a real good deal, no sobs or pouts. What do you say to that, Celie?”

“If I say no, do I get put in another dingy?”

“Worse than that, honey, you get to walk the plank. But before that happens you’ll get tied down to a hatch cover and get yourself pierced by every man on the ship. I’m offering you a pretty good deal, considering.”

“Considering what?”

“Considering you can’t escape. Considering I own every bit of you. And considering I’m going to sell you to the highest bidder, along with the other four. When I get around to it, sweetheart. Now, honey, call me a bastard again and I’ll hang you up by your thumbs.”

I wanted to cry. So much for my virginity! But out of pure helplessness I had come a long way since that first time when my refusals had put me in a dingy. Now the awful choice Rankin gave me didn’t seem as bad as it would have before my little visit to Palm Island. If a girl is pierced once, she might as well get pierced twice. Or for that matter, twenty times. And if this reasoning was prompted by the lingering influence of Palm Island, there was nothing I could do about it anyway. I looked Rankin in the eye and said, tonelessly, “Very well, Mr. Teller, I’ll accept your terms. Do you wish me to lay down for you?”

Rankin’s yacht was magnificent, and the guests were enjoying themselves. I was gathered into the group and promptly raped by several of the men, and then as I was

plied with drinks and conversation, I learned that ever girl present was expected to make herself available to all in the same manner as I. A small ceremony was enacted with me as the leading lady. My hands were handcuffed behind my back while a member of the crew painted the word Rankin had promised across my belly. If ever a girl knew herself available, I did then.

There were about ten couples and because half the girls had already capitulated there was no pressure on the other half to join the shameful sisters of which I was one. But I could tell they were scared. All knew about Margot in the brig, and about me. They had witnessed Marjory's girls, all tied up and naked, as they were escorted aboard the ship. I was told they were imprisoned in a lower cabin where they were kept tightly bound all the time and could consider their future. While the females were not enjoying themselves all that much, every male on the yacht was having the time of his life. They not only had the girls they had brought aboard, but every other female on the ship. After my tummy was labeled, my wrists were left handcuffed behind my back in a way to evoke lust in the loins of ever male. The result was that male arms were constantly helping me to the deck where I spread my legs and pretended to enjoy their favors and admire their prowess. I abandoned sarcasm alone with pouting and sulking. I felt so damned ashamed of my actions that I actually considered jumping into the ocean with the sharks. But I can't profess

that such action appealed enough to me to be serious about it. One look over the rail and I backed away. In any case, the handcuffs had been such a success they left them on my wrists until the novelty wore off and I was voted the most popular girl on the ship. If I had been a nymphomaniac, it would have been wonderful.

There was fun and games. The games mostly involved a female having to draw a number from a hat and whichever of us got the lucky number was then sentenced to be bound in some disgusting fashion and whipped throughout the day. These whippings were never what you would think. There was nothing ritualistic, no formal ceremony to mark the infliction of pain upon an innocent girl, no drum roll. But, having gotten the unfortunate girl secured, a whip was hung on her somewhere and every passing male was allowed to use it. Of necessity these male attentions were rationed to each. Each guest or member of the crew was allowed to strip the unfortunate girl twice a day, enough to keep the immobilized maiden in constant pain and a dither of anxiety. On my first time I did not draw the fatal number and was privileged to watch the girl who did. She was one of the number who had not accepted ravishment but in this matter of fun and games there were no alternative, in this case her name was Lucy. She was seized in good-natured humor on the part of the males, and planted erect in the middle of a clear space on the deck, and told to take off her clothes while we all watched. When she refused to

strip, the job was done for her by two members of the crew, while other males present cheered and came out with disgusting comments. Lucy was then placed on a hatch cover equipped with metal rings no doubt designed for this purpose. Her ankles were bound well apart, as were her knees. She was then forced to crouch while her wrists and forearms were tied between her thighs which left her forehead on the deck and her bottom pointed prettily upward. It was a cruel posture and when a thin cane was dropped before Lucy's anguished eyes, we all knew what was about to happen. Rankin made a delightful speech. He let all men know the limits but also insisted that all should give the girl up to that full limit. He also made it clear that if any man wished to screw her while her bottom was marked with scarlet lines and sticking up in the air, he was welcome.

Lucy was tugging at the bonds but could hardly move. When Rankin went on to point out that her large breasts could be striped on their sides, she started to cry. Rankin picked up the cane and promised a demonstration to illustrate the true functions of the curves on which a girl sat down.

It was almost as though I, too, was bound upon the deck. I could feel Lucy's horror and was well aware of how wickedly stretched and tight was that bottom. It would hurt twice as bad as if Lucy took her punishment standing up. Rankin made a big deal of selecting his stance, making

some trial swishes to make the cane whine in evil promise, and then cut squarely across the maiden curves. Lucy was too shocked by the pain to do more than gasp and stare with wide eyes straight ahead. Finally a pathetic whine came from her tight mouth.

The thin line across her bottom slowly turned red. Rankin bowed to the assembly, dropped the cane beside the girl, and stalked away to his office. The crowd slowly dispersed to let Lucy await stroke number two.

But she was not left alone for long. Throughout the day there were males visiting her often enough so that she always had a fresh scarlet mark forming on her skin. And often the man would take his two strokes, sometimes fiercely savage in their intensity, then avail himself of the up turned bottom to implant his phallus within her sheath. As her bottom grew more and more sore, her cries grew in intensity whenever a male body was thrusting into her sheath and banging against her bruised bottom.

After witnessing this display, the other girls who had been holding out gave in and became a part of the ship-wide orgy. Kindly males held glasses to my lips or fed me sandwiches, and always admired my handcuffed wrists, which several admitted shamefully gave them the most rigid erections of their life. I worked hard at being polite and receptive of male humor. And I never failed to lower myself to the deck whenever any male indicated it was his wish. This

latter function was helped by the fact that several other girls were always available. The voyage of the Rankin's Pride was a real fun thing… So long as you were a man.

I wanted to stay away from Lucy, but there was a fascination about her predicament which drew me in her direction throughout the day. Often Lucy screamed but all the girls pretended not to hear. And when we looked with shamed eyes upon her punished bottom, we discovered and every increasing crisscross of stripes. Many of the lash marks extended down to her thighs, and there was some marks on each breast. When she broken-heartedly rejoined the party after her time was up, she became the belle of the ball and found herself the object of much male attention. Some of the men seemed to get very excited when she had to lay on her tortured bottom on the hard deck for their carnal attentions. And she made no attempt to contain her cries of pain when a male was thrusting inside her and pushing her bottom hard against the wood.

I was grateful for the attention she was getting because it made the males a little less interested in my, my handcuffs, and my pussy.

Lucy was a shy little girl and the luck of the draw had proven traumatic to her. Other girls of larger size and stamina endured ill fortune with whatever grace they could muster. A girl named Nancy was a case in point. There was no whip for Nancy, but instead a prettily exec-

uted tying up job which left her sitting prominently on the deck with one ankle bound to the opposite knee and her wrists tightly bound in front, then tied down in the knee hollow of her leg. She was left in the total frustration of being a constant witness to the manner in which she was tied but not being able to reach a single knot. She spent most of the time trying to employ her teeth against the tight and neatly tied cords which held her wrists. Nancy's punishment was simply embarrassment, and a blush from shame she felt at the male remarks directed against her. Some playfully tried to encourage her to untie herself, hinting that since all the ropes and knots were in plain sight, she should be able to get her teeth on something.

She took the comments with wry good humor, returning quip for quip, and sometimes in disgust rolling on to her back to display a tangle of arms and legs, along with a more intimate view of her sex.

Megan was an auburn haired beauty some said was Rankin's ex-mistress. She was somewhat older than the rest of us and enjoyed the distinction of wearing a minimum of clothes. It was understood she occupied the role of house mother or matron, and was empowered to either inflict or alleviate punishment. She provided a willing shoulder on which a girl might cry, and a lot of sage advice which was mostly to the effect we might just as well make the best of a bad job because there was no way we were going to es-

cape. No one seemed certain whether Megan was to be sold at auction like all the rest.

Like all the rest I was forced to sleep as best I could with the party going on around. If I found the noise too much, I could go out on the deck and curl up on anything I found. I have forgotten how many days passed before one evening when Megan handcuffed my wrists once more behind my back and told me, with a forceful hand on my bare arm, that she wanted me to spend the night in the brig with Margot, who was still clutching at virtue. She was becoming increasingly morbid over her solitary confinement and the weight of irons on her. Megan confided in me that if Margot continued her rebellion against the system, she was going to get a flogging, naked and secured to the rigging in the fashion of ancient days. Megan thrust me inside the brig and clanked the iron door behind me.

I found Margot as heavily ironed as before, and with firmly set jaw in a determination not to give in. I was thankful I had not been promised a flogging should my errand fail. Miserably I said, “Hi, Margot, it’s me again. They’ve taken away my hands so I can’t play with you. I’m terribly sorry.”

“I take it you’ve given in to them?” The tone was far from friendly.

I felt a bitch and could feel a blush. “I’m doing everything they tell me to,” I admitted. “I’m here to tell you a girl survives. In its way, it’s not so bad.”

“So you’re playing Judas Goat? I’m ashamed of you, Celie, I thought you had more guts.”

Standing on one foot, I raised the other to the bench so as to provide my companion with a clear inspection of my vagina. “Look at it, Margot, you know how it’s been used since they took me out of here. I’ve lost count of how many times I’ve been screwed, but it doesn’t look any different. Does it?”

“Only proves nature’s been kind to you. I’m surprised it’s not swollen and red.”

I returned my foot to the floor. If I had had hands, I would have thrown my arms around her neck and comforted us both. But now I simply wiggled my shoulders and said, “You can call me a Judas Goat if you want, Margot, but I don’t see any sense in your remaining in this iron cage with all those beastly irons fastened on you everywhere. I hate those irons and I know you do. Why don’t you accept the inevitable and walk back into life?”

“It isn’t inevitable, not if I hold out long enough.”

“I’m supposed to tell you that if you refuse to obey, you’re going to be flogged with everyone watching and getting a good look at your nakedness. A flogging is terrible and you won’t heal from it for weeks.” I tried not to make it sound too awful but I did want to make her think about what she was really facing.

I saw her wince and sensed what an awful time she'd had locked inside this metal box. I knew that the heavy irons on her body wore down more than just her body, they were hard on the mind, too.

"Flogged? Isn't that when they strip the skin from your back with some horrible kind of whip until you become unconscious?" Margot looked nervous. "If I'm going to be flogged anyway, there's no point in surrendering."

"I think if you'd be obedient, Margot, they'd forget the flogging. I haven't been flogged so I don't know what they mean by it. Perhaps it's just another word for being whipped."

I watched Margot set her jaw even more firmly, as if the threat simply made her more resolved to fight them. Her voice was bitter, "Very well, Celie, you can tell them they can flog me. I will not allow myself to be violated by all sorts of men I don't even know. If you would have held out the way I'm doing, we would win out. But you're all such cowards."

"We want to live."

"Well, I don't. Not on their terms. I'll stay like this until doomsday if that's what they want."

I gazed at the poor, chained girl, wondering what made her so different from me. I saw myself fighting for survival and a bleeding back was not a part of it. I was wondering what

to say next when Margot gave me some hint of why she felt the way she did.

“Sex is beastly,” she said with heat. “Men pushing that horrible object inside what a girl has. It is obscene. Celie, can’t you see that?”

“But a girl’s pussy is made for that purpose!” I cried. After all, sex could be fun, too, if it was with a man you really loved.

Margot snorted. “The whole thing is disgusting.”

“But don’t you expect to fall in love some day and want your man inside you? Margot, dear, when it’s done properly it’s wonderful.”

The poor girl was busy fighting her irons. Her tone now was that of a speaker on a platform, “Don’t you silly creatures realize this so called falling in love is nothing more than natural urges. All that romantic crap about meeting your dream man is just that, crap! Moonlight and roses are nothing more than tricks men use to get past a girl’s defenses.”

“But… ”

“No buts! The act is terrible! Celie, do try and have some sense.”

I sighed. But I honestly did not want to see this girl hung up in some horrible fashion to have her skin striped with

some cat-o-nine-tails. I tried again, “But, darling, what about love? People do fall in love, don’t they? And then they do this thing you’re so set against.”

“Love is a trap!” Margot was running ahead at full steam. “It’s nothing but a reaction of our glands! Men are terrible.”

“Honest, Margot, it isn’t as bad as you think.”

“Never.” The word was spoken quietly for a change but that made it all the more absolute.

“Margot, it’s not that bad. There’s a party going on up there. If you just forget that some girls would call it rape, and try to enjoy it. Some of the men aren’t too rough.”

It was no use. Margot won the encounter hands down. In the morning I was taken from the brig and given back my hands while she remained in the iron prison with an even shorter tether from her collar to the wall. It was on that day I was given permission to visit Marjory’s four slave-girls.

Elsie, Gloria, Janet and Natalie were far better off than Margot. The wrists of each girl had been crossed behind her back and tightly bound, not because Rankin was short of handcuffs, but simply to give them hope and something to do. It appeared they were for Rankin’s use only until we reached that part of the world were girls could be sold at auction without problems. Enough of Palm Island’s influence remained, just as with myself, to make their plight

bearable and to endure Rankin's carnal thrusts. I was the only one with arms and was the one to embrace each before telling of the on-going party and of the selection from the hat for daily public whipping.

The poor girls had been prisoners for so long that being bound and locked in a cabin on a ship was not bothering them as much as it would have some other girls. They laughed in saying that they knew they could never get their hands free but in trying to untie each other kept them constantly amused. And, since Rankin managed to violate all four of them each day, they had nothing to complain about. All of us longed to return to Palm Island but all of us now knew this was no more than a dream.

They did speculate about being sold and what the man who bought them would do to them. But with a philosophy born from not knowing what punishment you would suffer each day on Palm Island, they shrugged it off and something they would just have to wait and see.

The next day it was me who drew the dreaded number from the hat.

My ordeal was obscene but relatively painless. My hands were tied behind my back. I was then laid on my back on the deck to get my ankles noosed to spread my legs outrageously far apart and raised high. My bottom was actually raised off the wood deck so that I was laying on my shoulders and bound arms. My pussy was wide open for all to

see, including me, who got a better view of my own pussy than most girls do. Any man or woman who wished could play with that wide-open pussy and, if he were clever, screw me while I lay there.

I suppose my punishment could have been worse, but after an hour or two of that exposure and some rough treatment from male fingers, I wasn't all that sure. It was a terrible way to be tied but my principal problem was the seemingly endless parade of male hands and finger exploring my private place. This constant interest in my sex kept me constantly aroused, a condition which occasionally resulted in a most unsatisfactory orgasm. Rankin added to the fun by coming to visit and doing the same things to me. Thoughtfully, he produced a candle, the butt end of which he inserted within my sex. With a smile he put a match to the wick, explaining that it would be a long time before the flame burned down to my flesh. In the meantime I would enjoy the benefit of a trickle of hot wax on my skin. It was a refinement admired by all.

I went through agonies watching that damned flame. At first I fought the ropes that held me but that only caused more hot wax to run down the candle and scold my tender flesh. I squealed more than once. And that candle stopped no one from teasing my sensitive parts, some people even tapping the candle so they could see wax running down the side and onto my sensitive flesh. Before long there was a

layer of cooling wax firmly embedded in my pubic hair and covering my clit.

I watched the flame burn closer to my pussy with considerable fear. I was sure when the flame began to burn I would scream myself hoarse. And the thought flashed through my mind that serious damage would be done to my sex, so much so that I might never be able to use it for sex again. I was scared.

At the last moment Megan came to inspect our master's work. She deemed the burning candle had given enough mental agony, and withdrew it from my lips and tossed it overboard.

If I had ever loved anyone, I loved her then. The flogging of Margot was a Tour de Force, an event to quicken every pulse aboard the Rankin's Pride. One of the crew even had a drum by which to mark the steps of the doomed girl as she walked to her fate. Margot was minus restraints for the first time in days. She gazed in horror at the sea of male and female faces as she was led to where she would be punished. She fought valiantly as her arms were raised for the wrists to be tight tied to leave her almost on her toes and beautiful for the sentence Rankin read aloud in somber tones. It announced that the naked prisoner had committed this crime and that, refusing to be friendly with guest and crew, etc. She was thus condemned to receive twenty strokes with a cat-o-nine-tails. Should she chose to

faint she would be revived with water. Rankin added his hope that she would benefit from the correction.

Margot defeated them all, enduring the first terrible stroke across her back, a stroke which left its wound and shed blood. Instead of the expected scream, she raised herself from the deck by bound wrists and managed to turn and look back at the master to whom she now belonged. In a loud, clear voice she proclaimed surrender and promised to be the most obedient slave-girl ever. Recognizing sincerity, Rankin cut her down and told her curtly she would get the awful word painted on her belly the same as me, and she'd better make it good. Poor Margot knelt and kissed his foot.

Later Margot threw her arms around my neck and whispered, "You were right, dear, I should have listened. And now I'm so terribly ashamed." There was a pause before she added, "Is my back terribly cut?"

I have to admit that Margot became like all the rest of us. She had been for all of us a symbol of what was right and proper. Now she was no longer ironed and placing her smarting back on the deck to appease the lust of men the same as the lesser girls who lacked her courage. But I asked myself about the benefit of courage when it led only to Rankin's irons and Rankin's whip. Poor Margot ceased to be a symbol and was now just a girl.

I think it was the next day when I was called to Rankin's office to stand submissively before his desk, while his dour inspection stripped me ten times naked. He didn't offer a seat and his tone was crisp as he conceded, "You're a good girl, Celie, a good fuck and you do what you're told. It won't be too long now before we put our surplus females on the auction block. You're scheduled to go with the rest. But I'm wondering if you might not prefer to stay on the ship as my personal property." His eyes roved up and down my nakedness. "I can't promise you anything, Celie, girl. I'd be keeping you for my own amusement so obviously you'll get your ass whipped now and then. Along with some other things pretty much like we've been doing here. Anyway, I'm offering you a choice: the auction block to be sold as a slave-girl, or staying here with me. It's pretty much between the devil you know and the devil you don't. What do you say, kid?"

"You've got Megan, why would you want me?"

"Don't ask no questions, honey, and you won't get no lies."

"You've been mean to all of us girls, Mr. Teller. I'm still remembering that dingy. I'd like to take my chance on the auction block. Please don't be offended."

"I figured you'd chose the block, and I'm not offended, girlie. Old Rankin don't get offended easily. Anyway, there's a little time yet before some old boy gets to buy you." His dismal was a curt, "Have a nice day."

My day was ruined. I now felt certain I had made a wrong choice. When I thought of the kind of men who would buy a slave-girl, a shiver ran down my spine. I could have kicked myself. Rankin had been mean enough to all of us so that being a permanent prisoner here wasn't too attractive, either. I comforted myself with the thought that a fresh and different captivity might be an improvement. I longed for Palm Island with all my heart.

Rankin had a thing for rituals. We all knew some girl was going to get it when guests and crew were lined up on a far rail while a plank was thrust over the side and made secure to the deck. Rankin took the opportunity to make a speech. "This here voyage has been a fun thing for all of us," he proclaimed. "Most of our little gals have played along and behaved the way little gals should. But four of my old friends have brought aboard four of the most damned fool females I ever did see. They got their legs clamped together tight and think they're too good to let us have fun with them." Rankin beamed on us all. "But we ain't got no more time to fool with four females who think their pussy is their private property. These four gals is pure waste." Again he paused dramatically before adding, "And all of us know what we do with waste aboard a ship."

There were stirrings and whispering among the guests. The crew couldn't have cared less, but I noticed four young women clutching the arms of four male escorts as though

reassuring themselves of the protection. My heart bled for each.

“We all know what the old time pirates did with gals who wouldn’t try to please,” Rankin continued zestfully. “They made them walk the plank, that’s what they did with them. And that’s we’re going to do here, aboard the Rankin’s Pride today. As far as I know we’ve only got four examples of females who don’t know how females should act. Since we all know the names of these dumb broads, I’m now asking their escorts to tie his gal’s hands behind her back, and shove them forward for us all to see. I know you’ve all got a bit of rope, so go to it.”

Four young women leaped like startled rabbits from the audience and fled swiftly out of sight. But Rankin had that figured. “Go to it, boys. Track the little fillies down and drag them back her by the hair.” Rankin laughed. “Don’t imagine we’ll have long to wait.”

There was nowhere the girls could hide. We heard their squeals and screams as each girl was caught and dragged back to the awaiting plank. Each of the virtuous maidens fought like fury but were soon conquered and quickly standing before, naked and with bound hands behind their backs. I thought they were foolish not to have done as the rest of us. Surrender isn’t all that bad. Especially when compared to what awaited these girls.

But they had made their choice and would not pay the price. Horror showed in the face of each girl as she stared at the plank. Next to it stood a crewman with a long pike at ready.

Rankin now practiced some more of his sardonic humor. Waving to one of the four girls, he said in amused tones, “Come on over, and walk out on that there plank just to show the folks it will hold a girl’s weight. Go out as far as you like. And if you fall in, we’ll put you out… This first time. All we want is a demonstration.”

The poor girl was almost shaking with fear. She was also frantically tugging at tied wrists in a way I knew all too well. Since she lacked the will to do it herself, Rankin picked her up and placed her on the plank with the Pacific Ocean below. She immediately stepped back on the back but was instantly replaced and this time found herself a couple of feet further out. And this time the man with the spiked pole thrust the pointed end hard into her back. When her timid young feet reached the final limit of wood, the pole made a single brutal thrust and, with a loud scream, she fell to whatever was waiting for her down below.

Rankin was as good as his word. Almost in the same moment the bound and naked girl stepped off the plank, a crewman armed with ropes jumped off after her. In a minute the poor girl was pulled back on deck, spitting out

sea water and coughing. She was soon judged to be in good condition and was told to stand beside her three companions, all of whom seemed to me wanted to change their minds. But whenever they opened their mouths were told to keep quiet if they didn't want to be gagged. The wicked game no got properly underway.

This time Rankin's pointing to another girl, who instantly turned and ran for her life in a useless escape attempt. She was dragged back, screaming and struggling. Two crew members held her arms as she was placed on the plank, and one continued to hold her tight while the other tied a bandage over her eyes. Another man performed the same task for the three girls awaiting the same fate. The spiked pole did its work and, step by faltering step, the maiden soon to die made her way steadily toward empty space. As she fell, she screamed again and again until all present heard the fateful splash of a girl's naked body meeting its end among the sharks. The remaining three could not stand the stress. They had heard the encouragement of the man with the spiked pole and her screams. Blindfolded they could not see to run, and with hands bound behind their backs there was little they could do but follow the awful course of Rankin's sentence. But now each in her own way, speaking into darkness, they promised to renounce their principles and offered their bodies to any man who wanted them. They turned distraught features from side to side in search of pity but the audience of standing spell-

bound by the execution it had just witnessed and the ones about to be performed. The poor girl moaning her promises was carried and placed on the plank where the spike instantly found the flesh between the bottom cheeks and pressed hard there. Fear of impalement within drove the unfortunately girl to make step after step until she, too, joined her companion in the sea.

“Two down and two to go,” proclaimed Rankin. Number three was pushed forward after refusing to answer her name. She fell to her knees, trembling with fear, and refused to walk even against the spike. But she, too, was only human, and under the thrust of steel was pushed to the end of the wooden plank. Her scream was the loudest of all.

Number four was the one who had first taken the walk off the end and was still dripping wet. She became a wild thing, carrying neither for blindfold or bonds, kicking and lunging in blind despair. It did no good, the crewmen picked her up bodily and placed her on the plank of doom. With the splash as her body hit the water and her choked off final scream, Rankin Teller’s entertainment was at an end.

Marjory’s four maiden’s had been brought from their cabin to witness the price of virginity, and were now taken back. The rest of us, in a state of pure horror, were getting ready to disperse, probably to resume the continual party. Each

girl's face reflected her horror at what had happened and the thought that it might happen to her.

It was then that Rankin played his final card. Crewmen went to the rail and there was an exchange of shouts and laughing as each of the naked girls who had walked the plank were hauled back to the deck to stand there dripping wet and shivering with fright.

It had been a simple deception, a boat had been out of sight and waited below to drag each girl to safety. Along with everyone else I felt better and would have embraced the poor creatures had they not been the center of Rankin's attention. Their blindfolds were removed. What the owner had to say was predictable. Each addressed each girl by name and asked the same question, "Do you feel like using your pussy now?"

Each girl said yes, and, after all, why not! For each had suffered death and been brought back to life. How could a girl equate the sanctity of her vagina against a miracle. As the last girl made her shameful surrender, a crewman appeared with a brush and some paint.

Chapter 5

Sold into Slavery

With every girl on the Rankin's Pride available to male erections, the pressure on each of us became less. Some girls, and I was one of them, were much favored for this male sport. But generally speaking, the impalings were less frequent. The topical sun made the Rankin's Pride bathed in golden light and warmth, the brig was empty and the men who fed upon our nakedness were increasingly satiated and less inclined to try new things. Thus we came to the port of Benakar.

I have never known exactly where Benakar is. It was neither wholly ancient nor completely modern. And only a few old ships were tied up to the mooring docks. There was the inevitable pipeline and the maze of metal by which tankers could take on cargo. The auction by which we would be sold was scheduled for the following day, and in the meantime we were to be held as wards of the local government which closed one eye to the flourishing slave trade of girls of any color. The import of girls was legal enough but was by no means free of duty and there were tax collectors.

Rankin explained all this along with the bad news that he was forced to turn us over to the locals who would keep us safely jailed over night, and deliver us to the action block in prime condition. The explained also that, while our

number has started out with Marjory's four plus myself, this figure of five was now augmented by the inclusion of three of the prior guests maidens in whom their original escorts had lost interest and preferred whatever they would fetch on the market to taking them back home. I wondered who Rankin's guests would find to screw on the way back. But this was none of my business and I felt positive they would not go short. We white girls would fetch a lot of money, but no doubt some dusky maidens could be picked up to fill the gap. I knew the time was close and I was scared.

There were eight girls to be sold, including myself, and we all stood in line while Megan tied our wrists behind our backs and explained that the local law would not tolerate nudity in public. We were draped with a sheet fastened at our necks. Having been rendered both helpless and respectable, we were joined together by a chain after collars were locked upon our necks. The chain was padlocked to rings on our collars at intervals of about three feet. We were controlled and could not dispute. I was told that in earlier slaving days this chain connecting female flesh had been called a coffle. Whatever it may have been called, it was certainly damned effective.

I never got to say goodbye to Rankin. We eight were taken in charge by a uniformed corporal who obviously relished his duty. He carried a swag stick in the manner of the British of another age, and thus none of us were ever in doubt

as to where to go. A van was waiting at the dock and we were propelled within and the door slammed shut and locked. We disposed ourselves as best we could while exchanging dire predictions of our fate.

But the ride was short and the corporal took charge to usher us into a dusty building and down corridors until we came to a huge, barred cage expressly designed for what we had become. Uniformed guards and a wardress now stood by while the corporal took up his position at the incitingly opened door. The wardress removed our sheets and thrust us, with hands still bound, into the awaiting cage. The bars were heavy and the door slammed shut with a frightful clang, to leave eight helpless young women wondering what came next.

Nothing happened. After a while we simply sat down against the bars with our necks still encircled by a collar and all of us joined by that chain. We talked but there was no optimism in what we had to say even though there was a general excitement at the prospect of being legally owned by a man. One of the girls summed it up simply, “We all know what he wants us for.” It was thus that eight maiden’s who were once free now contemplated slavery.

There was a workaday atmosphere about the prison. Uniformed men and women went about their affairs and found little interest in the affairs of eight naked and chained women inside a cage. After a couple of hours our

wardress arrived with a pail of warm water, soap and a brush. We were told to stay in line and keep still while the offensive word painted on our bellies was scrubbed off. The paint didn't remove easily and we had rather tender skin on our tummies before the task was done. Our hands were then untied so we could feed ourselves. Later in the day we were inspected by a number of men who made remarks about us in the local tongue and did a lot of laughing. It was a real fun day.

I felt sorry for the girls whose escorts had dumped them. They suffered more than the rest of us. I, at least, had a friendship with the girls from Palm Island with whom I again and again bemoaned our removal from that tropical paradise. From that lovely island to this dingy cage somewhere in Arabia was a great contrast. Every girl did a lot of walking up and down and tugging at the bars. We longed to rid ourselves of the collars and chain. I was between Elsie and Gloria, but Natalie and Janet were at each end of the coffle.

We slept in a row upon the hard floor, waking each other constantly by jerking at the links which joined us all as one happy family. Our dreams were somber and it was only in our waking hours we envisioned the handsome prince who would buy us in the morning.

The new day was suddenly busy, and it was easy to see why we had been left chained from collar to collar. It made us

easy to handle and kept us under control. We were taken to a bare concrete room where we were told to use our free hands to gather our hair above our heads while we were hosed down with cold water from scalp to the soles of our feet. Needless to say our soft parts got the most attentions. The corporal, aided by one of his staff and his wardress, then rubbed us vigorously with course towels until our skin glowed. Then, with men still in attendance to make sure we behaved ourselves, the wardress marshaled us to some tables where there were cosmetics and perfumes. We were left on the chain and taken one at a time for her attentions. We stood or sat as directed and got a facial fully up to western standards. And, in addition, our nipples were painted the brightest scarlet. We even got a quick rouge job on each cheek of our bottom. By the time the eighth girl had been attended to, it was time for the grand entry into the auction room where girls were sold. This time the sheet draped over our nudity was intended more for the one dramatic moment when it would be pulled away to reveal what lay beneath. As we walked in single file, I realized once again how convenient our collar and chain was for those who tended us.

It was a large, bare room with a few steps up to a platform, the purpose of which was well understood. Us girls were backed against one wall, and admonished by the corporal to behave ourselves if we didn't want to be flogged. He

then opened a door to give entry to a collection of clients. Their appearance was a letdown.

We couldn't help being influenced by the movies and I expect we'd expected flashing-eyed sheiks. But the poker-faced collection that scattered itself around the room was rather nondescript. Most wore western business suits while a few were attired in open necked shirts and pants. Since the attractive portions of our anatomy were still covered, and there was a rule against touching the merchandise, we eight girls got less attention than we expected. It's true, they did drift over in our direction, walked up and down the line without saying a word or asking questions, then rejoined their fellows. A hush fell when the corporal mounted the platform and the wardress unlocked the padlock which held Natalie captive of the chain. Still wearing the iron collar, she was pushed up the steps to stand beside the uniformed corporal. He made his preliminary remarks in the local language which none of us understood. No doubt we were described as thoroughly trained in obedience and submission. He then asked for bids.

The first responses were mostly in course humor, easy to recognize. But having gotten the wheels in motion, the corporal then performed the act to improve the bidding. He whisked Natalie's sheet from around her neck and tossed it aside with a fine, dramatic gesture. He then told Natalie to place her hands on the top of her head and slowly rotate to display her assets. He also told her to keep her legs well

apart. With not the faintest hope of escape, the poor girl did as she was told which prompted a rash of bids and much comment. The corporal then had his merchandise posture herself in a dozen different ways until Marjory's prize was knocked down for a sum of money staggering in size. Natalie's wrists were handcuffed behind her back, the sheet replaced, and she was led away by a man who didn't seem to care much.

I had been watching the crowd and, as the first disappointment-wore away, I realized there were a lot of damned expensive business suits in evidence. In this group of ordinary looking men there was Money.

When it came my turn, I was frightened half out of my wits but the hand of authority was on my arm. Instantly I sensed a difference.

My corporal made a brief announcement, after which there was a pregnant hush as though the message was dramatic. There was a stirring among the group and a space cleared for one of those with an open shirt. I noticed him for the first time, a man of at least thirty but not over forty. He was a man who carried with easy grace the presence of authority. Without hurry he passed a few words with those standing by before facing the corporal to bark something I didn't understand. Certainly it was well understood by the corporal, who passed me back down the stairs to the wardress who lead me to the exit door and turned me

around to propel me back into the prison. I ended up in a cell no more dismal than the rest, but nonetheless forbidding. At this point my sheet was stripped away and the wardress checked to make sure my hair was perfect. She simply said, “You wait,” and slammed the door on me. In a return of the familiar bewilderment, I paced up and down against the bars a couple of times before planting my nakedness on the hard bench.

He was handsome, he was Arab. He had either purchased me or put a stop to the proceedings. His authority had been impressive. When the wardress next passed my cell, I asked why I was different from the rest and if I had actually been sold. All I got in reply was a burst of laughter and the admonition to wait and see. I pondered the possibilities and waited. A small cell is a bad place to those who must wait.

Time passed slowly then suddenly he was looking at me through the bars. “Miss Celie Collins, I believe,” he said in perfect English. “You may call me Hamid, expect when company is present. At such time you will address me respectfully as ‘Master’.” The laugher now took control as he added, “Isn’t that a gas!”

I couldn’t think of a thing to say. So far as looks went, I’d drawn a winning number. But so far as handsome men went, they can be as cruel as any of the rest. All I could get

out was a polite, “Thank you for buying me, Sir. I’m very grateful.”

The wardress unlocked the cell door and was suddenly gone. Hamid left it open as he sauntered in to demand, “Go through your paces, Celie. I want to know what I now possess.”

“You mean the things the girls had to do on the auction block?”

“Of course. But I understand your problem. Just a moment while I free your hands.” Hamid used the key and his first act was to kiss the back of my hand. Then he seated himself on the bench and told me to stand in the light from the barred window and demonstrate my goods. Immediately before Hamid’s intent regard, I delivered all the humiliating acts of submission to reveal everything female I possessed. I was rewarded. “You are very beautiful, Miss Celie Collins. You appear obedient. You also come with the highest references.”

I had been standing with legs far apart to display my private area, but Hamid’s words were a surprise so I discarded the pose to politely inquire, “I don’t understand. Who in this place would give me praise?”

“You are forgetting Rankin Teller, who I have known for years, and who gave me the recommendation. He tells me you accept punishment very well.”

“I hate being punished, Hamid. There’s no kind of punishment I enjoy.”

My outburst earned only a smile. “Rankin did not say you enjoyed everything he did to you, or that you would enjoy everything I might do. He simply said you were obedient and accepted your pain in a manner I would find pleasing.” Again the charming smile. “I will find this out myself, Celie. Come, I want these handcuffs on you again, this time in front. It takes a special kind of girl to wear handcuffs gracefully.”

I knelt before him and raised my arms. He fitted each cuff carefully before clicking it shut. I wondered if, should I use my hand clumsily, he would return me to the auction block? Handcuffs are difficult for a girl to wear since most of the time you appear to be striving to get them off, and the rest of the time simply don’t know what to do with them. Fortunately I had been handcuffed so much I was at ease with them. Hamid seemed pleased.

“You met that test admirably,” Hamid said without flattery. “Rankin told me truth, you are a remarkable young woman. We will sit on the bench and ask yourselves questions while there is still time to dispose of you in the auction room.” He studied me as I sat down. “You have an exquisite body and use it with a natural grace. How many times have you been whipped?”

Anxiously I said, “I am feeling silly, sitting before you like this. I am not sure of the proper address, but I would wish to call you by your name. But I believe myself a slave-girl and slave-girls do not enjoy that familiarity.”

“This is an unusual association which I will make understandable to you as we progress. If you feel easier in your mind calling me ‘Master’, then do so. I asked you a question.”

“Yes, I have been whipped. It seemed to me a terrible whipping.”

“I will whip you often but it is good you’ve had the experience.”

“Thank you, Master.” I was suddenly disgusted with being submissive, but since I was this man’s property, it seemed natural.

“I am a product of two worlds,” Hamid said evenly, “Harvard in the United States, and the London School of Economics. I speak English perfectly but I am still an Arab. By the way, Rankin told me you will submit to any man, anywhere upon demand. Submit to me now.”

I had become used to the hateful pose. With only a tiny shrug I slithered down to the floor and arranged myself for my new owner. The floor was cold against my back. I placed my linked hands above my head and looked up ex-

pectantly, while adding a bit of icing to the cake, “I am yours, Master. Take me.”

Hamid simply laughed and, grasping my handcuffs, pulled me back upon the seat. “One more test,” he said lightly. “You submit as perfectly as you do all ease. I will keep you prisoner on my country estate for the time being.” Hamid resumed his story before I had a chance to speak. “How long you remain in prison depends entirely upon my whim and your ability to charm me out of the chains and iron bars which are now your lot in life.” He gestured almost wearily, “As you may have guessed from the way they treat me here, I am a very wealthy man. You are an expensive plaything but one I can well afford. In between your cries of anguish I will try to make you happy.”

What the hell was there for me to say! I could sense there was more to come and invited it with an adoring smile. Hamid continued reflectively, “My parents were both of this land but I was sent aboard to be half English and half American. Your customs come easier to me than my own. And with the death of my father I inherited not only his wealth but the administration of his empire. What I’m trying to say is that I haven’t had much time for fun and games. In some ways you will find me naive. My decision to acquire you is recent.”

“I could think of worse masters,” I said with some sincerity.

Hamid nodded at my tribute. “You may also know that I purchased the four girls who came from Palm Island along with yourself. Their function will be purely decorative, other than to receive occasional whippings purely for my enjoyment.” Hamid’s eyes searched deeply into mine. “I hope you have some insight as to why a man finds great pleasure in this marking of the skin of girls. Do you?”

“I have presumed it simulates and prolongs the joy of orgasm, Master.”

“Continue.”

“That’s it, Master. Some people may see a kind of beauty in the act. And I think some girls can reach a kind of transcendental state under the infliction of so much pain. But for me it’s just hurt.”

I could not be sure if Hamid was not quietly laughing at me. Nor could I be sure if he agreed with my reasoning. Doubtfully I wanted for my master to reply. Instead he nodded in agreement. “You have saved me the trouble of explaining it myself, Celie. I have whipped many girls and always found their loveliness increased many times over by the lash.” With raised eyebrow Hamid looked at me in a sort of sly sharing discovery. “You forgot to mention that a whipped girl is almost always much more obedient. But this is so, is it not?”

“It is so, Master.” My owner nodded.

“There is one more thing which intrigues me. It was not so long ago that you were snatched from a world and a life in which you were totally free. How well can you cope with memories of that world?”

I managed a shrug. “I have been kept so closely a prisoner, Master, that I no longer think of the way it used to be. There is a million miles between my enslavement and the place I used to live.” I held up my steel-clad wrists to add with a touch of bitterness, “It has been like this always, with chain or rope or iron bars. My other life has gone, Master, it will not-intrude upon your pleasure.”

“You are almost too good to be true, Celie.” Hamid’s eyes were deep and dark, and most of the time had been drinking in the contours of my breasts. He got to his feet and looked down at me with what I hoped was pride of possession. “I will not send you back to the auctioneer,” he said with real sincerity. “I am indebted to Ranking Teller for much of what I know of you. Grant me time to make a few arrangements and then I’ll take you from this disgusting cell and place you in a prison more to my taste.” Hamid took my joined hands and kissed each of them before he went away.

I tried the door but it had locked when he closed it. I looked at the handcuffs on my wrists and sighed. The bench was hard but it was all I had to sit on. I tried to sort out the multitude of impressions crowding in my mind. Foremost

among them was the persistent yearning for Palm Island. But Palm Island was gone as was my former life. Now a man named Hamid dominated my life. Whether a girl was slave or free, this man seemed every girl's ideal, coming close to the bejeweled prince of girlish fantasy. His suave command of English was hard to relate to his promise of whipping me when he was in the mood. Most of what he said was kind but none of it disguised the fact of my being a plaything, a pretty, painted and scented doll, programmed to submit to his desires.

I figured I had come off a lot better than I might have.

But I wished Hamid had not mentioned whips. It was the wardress who brought a sheet to hide my nakedness from public view. Before draping it, she moved my handcuffs from front to back. Then, in a manner to make me wince, she bound my elbows tight together with thin cord. It hurt outrageously but all my complaints fell upon deaf ears.

As she arranged the sheet to clasp it around my neck, she volunteered something that sounded sincere, "You are very lucky, girl. Your master will be kind and also cruel and every maiden in the land will long to fill your shoes."

"Not with the way you've got my elbows fixed they wouldn't."

“What is a little pain when the rewards will be so great,” she chuckled. “Hamid will keep you in a silver cage and lock you in golden chains. Come, he’s waiting in the car.”

I was thankful for the sheet. With elbows screaming we walked what seemed like a very long distance to the car. It was a Rolls Royce which Hamid drove himself. With amazing strength he picked me up to seat me beside the wheel, handed the wardress some funny looking money, then turned the key. “Welcome to your new life,” he said softly. “I know you are afraid, but where I take you now is a place of happiness.”

“That woman tied a cord so tight around my elbows it’s cutting them in two. I’d be grateful if you’d take it off.”

“You should treasure the pain, dear child, it comes from me.” Hamid smiled at me sideways. “Regard it as lesson number one. And you would be wise not to mention it again.”

I had been put in my place and I tried to bear with lesson number one by wiggling my bound arms into the corner of seat to hopefully reduce the cut of the cords. Timidly, I ventured, “Please instruct me, Master, I have never before been purchased by a man. I know myself fortunate in your choice. I want very much to please. I expect you know how much of a surprise you are to a girl who expected something quite different. I am terribly confused.”

“I will be every bit as cruel as any other man, I already told you that. And the cord you bear on your elbows will be a remainder on our journey. I, in turn, am amazed that Rankin parted with you.”

“Mr. Teller is a slave trader. There was no shortage of girls on the Rankin’s Pride, and he did with us as he pleased. Somehow he talks his male friends into bring on board pretty young women for extended cruises. The man who escorted me made it sound quite glamorous and exciting. After we’re out to sea the girls discover the cruise is not quite as expected.”

“The Victorian ‘fate worse than death’ was something you all adapted to?”

“Yes. Rankin’s amusements were something to make us obey. No girl needed more than one or two treatments before she laid down and spread her legs. We girls cling to life and it wasn’t long before we found submission tolerable or even desirable. I am soiled and second hand.”

I got another shrew, sideways glance. “That is your evaluation, my dear. It is not mine. At Shalima, the place to which we go, you will be renewed, you will dwell in beauty and paradise. I have maidens to attend to you, even though they keep you chained.”

It was always there, the knowledge that escape would never happen. I now headed into another direction and de-

liberately used his name. “Hamid, I am confused. You treat me as an honored guest and a slave-girl at the same time.”

“You are a prisoner, dear child, I do not care much for the word ‘slave’. It hints too much of domestic chores. What I desire is to create at Shalima a tapestry of beauty in which every female I possess will play her part. You profess to be confused but that is the way a prisoner should be.”

I dared not argue. Visions of being dragged out onto the sand and given a thrashing right there and then flashed through my mind. “Master, it seems to me I speak too easily of things perhaps forbidden. But I don’t think you want a ‘yes, Master’ and ‘no, Master’ as my limit of response. Is there a danger of my saying things that will earn me punishment?”

“You are seeing dragons where none be. There are no dragons. Don’t you realize I am as formal as you in this discussion. Familiarity will come if we give it half a chance. When I have whipped you for the first time, most barriers will dissolve.”

“Can’t this be achieved without whipping me… Master?”

Hamid laughed at my innocence. “So you don’t want to be whipped, Miss Celie Collins. Well, dear girl, I don’t suppose you do. But the results of leather across your bare skin may bring you more wisdom than all I could tell you. Forget everything except that you belong to me.”

Hamid had left me little to say. I would probably have kept silent had it not been for the unrelenting pain in my elbows. I cursed that prison wardress for putting it on me. But I dared not speak of it. Instead I spoke of something else. “Do you not have wives Master? I thought in your country a man might have several and the youngest served the older?”

“I have no wives. There are girls at Shalima who keep me amused but I have not had time for wives. I have purchased girls from to time and some have pleased me well enough to let them stay at Shalima. Some of them will amuse themselves with you, sometimes painfully. But you will acquire wisdom and some may become your friends.”

“Will they whip me?” I got my nipple pinched for that one. But Hamid was amused. “Is that all you think of, Celie? Of course, they’ll whip you. But no more than you can bear. If it would amuse you, I’ll give permission for you to whip one of them. But forget the whip. Will you enjoy being imprisoned in a cage?”

“If it pleases you, Master.”

“Oh, come of it!” The western expression fell easily from his lips. “Good gosh, girl, you’ve got the quaintest ideas about or customs.”

We were closer, I sensed it. “You know about Marjory,” I said timidly. “And you’ve purchased her four girls. Will you not impose on them the duties of a wife?”

“What you mean is will I fuck them? That what you’re getting at, Celie? Of course I will, just as I will fuck you. That’s a beautifully descriptive word, isn’t it? I’ll try and not use it too often.” Again he laughed at me. “Those four maidens will become a part of my tapestry. I will arrange them and do things to them as an artist would use a brush. If you walk in the gardens and find one hanging from a tree, you must not be surprised. And, above all, you must not let her loose. Savvy?”

Shalima arose for us out of the desert’s mist of heat, a wall of yellowed, ancient stone encircling at great length the home within. I saw some trees that probably told of an oasis. When the guard opened the gate, I saw lush greenery abounding around the huge house. The Moorish style of the main house might have been ancient or modern, I could not tell, but I instantly glimpsed Hamid’s tapestry. There were many gardens and trees and paths creating a paradise in the heat of the desert. There was no main door, just a patio where one entered the cool shadows of the protected walls. Here I was taken from the car by three ardent young women attired mostly in bangles to accent their nudity. Their eyes were curious about their master’s new possession. I was whisked away to a lush bathroom where the tub was huge enough for more than one. The girls not only

divested me of my sheet, but also the skimpy clothing that adorned their fine bodies. Then they joined me in the perfumed water. They laughed and chatted in their native tongue until a voice that could only come from the Bronx said, “I bet you’d like to get rid of that cord, wouldn’t you, kid?”

“You’re American,” I said in surprise.

“So what! It don’t make no difference here, dearie. We all have the right parts to please a man. Welcome to Shalima.”

Surprisingly, the other two girl also spoke English although with an accent. I turned to the American and said, “You’re right about the cord. It hurts something fierce. Please untie it.”

“Shit, girl, what I asked was if you would like it gone. No one said a thing about actually untying it. We don’t have no authority to untie them elbows or unlock them handcuffs. You wear them, girlie, and be thankful it ain’t nothing worse.”

I was scrubbed and dried and perfumed. I was fingered and inspected by the three girls who treated me with a mixture of mockery and respect. “You’re the sultan’s favorite, sweetheart,” the Bronx informed me with a touch of envy. “Probably the first thing he’ll do is whip your ass.”

“You also get screwed a lot around here,” said another maiden.

“Or maybe he tie you down on an ant hill.” This third voice made the suggestion with obvious relish.

It was a lovely room with a balcony above the lush greenery of the courtyard. It also had a door with lock and key, with the key on the outside. My three now giggling companions stood me in the center of the huge floor and set my bare feet upon a costly rug and used a shackle on my ankle to insure I stayed within a yard of where I stood. They kicked my legs apart and each in turn made her hand familiar with perfumed pussy before departing in a gust of merriment to leave me standing with wrists still handcuffed and elbows cut by cord. Clearly I heard the click of the lock followed by silence.

I was the new girl at school and realized how little I knew of the rules of this school. But I had little time to ponder that because the lock clicked once again to admit the male figure of an Arab clad in a white burnouse and that strange headgear. When he turned to survey his prize, I saw the smiling face of Hamid, who carefully locked the door and asked sardonically, “Do I please thee better thus?”

He pleased me mightily. He was the acme of everything I had every read or ever fantasy I ever dreamed. I knew myself owned by and looking at a Man. I spoke simple truth, “You please me very much, Master.”

Hamid grasped my bare shoulders and kissed first my forehead and then my eyes and then my lips. I kissed him back with a fierceness ill befitting a slave-girl.

“I give you now my first command,” he whispered. His eyes roved up and down my frontal exposure before he barked, “Submit!”

I was well trained. In a second I was on the rug struggling to lay back on bound arms. I paused hopefully but Hamid shot down my hope in flames. “Your arms stay bound, beloved. Your wrists remain ironed. Lay down and offer thanks.”

Hamid watched as I did as I was told, realizing that with my arms thus secured my loins rose up. As I separated raised knees to provide a good view of what my master had purchased, the momentary agony of the cord vanished at the sight of Hamid casting aside his robe and headdress to stand naked. My heart beat fast. I was both thrilled and scared at the sight of a massive tool designed to please any woman. Here was a man indeed. A man who owned me more totally than anyone in all my life.

I cannot explain these things. The agony of my elbows should have made sexual excitement difficult and pleasure impossible. But when Hamid slipped easily into my sheath and pressed his nakedness down on my own, I knew only an intensity of sensation far beyond anything given me by any other man. With ease Hamid took me to the stars and

back, gave me an incessant hunger to match his own. I was tossed upon a sea of agony and ecstasy on which I screamed and screamed, until my lips were sealed by his. Again and again he brought me to orgasm after orgasm.

When Hamid withdrew, he knelt at my side to gaze down affectionately at my return to his world. By another instinct I could not explain, I beheld his glistening phallus and took it greedily within my mouth that it be cleansed.

We moved in slow motion in deep content. When Hamid stood, I imprinted on each of his bare feet a single kiss, which we both understood as a symbol of submission. Hamid lifted me to hold me tight and close. “We will adjourn to the balcony for a long, cool drink.” Then he laughingly added, “I know what you want to say, precious girl, you want to tell me you cannot lift a glass.” He turned me around and quickly cut the wicked cord and unlocked the handcuffs. Dazed with happiness I helped him massage the deep indentations in the flesh of my arms. It is not easy for a girl to think up endless endearments so I said quite simply, “Hamid, you are wonderful.”

At the balcony I turned in alarm. “But, Master, I am naked! I should not be seen.”

“There are none to see,” Hamid said carelessly. “In any case, none would complain. Come, watch me mix the drinks so that next time you can serve me on your knees.”

As we sat and sipped and allowed the desert air to caress our nakedness, I thought back to the Rankin's Pride and marveled at my fortune. When a girl knows she is to be sold on the auction block, her thoughts always tend toward a pretty dream. For me this dream had become a reality, and I knew myself not only physically but emotionally enslaved by this man.

"Did I not tell you, beloved girl, Shalima is a happy place?"

I tried not to go overboard in telling Hamid of my content, aware of his quiet laughing at my earnestness. I was a pleased child. When I was sent to mix our second drink, I was aware of being slightly tipsy. Aware, also, of the return of the lovely smoldering heat on Palm Island. I was also acutely conscious of total freedom, no chain was on me anywhere. As I knelt at his feet and quietly sipped, he shattered my complacency, "I'd be surprised if you haven't already guessed, Celie. We'll take our time with these drinks but when they're over, I'll whip you."

Hamid's voice hung in the air. I like to think I took it well. For several moments I tensed in shock before realizing how right he was saying I should have guessed it. In this lovely world of Shalima a girl and a whip are never far apart. I took a big drink and did my best to hide the fear. "Thank you, Master, you told me it would happen. I will try to make you proud of owning me." I felt a fool at the speech but could think of nothing else to say.

I did not prolong the drink. I was determined not to give offense and to please this man for whom I felt a warmth quite separate from the smoldering embers within my loins. I took our empty glasses to the sink then stood before Hamid to make an utterance not far short of the insane. “I am ready, Master. Please whip me.”

“And why would I do that, beloved girl?”

“Because it gives you pleasure. And in that I am content.” I allowed a pause before adding, “Please whip me.”

I had evidently said the right thing. Hamid took me by the hand to lead me to a divan. It was beautifully made and had two levels I did not understand. But I understood when Hamid had me kneel on the bottom level and lean forward to stretch out my hands and lay bare breasts upon the bench. Some sort of clasps the hollows behind my knees and two more doing the same for my ankles. There was now a belt to buckle around my waist. When Hamid pulled that tight, it cinched my tummy hard down with the leather around the narrowest part of my waist, making certain I could not move my hips. “You hands and arms are yours, dear girl,” Hamid said softly. “I am curious to see what you do with them.”

I didn’t do anything worthwhile. I could not reach back and touch any of the binding by which I was secured. I could raise my head, or even rest upon my forearms to

gaze around or back in a relative freedom. I began to sense embarrassment.

Hamid's fingers lovingly played with the curves I could not move. He seemed to find a fascination in fingering my curves and testing the flesh. For Hamid it was an enjoyable prelude but one I did not share. I was soon to suffer pain and much concern as to how I would handle it. I was concerned how I hold in my screams. I was certain when Hamid whipped a girl it would be an anguish to remember. I was trembling but kept assuring myself I was not afraid.

"You're are ready?" Hamid's voice was almost a whisper.

"I am ready, Master, please whip me."

My owner had chosen a cane from a collection of such instruments. It was long and it was thin. It cut the air with a whine, and impacted across my flesh to leave me silent in the most vivid shock of my life. The pain was bad enough but it grew and spread. And it was then I made the ugly little noises in lieu of actual screams. I could move nothing below my waist but raised my breasts and shoulders as though in mute protest. Or perhaps to make sure they were not forgotten. In my distress I looked back into Hamid's gaze and then slumped back upon the bench to clasp my face in my free hands. When the cane found my flesh again, the agony told me I had found the master every girl desires.

I did not scream. I have been whipped often since this one first time.

Now I scream. It is much easier to scream than to keep quite. But the effect of Hamid's magnetism upon me made one thing vital in my wish to please. The man who owned me should not be offended by the screech and scream of maiden torment. Somehow I sold myself on the idea that it would hurt no less if I made disgraceful sounds and thus Hamid extracted from me only gasps and moans. My master's use of the cane was steady and hard. I failed to count the number of strokes but when he had appeased his appetite for pleasure, there came a long suspenseful pause until I raised myself to meet his laughing eyes.

"I will take you to a mirror," he said, "that you may judge the quality of my work."

That my ordeal was over was something I found trouble believing. "Thank you for caning me, Master," I said before I realized what I was doing. My master made no move to free me from the bench. Instead he sat beside me and lightly fingered the pained flesh which tomorrow would be very color of the rainbow. And which now responded to his touch with quivers I could not control. In fact, the sensations became pleasurable as he progressed and even though my scolded bottom burned with fire, I had no wish for him to stop.

"Do you realize what a miracle you are, child?"

“I am not a miracle, Master, I am simply a girl who has given pleasure to the man by whom she is owned.”

“Come, come, Celie, you know there is more than that. I have never whipped a girl who did not scream. You did not scream.”

“I had no wish to offend your ears, Hamid. Screams are obscene.” I paused before adding, “But this is the only time I have not uttered them.”

“I find it pleasurable to leave you fastened as you are. It is a nice pose that we may not repeat for some time. You will stay fastened as we enjoy another drink.”

I looked back to behold his gorgeous nakedness walking for the bar. When he returned to place the drink in my hand, I found that I could thrust up hard enough to lift the cocktail to my lips and share Hamid’s toast, “To the most beautiful and whippable girl this side of Suez.” I drank with him. I was happy.

Before I was released from the bench I was once more handcuffed. I was so accustomed to these things on my wrists it did not matter. I realized that half the time they were only a symbol of someone’s authority. I said nothing as the steel bands were snapped upon my wrist. An odd thought crossed my mind—I wondered who’s wrists Marjory was chaining now.

My master's voice cut into my thoughts. "I will free you from the couch, beloved. I have things to do. You may wander as you please. You cannot possibly escape."

I lay upon the bench a long time. I knew it would be painful to sit and, in any case, I was possessed of a lassitude which was no doubt partly due to the refreshments. I wanted to explore and was willing to believe there was no possibility of escape. In fact, at that moment I had no wish to escape. No thoughts of leaving this lovely place crossed my mind. The fact that I had received a severe whipping played no part in my reflections.

I knew myself submissive to a man far stronger than I. I wondered if the whip had changed me. Hamid had sparked in me an entirely fresh assessment of who and what I was.

It was pleasant in the huge, cool room. It was as though the bench on which I lay had shared the pain Hamid had inflicted. I was comfortable and allowed my fancies to wander where they would. They took me immediately to the question of why Hamid had purchased me and why we had conversed in the manner of a couple or "normal people". Why was he kind to me? Why did I not resent being whipped? How could he express genuine affection for a girl he had bought and paid for only hours ago? When he called me beloved it was as though I had been his slave-girl all my life.

I constantly reached back to play my fingers across the welted skin I had been unable to touch when bound. The handcuffs were a handicap but I could stretch enough to explore my bottom with one hand. The wounds were sore and tender and somehow special. I knew that if Hamid should appear at that moment to demand I submit, I would be in the age old posture in seconds with knees apart and holding up bare arms in supplication.

My dreams were interrupted by a sloe-eyed maiden who brought me what I suppose was dinner. I attacked it with vigor but since the serving girl spoke only her local tongue, I asked no questions. She was obviously curious, examining my nakedness with envious eyes, then pointing to my bottom and making such motions that left me no doubt that she wished to see how injured it was. I rose and left her have a good look at which she clapped her hands and made sounds of envy. She also fingered my handcuffs as though never having seen such pretty bracelets before. By the time I had finished my feast, the day was well advanced and I set out on my tour of exploration with an anxiety to be done with it by the time Hamid demanded my use at bedtime.

Shalima was huge. And here and there impressive in its display of wealth. It was almost a museum but was adequately staffed, mostly by females who accepted me without surprise and those with enough English asked to see the evidence of the master's cane, and all expressed approval.

Some told me to be a very good girl. I encountered no hostility, even in the men. But no one would tell me were Marjory's four girls were held. All I got was a stony stare, or a repetition of the advise to be a good girl. It was almost like exploring a museum and in the end I was glad to find an open door and an entrance to one of the lovely gardens. The hot air hung breathless at the end of day. I walked up and down the paths but soon felt terribly alone and was actually glad when a servant took on hand and said, matter-of-factly, it was time she chained for the night. I was puzzled and far from pleased but allowed myself to be led back to the big, cool room where Hamid had made love to me.

During my absence there had been a change. In the center of the floor was a pile of shining bronze links on the top of which was a metal collar far too small for any girl to wear. But when I obediently knelt to have it slipped around my neck, it fitted perfectly and closed with a decisive snap. From it ran one end of the long chain while the other was clearly padlocked to a massive ring in the floor. Once more I got the advice to be a good girl and then was left alone.

I was piqued. I had expected Hamid's bed instead of kneeling on a costly rug with a collar and chain on my neck which I felt was a lowering of status as well as a loss of freedom. I got to my feet and walked as far as the limit of my chain, which took me almost to the balcony in one direction and the door in the other. The links followed me

around but snubbed me short of anything worthwhile. I was standing and looking longingly at the balcony when the opening of the door announced I had company. I swiftly turned to meet one more disappointment.

She was of the west and her clothing probably came from some big and expensive American department store. When she spoke her voice betrayed an English origin. It was an educated voice and went immediately to the point. “My name is Emily Parsons. I am a school teacher and here at Shalima my duties are to teach the staff and their children whatever English they can absorb. You are Miss Celie Collins, the Master’s latest acquisition.”

She advanced with outstretched hands to clasp one of my handcuffed hands and say, “It really is a pleasure, Miss Collins. How d’you do?”

She was neither pretty or plain and was possible thirty-five. I liked her instantly and got good vibes from her. I asked, “Do you live here all the time?”

“Of course, I have a very full day with all I have to teach. And I am not chained at bed time or kept in a cage. I am not as fortunate as you.”

“You mean you’re free!”

“I’m sure that seems strange to you, Miss Collins, but, yes, I am simply under contract to provide scholastic services.

Otherwise I come and go as I please." She chuckled. "In case you're interested, the salary is more than generous."

I stood there, breathing heavily, and viewing the inevitable. "Then perhaps you can do something about getting me released and sent back home. This morning I was sold by auction, and before that I was a prisoner of several people for a long time." I stopped to catch my breath. "You will do that for me, won't you?"

"I'm afraid not, dear. You are by no means the first to ask. But these matters are internal to Hamid's household and I dare not interfere. No one would thank me for intruding." She patted my cheek gently. "I'm afraid you truly are the slave-girl you believe. And I doubt very much you'll ever been given opportunity to escape."

"But I don't understand this refusal to help."

"My dear girl, if I did what you ask, I'd be immediately deported in disgrace and find myself on everyone's black list." She paused for a second before adding, "If not worse."

"You're telling me I'm a slave for life?"

"Quite probably. Most certainly for as long as you have youth and beauty. You've got looks in an abundance to make me jealous. Since that chain on your neck isn't long enough to reach the furniture, would you like me to drag over a couple of chairs or shall we sit on the floor?"

I chose the chairs even though the chain would hang more heavily upon my neck. The atmosphere this western woman evoked made squatting on the floor something I did not want to do.

“Look, I see a bar over there,” she said, “shall I make us both a couple of drinks?”

Miss Parsons had either been informed or glimpsed my discolored skin. Casually she remarked, “His Nibs thrashed your bottom, didn’t he? It’s always referred to as ‘Shalima’s Welcome’. Most of the servants have had it too. Would you mind showing me how badly the Lord and Master has marked your skin?”

Again I displayed my wounds and wondered if Miss Parsons had a Shalima Welcome herself, or might be subject to whippings herself but I kept the thought to myself. Even though I winced as I sat down, I wryly proposed a toast, “Here’s to slave-girls, long may they be in pain.”

“You’re taking it very well, dear. The nakedness thing would drive me up the wall, to say nothing of all the rest. But, of course, you did say you had previous experience.”

“There were four other girls purchased with me…?”

“Oh, those poor creatures.” Miss Parsons was still dealing in obvious affairs. “They’re sort of being conditioned tonight. He’s got them heavily chained in a dungeon. They’re quite sure they’ve come to the end of their young lives. But

tomorrow they'll be introduced to a sort of Persian Paradise. They won't know what's happening. It's a cute little trick his Nibs loves to play on girls. Don't worry, they won't be tortured."

"But why did he buy them?"

"So far as I know, it's to provide a pool of unmarked skin." Miss Parsons eyed me doubtfully. "You see, dear, your owner is a man of vast enterprise. There comes to Shalima a good many men from whom he can extract a favor by making a gift of a lovely girl with unmarked skin, all ready and waiting for a man's whip." My companion laughed disgusted. "As far as I can tell, Celie, every man, especially if he's got any money, wants to whip a naked girl more than he wants anything else in the world. The fact is those four maidens are going to lead a really wonderful existence until one of these male monsters comes to call. Fortunately, it's not all that often."

"But they'll always be marked."

"So will you, dear. Forget it, it's a fact of life." I was feeling much more secure. Emila Parsons was a rock on the shifting sands of my enslavement. I felt free to ask, "I was told to call the owner of this place by the Christian name of Hamid, and to call him 'Master' only on formal occasions. I don't understand this familiarity. What do you call him?"

“Well, that’s easy, dear. I simply call him Sir. His full name is Hamid Bed Shardela, and his power and authority is almost frightening. He inherited most of it and actually isn’t a bad chap in his own way. He wants to be liked but has a passion for white female skin, which he marked according to his mood. I’ve seen him whip half a dozen naked girls in one day. But, on the other hand, I’ve seen him make them very happy with gifts and money and privileges.” Miss Parsons looked at me critically. “At the moment, it’s you who are the Sultan’s favorite. But you’ll have a lot of hard and painful work to keep the title… That is, if you want it.”

“What if I don’t?”

“You won’t get your head chopped off, you’ll simply be demoted and have to do some work. If you look carefully among the staff, you’ll see quite a few pretty girls who failed the test and are kept around as a matter of convenience. And to make certain they don’t go back to where ever they came from with stories about what goes on. Don’t let any of this alarm you. You can have a full, rich life. And there will be times when Hamid makes you very happy.”

“I don’t like this chain and collar on my neck, it doesn’t make me the least bit happy.”

“It isn’t hurting. You’d be foolish to complain.” Emily laughed and made a gesture of frustration. “I’m afraid that is what is going to have to govern your actions from now on. Believe me, Celie, Shalima contains more devices for

making young ladies uncomfortable than you could dream of. But there is always the possibility Hamid could give you back your freedom, along with a check that would take your breath away. I've known it to happen. What you have to do is bend with the wind, don't ever be rebellious."

I held up my joined hands to inquire, "Why do I have to wear these handcuffs? They don't do the least bit of good."

"For the same reason that brides wear a wedding ring, Celie, dear. That's all it is, a symbol. Do you want another drink?"

I had to marvel at Emily Parson's free and easy use of privilege, but I was glad of her company. "I'll have another of these," I said. "But too many and I'm not going to care about chains and whips and being the property of a man."

"I understand Hamid is more than adequate in his ravishment of girls," Miss Parsons interrupted caustically. "It's a disgusting human function I've always deplored. But I suppose some of the girls like it."

"I'm surprised Hamid pays you a salary. He could have easily had you kidnapped and have you without cost." My comment prompted the beginning of a blush. "Is there something I ought to know?" I ventured.

This time the caustic was heavy in her retort. "I'm neither young nor attractive. Hamid would be silly to bother with the kidnapping of a female he had no wish either to sleep

with or to rape. He and I have an understanding that works well. I won't leave Shalima until I've acquired financial independence."

Looking over the rim of my glass, I assessed my companion and wondered what traumatic incident in the past had convinced her she was without attractiveness. Feature-wise she was by no means a raving beauty. But her figure was excellent and the way she carried herself spoke of grace. But I said nothing. All I wanted was that she be my friend.

"Will you come and see me often, or will I be allowed to visit you?"

"Of course we'll see a good deal of each other, girl. As long as you don't get in trouble." She chuckled at some thought. "It's not impossible I can get permission for you to attend one of my classes. Wouldn't it be fun if you became a junior teacher."

Emily Parsons and I liked each other but the hour had grown late and I was becoming tired. Emily sensed this and returned the chairs to their proper place. She took the glasses back to the bar, kissed me lightly on both cheeks, and promised to try and spend time with me tomorrow. Then she was gone. Suddenly I was terribly alone.

With the compulsion of a caged animal, I once more tested my tether. Nothing had changed, I was still snubbed short of both the bar and the door. For some moments I stood re-

flectively, fingering my whipped skin as well as chained hands would allow. I ended up doing one cheek at a time.

I laid down on the rug and went to sleep. I cannot tell the hour in the night when the wet wad was thrust inside my mouth by firm, strong fingers while I was flipped face down and held there by a couple of painful knees upon my back. My iron collar was released by be replaced by a strap between my teeth which buckled to the nape of my neck. It was tugged brutally tight and followed up by an equally brutal blindfold.

“You do not fight.” The command was feminine as sharp steel was pressed against my throat. They were both women, but both were strong. It was easy for them to free one wrist then lock my hands behind my back. I could do nothing for fear of being hurt.

I allowed myself to be raised up and propelled to the door. I tried to scream but the gag laughed at my effort. It is terrible to be robbed of sight and, even with firm hands holding my arms, I was fearful of the fast pace they made me walk.

I could not see but I heard the sound of a car trunk being opened and suddenly I was thrust within. My ankles were bound with painful cord which then was lifted to my handcuffs and fastened tight to leave me in what I knew was called a “hog-tie.” I could not move.

The vehicle instantly got underway but was stopped at the main gate where I heard an exchange in a tongue I did not understand. But the tone was friendly. My abductors then trod on the gas to speed us off into the night, a night for me was double black. My terror was total. Perhaps it was just as well I was unable to move.

I knew little of what was going on except that I was captive to two women and being transported far from Shalima. The only encouraging fact was that I was laid upon a couple of soft rugs. Evidently someone did not want me hurt.

I could sense the car speeding across the desert as time passed. It might have been anything up to an hour before the lid was raised and I was lifted from the tiny prison of the trunk. I sensed urgency in the hands upon my flesh but no words were uttered as the cords around my feet were freed as was one cuff around my wrist. My back was thrust hard against what seemed to be a post. Behind that post my wrists were once more locked with the cuffs. Swiftly my elbows were bound back, one on each side of the post to which I was being fastened. Next there were ropes above my breasts, then my knees and finally my ankles. By that time I had become very helpless and unmoving. I heard the motor start and then disappear into the distance. I was alone and without the faintest inkling of where I was or what my fate would be. I struggled furiously but could scarcely move.

Once more I knew nothing of time but spent a lot of it chafing my wrists against the hard steel. I also tried to influence the strap which held me mute, then the blindfold. But I achieved nothing. Naked and completely helpless, I had to await in the darkness whatever my fate would be.

My bandaged eyes could tell me nothing, and as I waited for something to happen I struggled again and again. Try as I might, I could not think of a reasonable reason to be snatched from Shalima to be fastened as I was now. I was scared that for some reason it was someone's intent to leave me here until I died.

The sound of the approaching car was music to my ears. When the motor died and fresh hands tore away my bonds, I was tense with hope until I stood with hands still cuffed behind the post and the gag still cruel within my mouth. But the other ropes were gone and now a knife cut the blindfold to leave me staring at as unlikely a pair as I have ever seen. A man and a woman dressed for the desert, he middle-aged, the woman younger. It was she who spoke.

"My name is Fayella. And this is my husband, Lobo. You are now our property and will do as you are told."

I recognized his face as one of the men present at the auction. I made some sad little sounds to indicate that I wished the gag taken off.

“You will remain silent until we get home,” Fayella said tersely. “We do not want you in a state of hysterics so we’ll tell you a rough idea of what we’re doing.”

I shifted myself against the post. The female voice continued. “We intended to purchase you. My husband desires a pretty slave, and I wish to own a pretty white serving girl who I can whip.” There was a brief pause as Fayella tested the weight of my breasts. Her voice became curt with anger, “The auction was a fraud. As always Hamid got his way and stole you from our grasp. He’s too rich and far too powerful, he gets everything he wants. We have reason to believe he bought and paid for others beside you, but that is of no account. We have corrected this dishonesty and now possess you. You would be wise not to make a fuss.”

Fayella’s English was almost perfect. She might very well be American or Canadian or English. What but did it matter? I labeled her a bitter and frustrated female from whom I could expect little mercy. Lobo was not similarly educated, his English was blunt and simple, concerned mostly with my physical attributes and that I should behave if I didn’t want additional marks on my rump. My hands were taken from the post and once more joined behind my back. My elbows were bound but not with the harsh cruelty of the auction wardress. I was pushed into the back seat of a battered Buick, and one of my ankles secured to a waiting ring on the floor. I was helpless and angry and could not utter a single word.

The couple who now held title to my body were a rough pair without evidence of wealth. There was feminine quality about Fayella, but Lobo frankly smelt of sweat and goodness knows what else. But in spite of his firm admonitions, I got a favorable impression. Still I dreaded the thought that Lobo's masculinity would soon penetrate my sheath.

It would have been nice to talk but the wad filled my cheeks and the strap was as tight as ever. I shook my head time and time again but it held me silence. Like a well behaved child I sat there, swinging my one free foot. Quite uselessly I tried to find comfort for bound elbows but I don't think this is every possible. My captors talked constantly but I did not understand a word.

It was a dusty, small oasis with only a few palms. The dwellings were as sparse as the tree, and few. To one of these Lobo steered the car. I saw no noisy neighbors and was sniffed at by only one mangy dog. I was hustled into my new prison down some steps in the basement. I could hardly believe what I saw when I was pulled into the small room. It was a small cage amidst a room full of junk. The iron bars were not too thick but too strong for a girl to bend. The cage was short enough so that I would be able to barely stand, and just long enough for a girl to lay down on a threadbare rug.

“We don’t need this anymore,” Fayella said as she unstrapped the gag. “Step inside so I can close the door, and then I’ll get you something to eat. If Lobo comes, you’d best do as he says.”

The door clanged swiftly behind me. Fayella departed quickly to leave me looking at iron bars. I tried the door but it wouldn’t open. It was good to get rid of that gag, but that was the only good thing. Before I could decide whether to stand, sit or lay down, Lobo burst into the storage room with about the same urgency in which Fayella had gone upstairs. He was either a man of quick decision or a man in urgent need. He unlocked the cage, pulled me out to a space of open floor where he explained his mission in few words. “You lay on floor. You raise your knees. You stretch wide open. I fuck.” It was as matter of fact as a man giving the time of day.

I don’t much want to tell of my first ravishment in that new prison but there is still vivid in my mind of Lobo tossing aside garments to emerge as a sturdy, fleshy, pot-bellied son of the desert, with his genital cannon aimed directly between my thighs. If he had smelt before, his scent was doubly strong as he lowered himself onto my nakedness and thrust into my sheath with a rather brutally hard move. I had already learned how to dispose myself with arms chained behind my back. It was nothing now. But Lobo was a heavy man and his thrusts were vigorous beyond his carnal need.

I sighed and closed my eyes. I can't say I enjoyed Lobo's brand of love. His equipment was enormous and he used it hard enough to hurt in contrast to Hamid's gentle way within my flesh. What I was getting now was exactly what I would have supposed if I had seen this rough man walking down the street. I suppose Lobo felt I should feel honored at his attention. To be on the safe side, I did say "Thank you, Master" when the job was done. Strangely I longed to laugh instead of cry but once more had no time for anything before I was thrust back into the cage, the door locked with me on the wrong side, to stand unhappily and watch my new master depart. It looked like another busy day.

My captors maintained a staff, none of whom spoke English but found no difficulty communicating their simple needs to a naked girl locked inside a cage. A teenage girl brought me food and drink, which she passed through a slot in the bars close down to the floor. She surveyed me with a grave but eager curiosity before displaying domestic wisdom by creating a circle with finger and thumb, and pushing her opposite forefinger in and out in a motion none could mistake. She accompanied this by suggesting, "You and our Master, you jig-a-jig." Then, laughing, she turned and ran. I had not the faintest idea what I ate or drank, but it tasted good enough that I left no trace. When the same girl came to collect the plate, she told me wisely,

“Is good. Make you most strong for fuck.” Once more she ran away.

Being locked alone in a cage is not much fun. Servants came and went, both male and female, on the pretense of looking for an object they could not find. Instead it was I who was examined from every angle the cage permitted. I gave them a careless wave of the hand and sometimes got a shy acknowledgment. But I think the women simply felt sorry for me, and the men knew damned well my loins were not for them. I was mostly left in the boredom of solitude.

I fell into a much needed sleep from which I was awakened by the unlocking of the cage. This time it was Fayella who stood, looking down at my nakedness to helpfully explain, “I forgot to tell you, girl, you should address Lobo as ‘Master’, and me as ‘Mistress.’ I’ll instruct you in other things as we go along. Now I want to whip you. Please don’t complain. I want you to remember that girls are made to cry out beneath the lash. It is the female destiny.”

I struggled to stand and looked unhappily at what Fayella carried in her hand. It was a whip and a cane and quite a lot of rope. Defensively, I tried to be helpful. “My bottom was caned yesterday, as you can see. I was caned terribly and is still sore. It is not ready to be caned again.” I looked at my mistress hopefully.

“I was told your name is Celie,” my mistress said. “I will whip you how and whenever I please. Surely you don’t suppose me so blind as to not see those colored strips on your rump? This time I will punish you in other places.” As though adding vital information, she remarked, “A girl has a great many places well designed for pleasurable pain.”

“Pleasurable?”

“Pleasurable for me, dear girl. I have yet to discover if you, too, find pleasure in the scoring of your skin.” There came a lengthy pause before she added, “Do you?”

I remembered what I now thought of as the Palm Island heat. But I felt I’d best play it safe. “Being caned or whipped hurts me terribly,” I confessed. “If there is anything I can say or do to avoid the lash, you will find me most obedient. Please, Mistress?”

I had struck a favorable cord. My nipples and breasts were played with reflectively, and my wet pussy tested. Fayella made an unexpected admission, “I like you, child. You are exactly what I hoped when Lobo and I went to the auction to buy a white-skinned girl. I wish possessing you could be more legal, but be assured my whip will hurt none the less. I expect you would like to be fastened to avoid the shame of struggles.”

“You mean you’re willing to whip me without being tied?” The words escaped my lips before I could bring them back.

“Of course I am willing. There is a thrill in an obedient girl like no other. But I am kind enough to give you warning. If you struggle or complain or run around this room while I mark your skin, you will receive a double dose. I am thinking now in terms of twenty strokes up and down your back. Should you so desire, you can easily raise the number up to forty.” There came a pause that didn’t last long enough for me to say yes or no. “Do you wish me to tie you, dear child?”

I said yes, I would much prefer to be bound, figuring I would be tied up anyway. So what the hell! To get into the spirit, I added, “Please show me where to stand.”

I lost my handcuffs and was thus able to assist Fayella in pushing back enough junk to create an adequate open space in which I could be suspended and whipped with the full vigor of the woman’s arm. Escape was far from my mind even though all my limbs were beautifully free. Instead I asked politely what position she wished me in.

“Feet in the air and wide apart,” Fayella said casually. “On your back. You don’t need handcuffs.”

I dared not tell her I had been punished thus before. Instead I scrambled down and thrust my feet apart as though in invitation to a man. I was told to raise up on one elbow to watch my ankles noosed, and raised aloft to hooks already hanging from the ceiling. I lay back and hoped my mistress would be kind.

It took only the first few strokes to tell me I was a lucky girl indeed. Fayella was an artist. Sure the first few strokes within the softness of my thighs hurt enough. But I had become knowledgeable in this vocation of being whipped. The stinging cuts were hard to bear and I did, indeed, struggle and weave my hips around as well as beat the floor with small, clenched fists. But I knew these blows were only half as severe as Hamid's. Or Rankin's, or even Marjory's. I could not be sure if Fayella's charity was exactly that or a desire to spread out the punishing strips for as long as a girl could stand the pain. I knew it would only spell trouble if I feigned unconsciousness.

It was not long before we were joined by members of the staff who were evidently curious as to how the new, imported girl would receive her initial acquaintance with the whip, and just how hard their mistress intended to punish this girl. They came and went but I was hurting too much now to even notice. Fayella was cutting into the tenderest part of me. When she had worked her way up one thigh and down the other, she spatted the whip squarely across my vagina to make me scream and heave and buck. Even when charity holds the whip, it is hard for a girl to keep both silent and still as she is cut and cut again.

About half way through, Fayella dropped the whip to fetch a bottle and sit beside me on the floor. Playfully she tilted the bottle to my lips and I drank greedily. Then she poured a small amount within my slit as she held it wide apart

with the other hand. I dared not interfere but said again my humble, “Thank you, Mistress,” as the fire of alcohol burned itself out within my loins.

“You have done well, child. I am pleased with you. Let us drink enough to make us happy.”

I drank as much as I could get, which wasn’t all that much. I could tell Fayella was not going to allow me to escape my pain by getting tipsy. As she sat beside my nude and terribly bound body, she told me of her house, her husband, and the ways in which I would be used. So far as Lobo was concerned, his only need was for me to jig-a-jig, but my mistress wanted something more. She told me she knew I was not a lesbian but would on occasion punish me until I agreed to perform the lesbian service long enough to satisfy her. The rest of the time she would find pleasure in giving me whippings such as now, and inflicting humiliations and binding about which she refused to talk. The time was short before she sat aside the bottle and glass and picked up not the whip but the slender cane I had come to dread. She stroked my bottom with a gentle hand before standing back and swinging the wicked cane to add fresh pain and even more vivid markings to the curves I could not protect. My hips weaved to the limits of my tethers as the flesh between my legs was once more set on fire. Without prompting I made appropriate sounds and motions as the thin and wicked instrument rose and fell as if meaning to cut my bottom to shreds.

Chapter 6

Teenage Torture

Fayella did not release me immediately, but once more sat beside my nakedness to assure me earnestly of her deepest wish to thrash me forever. But she was a practical woman who knew when it was time to stop. And that time was now, a fact with which I heartily agreed. If she had toasted my pussy with a blow torch, I doubt it would have hurt more. I was sure my tender flesh was cut and bleeding. But it was her choice of place and posture which left me weeping. She cradled my head in her lap, stroked my hair, and allowed me to sob out my defeat.

When the tears dried, she helped me up and guided me back into the cage. I sank gratefully to the floor and fell asleep without hearing the closing of the door. It was not until I woke up the following morning that I discovered the handcuffs snug upon my wrists.

There are worse things than being locked naked in a cage, and there are worse things than wearing handcuffs. My cage was none too large but not tiny enough to complain about. My needs were looked after by the same teenage girl of yesterday, who I was certain had no keys, and was thus of little help. She was, however, intensely curious, especially about the swollen skin which Fayella had punished so brutally. I was sufficiently bored to twist and turn and separate my legs to satisfy maiden interest in my condition.

The girl seemed to think I should be pleased and proud of my new discolorations, and clapped her hands in delight, a delight she seemed disappointed I did not share. I felt ashamed over wondering how I could use her to effect release.

I had deemed release from Shalima impossible, but I was not that certain about Fayella and Lobo. I stood as prisoners often do, clutching a couple of bars and gazing out into the room where I had been violated by Lobo and whipped by Fayella. I didn't relish being left alone in the cage all day and was looking hopefully at the door when it opened to admit the master of the house. He wasted no time, but waved to me cheerfully. As he approached my cage, he said, with humor, "We do a jig-a-jig. I jig-a-jig with you many times today." He paused to survey the tortured flesh within my thighs. "Fayella, she whip you. She should have whipped your ass, not the place where I go inside." But the torture of my private place did not deter him from his purpose, and he opened the cage door. I was pulled out for jig-a-jig.

It took all my courage to leave the cage. Lobo had tossed aside his garments to reveal a weapon more rampant than the day before, a weapon pointing straight at me. I don't need to say more. I approached my ravishment with shame, and endured it without comment. Lobo left me handcuffed, they did not interfere with anything he wished to do. But they kept me aware of punishments and penal-

ties and the stupidity of trying to run away. I took everything Lobo had to give and was more than filled with that weapon. The rough shoving in and out of his tool was a strange combination of pain and pleasure for me. His body pounding against my tender flesh hurt but that huge tool filling my sheath was something no girl could ignore. And it felt good in its own way. What a strange thing it is that pain and pleasure can be so mixed.

When, after giving me a number of orgasms, my master found himself spent with a weapon fully discharged, he got off me and allowed me to regain my feet. He did not lock me back inside the cage, but led me by my handcuffs to find his wife and formally deliver me into her possession for the balance of the day. About the only interest I now had in those who owned me was to hope that Fayella would not whip me for a second time. But this fear was groundless. I was welcomed with open arms, told how disgusting husbands were, and invited to share Fayella's lunch. She seemed to take it for granted that I had been well and truly dealt with sexually, and informed me she had something else in mind. She seemed so pleased I felt certain I wasn't going to like it.

My fear was supported by the shifting of my hands from front to back. Lobo seemed to enjoy the increased view of my front but took no other interest in me. I was apparently Fayella's for the afternoon. She made sure my handcuffs were properly tight. She said I would no doubt enjoy some

fresh air and sunlight, along with cheerful company. She took a firm grip on my arm and led me from the house.

Some children stood waiting, their ages from about four to fourteen. The eldest was a teenage girl standing there with a riding crop, which the others eyed in awe. She waved it as a badge of office, while Fayella explained, “They are such sweet children. She who holds the whip is called Inza. But she had been warned to use it only if you are disobedient.” Fayella gave me a grin. “But, of course, you will be a very obedient girl, won’t you?” She patted me on the wounded skin of my bottom and walked back into the house to leave me feeling wickedly exposed.

As though by mutual consent, we moved a little way out into the sand until Inza halted the march with an abrupt command. “Your name is Celie. Spread wide your legs.”

Pushing my luck, I asked politely, “What do you want me to do that for? You can look at me well enough now.”

“It is so the little boys can see your pussy cat.” She waved the riding crop. “Do it or Inza whip.”

I recognized authority. I spread my legs and was rewarded by several male children coming as close as Inza would permit. The most eager member lay between my legs to look up at my most interesting part. When the boys had inspected my pussy cat to Inza’s satisfaction, their place was taken by the girls, whose interest was far less avid and ap-

peared centered on the fact that mine was larger than theirs. Curiosity satisfied, Inza progressed my degradation one more step in the wrong direction. “You stand like that while I fix the rope,” she said. “Then we take nice walk.”

I held the disgusting pose and watched in apprehension as the group leader extracted a length of well-used cord and a pair of those spring clips used in offices to hold loose sheets of paper. I suppose there is nothing remarkable in finding such objects in such a distant place. I moaned inwardly as Inza knelt and fingered the sexual lips that were still very sore. A moment later I squealed in pain as a clip bit hard and deep on one side of my innocent labia, and squealed again as its upon my other lip, still free. It was no longer easy to clamp my thighs but I did my best while telling Inza, “They hurt too much. Take them off… Take them off!”

“Pretty lady want clips on tits?” I shook my head, clenching my teeth against the pain as the girl thrust my feet apart to thread her cord through the center of each clip, made a slip knot, and drew it tight to make me squeal again. She stood in triumph, holding aloft the tether to my pussy. She tugged it gently to make me yelp before announcing in the manner of a Sergeant Major, “Now we walk.”

I was thankful it was Inza who led me on my shameful exercise. The first few steps were murder but she informed me that she had once been punished thus herself and ignored my protests and pleas for mercy. But she was careful

not to impose too great a stress upon feminine flesh so punished. The entire group was very happy as I walked with legs as far apart as possible. I guess I got used to the pain and become mostly concerned that the girl who held the leash should not tug needlessly hard. It was a slow march indeed, and it was painful. In fact, even with all the indignities I had suffered in captivity, I was more controlled than ever before. I longed for Fayella so I might make known the full horror of the clips hard and fast where no such things should be. I had a strong suspicion that Inza, although she might pay no attention, knew what I was feeling. Without pause, and in a frantic need of hands, I tugged and twisted against the handcuffs on my wrists.

Inza skirted the cluster of buildings which was the village. No one paid much attention to this strange party. After we had circled the village a couple of times, the children had gotten bored. She then led me to where an ancient tree clawed its way out of the hard, baked earth. She passed the tether between my thighs from front to back, pulled me close against the tree, then fastened the soiled old cord where my hands could not reach. Thus I stood facing the hungry young eyes without defense. Inza had not drawn the cord tight enough to hurt any more than just the clips did, but enough to keep my bottom brushing the trunk and me from moving even an inch away. She barked something and the two oldest male children took possession of my

breasts to eat my nipples. They did about everything except bite my rosebuds off. Then they fell to a steady sucking. These activities were watched with wide-eyed interest by those whose turn was yet to come. Then Inza spoke to the boys sharply and motioned a couple of girls to take their place. The girls did not bite as much as the boys had, but they worked harder with tongue and lips to make my breasts tingle and feel so wonderful, an odd feeling when you consider my pussy was in constant pain. Inza watched with curiosity until she finally asked, “Is making you hot inside? You want I fetch Lobo?”

She was right about the hots. The smoldering fire generated on Palm Island had never really gone away, it was very much a part of me still. And with the increasing stimulation of youthful lips and tongues, I had to wonder if I was getting glassy-eyed. I told Inza not to bother about Lobo and, yes, indeed, she was making me hot and bothered, and would she please stop. I could just as well saved my breath. It was an unending rotation in which Inza herself took part to bring to bear not only a more crafty attention to my breasts, but also a gently manipulation of the clips which bit my pussy lips. Because of some strange feminine response, the soft pain stoked my fire more furiously than the mouths feeding on my breasts. Despite myself, I blossomed into an explosive orgasm in which I cried aloud and twisted furiously against the tree. The children backed away and watched in awe.

A few minutes later the mouths were back at my breasts and the agony in my pussy compelled me to keep still and lean back against the trunk to passively provide Inza and her small tribe with continuing amusement. I was forced to gasp my way through that period where a girl's pussy tells her she's had enough and wants no more, and then beyond that until I knew my forces rebuilding themselves for a repeat. I looked down wearily at the young heads busily engaged my at nipples, then looked appealingly to the girl with the riding crop. But Inza knew she was on safe ground and laughed away my pleadings for the game to stop. All I got out of that youthful authority was a sly question if I might sooner have the children whip my breasts. And then the earnest assurance the lips and tongues I now endured would continue for the rest of the afternoon, and all of them hoped I would climax at least fifteen times. Within my traitorous flesh I could feel the first stirrings of another disgraceful spasm. I kept quiet and let it happen. The children seemed to like this game.

I cannot tell how long my system might have withstood the assault upon my sexuality, but suddenly it stopped with the children scattering in all directions to leave me alone but still securely fastened by the clips. At first I paid little attention, for I was totally engrossed in a longing to escape. But finally I paused long enough to behold the reason for my childish tormentors departure. There were now military figures surrounding the tiny village, one of which was

striding my direction. And with a cry of gladness I recognized Hamid! I had never been more thankful to see anyone in all my life. Without thinking, I started towards him but was halted by the most intense pain of the whole afternoon. It sent me cowering back against the tree.

To this man who owned me, I must have seemed free of all restraints so that a frown of puzzlement took the place of his welcoming smile, and I was forced to compound my embarrassment as best I could by saying, “Master, I am fastened! I am fastened by… I mean, by… Oh, shit, my pussy’s clamped!”

I need not have blushed or felt shame. My master was instantly on his knees before my nakedness. He laughed at what he saw, a laughter I did not share. His hand went towards me and suddenly I was fighting back a scream as the jaws of the clamp opened. The momentary pain was worse than the steady ache they had been. I fell against the tree trunk. Now the cuff from my right wrist was set free so I could joyously throw my arms around my rescuer’s neck to be kissed and kissed again while I whispered vows of thankfulness and eternal obedience. Our greeting took quite a little time, and at the end of it my right wrists was once more captured by the handcuff, but this time with my hands in front.

I was guided to the Rolls Royce. Anxiously I tried to babble out the story of my kidnapping and those who had

snatched me from Shalima, but Hamid put a finger to my lips. “We know who is responsible, dear girl. And justice will be meted out. Come, let’s go to the house where you were held prisoner.”

The front door of Lobo’s house burst open to reveal Fayella and her husband in the grip of soldiers who stilled the couples struggles with handcuffs against which no prisoner prevails. I was now witness to a horror I’ll remember all my life.

The uniformed men who were in charge of Fayella walked her toward the waiting van and, despite her strength and anger, thrust her within and closed the door. I could imagine her frustration for I felt certain she had never experienced restraint in all her life. But what happened next drove Fayella from my mind. Lobo had never ceased to fight. He was a powerful man and in a surge of strength broke free and ran with surprising speed out across the sand. Casually and without haste, a waiting soldier sighted his rifle carefully and pulled the trigger. Lobo threw his arms up and fell face down upon the sand. One of the men who had held him retrieved the handcuffs. To make double certain, he also administered the coup de grace to leave me looking in horror at the lifeless hulk of a man who only that morning had impaled my sheath to perform the jig-a-jig, which for him was a simple pleasure not to be denied. I shuttered and tried to shut out the vision.

Hamid made no further comment on what we had just witnessed, merely turning to me to shrug. It left me scared but in a few miles the thrill of rescue returned in full force to leave me longing for Emily Parsons and Shalima. If there was a cloud in the sunshine it was because of the handcuffs on my wrists. Evidently, in Hamid's book, I was still not to be trusted. A prisoner to be treated with love, but still a prisoner.

Perhaps I was born and raised in a different culture because I simply could not get rid of the vision of a man dying. Yet those around me seemed unaffected by it. Perhaps it was a daily occurrence in this land of sand dunes. Considering Lobo had raped me many times in our brief acquaintance, I should have felt he got his just dessert. Yet was the price he paid with the little pleasure he gained? I had no feeling he deserved to die.

"What are you going to do with Fayella?" I asked suddenly.

"She will be properly dealt with, Celie. For the time being I will not discuss Fayella."

"Are you going to kill her?"

Hamid's lips curled in amusement. "No, she will not be killed." The same amusement now colored his voice. "Do you wish to disobey me with more questions?"

I had forgotten my status. I was a girl who had stood on the slave block and purchased. I was Hamid's property and he

owned me utterly. If he wished to punish me cruelly, that was his right. The fact that we had each felt a strange affection for each other altered nothing. I was his to command. I had best watch my tongue.

Timidly I offered, “Fayella was kind to me, but I won’t speak of her again, if that is your wish.”

“Tell me, beloved girl, do you still dream of Palm Island and the woman called Marjory?”

Hamid had changed the subject with a vengeance to leave me once more trying to gather my wits. He had not asked the question ideally, somewhere there was an intent.

My words were cautious, “Of course I dream about Marjory’s island. It’s a beautiful place with a beautiful house and a beautiful woman whose punishments weren’t all that hard to take.” I stole a sideways glance at Hamid. “Why do you ask?”

“What you and Rankin have told me of the place and the woman who owns it intrigues me.” Hamid’s tone was thoughtful. “That island is a remarkable concept, but it should be owned by a man, not a woman. Certainly no woman who is little more than a girl. I take it you’d like to see your Marjory again?”

“Yes, I would. I became fond of her.”

“Suppose you and I visit Palm Island? We could use my personal jet. It’s a long journey but might be worth it.”

“But, Hamid, why? I don’t understand.”

“You know something about men, Celie. You know of the strange desires rich men indulge.” Once more I saw his amused eyes. “I find myself with a selfish compulsion to strip this Marjory naked, tie her in some demeaning pose, and then give her the whipping of her life. I’m sure you would wish to be present.”

Hamid said it so easily, as though speaking of something we would do when we got back to Shalima. I suspected he was testing my loyalty, so I held up my handcuffed wrists and made my voice as demure as I could, “I am your property, Hamid, I must obey. My will is not mine but yours.” This time my master laughed outright to my confusion.

“You said that prettily, dear child.” He patted my bare knee. “But we are still a world apart. Perhaps it is you I should whip when we get back to Shalima.”

Suddenly my heart was thudding painfully in this sudden reminder of how I was at the mercy of Hamid’s caprice. In this ancient land, a whip was never far from a man’s hand. Hamid had shown me both love and cruelty and I realized I could be the subject of both at anytime. I had to understand that for a woman like Marjory and a man such as Hamid the simple pleasure of watching me struggle and

cry out in pain was justification enough. True, I might learn to charm my master out of such inflictions upon my skin. And it would be best for me to learn whatever turned him on. I sighed. It was a task I did not relish.

On our return to Shalima, I was placed in the care of one of the women I thought of privately as “wardress.” My master’s brief instruction to this woman once more covered me with shame. “You will chain Celie in the largest of the cages. But first, since she has been possessed by another man, you will cleanse her. Very well.” Hamid kissed me and was gone. The wardress grasp my bare arm and led me to a bathroom and a cleansing of my body.

The cage was nowhere near as bad as I had feared. One side of it was open to the sunlight and the courtyard below. It was half as big as the room it occupied. Its bars were heavy and gilded as with gold. The shackles now locked on wrist and ankle matched the tone. Another chain connected my wrists and ankles to a ring in the wall just above my knees, an arrangement which prevented me from raising questing fingers above my navel. The wardress explained, “This chain, it keep you safe. You sit down and draw up your feet so then you reach your lips to feed yourself and do your hair. You very lucky girl.”

Alone, I took stock of my new prison, standing chained and helpless to tug in resentment against the restriction of my

freedom. In any case it was useless, and I forced myself to relax. I was suitably confined for a slave-girl.

The cage was luxury and perhaps a trifle tongue in cheek. There were large cushions everywhere and the floor was covered by a rug I was sure cost a fortune. Exploring the cage, I found a huge chest which held other restraints and instruments of punishment. I closed it quickly. Finally I returned to the bars, clutching one in each hand and gazed down at the beauty of the courtyard. I longed for Hamid. I longed for anyone who would talk to me. I wondered if I could persuade my master to allow Fayella in my cage. In frustration I simply sat on a cushion and wept.

Bitterly I longed for freedom and inconsistently longed for Hamid. But I wanted him out beyond the bars and the walls of Shalima an improbable fantasy I knew was not to happen.

I fingered my chains and sighed a lot. Despite my warmth for Hamid, I had to ask if a man who truly loved a girl would chain her as I was shackled. Sure, it might be no more than a tongue in cheek reminder to keep me in my place, but, on the other hand, it made freedom a distant possibility. I asked myself if this infatuation for a man who actually owned me by right of purchase was not simply a girlish impulse. Hamid was handsome. He was rich and powerful. And even in this pleasant imprisonment behind golden bars, my internal heat called out for his attention.

Shamed, I thrust the thought from my mind to dwell on the only thing that really mattered—freedom. Some way I must find my way back to the natural world of girls and pick up a normal life away from chains and cages and whips. I seemed silly to dream of liberty but I was thus engaged when Miss Emily Parsons entered the outer room.

"Gosh, how on earth has that man got you fastened now?" She laughed at the sight of the chains I was forced to wear. "You mustn't take all that metal so seriously. I suspect your Lord and Master is having fun with you. But, for goodness sake, don't tell him I said so." Miss Parsons positioned herself against the bars of my cage. "I've heard all about your kidnapping and the rest. So don't let's talk about it, I don't want to hear. Are you all right, Celie?"

Producing a key without waiting for reply, she enhanced my moral by opening the door of my cage. I was soon enveloped in two maternal arms and hugged reassuringly. She kissed me. I longed to throw my arms about her but standing upright this was not possible. Once more Emily laughed at my discomfort. "Don't worry about not being able to do the usual things," she told me cheerfully. "I'm accustomed to what we can politely refer to as 'restraints.' You might be interested to know that my school has gained a young woman by the name of Inza. At the moment the poor child is chained the same as yourself but in far less pleasant surroundings. I expect Hamid will have her whipped before I get to take her tomorrow. Really, the

manners and habits of this place are truly appalling." She snorted in disapproval. "I suppose someone has told you of the possibility Hamid may have you whipped as well? It's his way of telling you not to get ideas above your station."

Have it not been for Emily's acceptance of the status quo, I would probably have produced a flood of tears. But the school mistress had a gift for making the impossible and outrageous appear normal and expected. I had no reason to hold affection for Inza, who probably deserved what she was going to get. My tears, had I shed them, would have been solely in grief over the marking of my own skin. Unhappily I looked at the open door to ask, "Miss Parsons, I have to escape. I absolutely must escape. Can you help me?"

"It seems to me we've dealt with this subject before," she said primly. "If I could set you free, I would. But I have no desire to taste the lash myself because of some nonsense. And I have not been here long enough for Hamid to really trust me. For instance, the key by which I opened the door was given to me. But I do not have the key to those chains you are wearing. I'm truly sorry, dear girl, but any kind of freedom or privilege in Shalima is strictly limited. Even supposing you got beyond the walls, I don't suppose you'd be anxious to walk out into the desert in your present condition. Like I said, being a female in the country has its disadvantages."

We kissed and I sank to the floor and thus could use my arms against the music of the links. Miss Parsons, herself, knelt to make possible the things we could not do while standing. But our efforts ended in wry laughter at the victory of Hamid's chains. There really wasn't much worthwhile I could do and after a while I stopped trying. The two of us sat on a cushion to discuss my fate.

"One of the reasons you've been chained inside this cage, Celie, is because you have here a fine view of the patio, the courtyard, and some of the garden. Tomorrow you'll be able to witness the punishment of the two women who kidnapped you and took you from Shalima. I suspect the woman called Fayella will also have to endure a bad time before she is sold into slavery. I am not sure what's going to be done to any of them, but I thought I would warn you."

"And I get whipped, too?"

"It's a possibility, too, dear. One can never tell about these silly men."

Once more I fought back tears and to bridge an awkward gap told Miss Parsons of my master's casual suggestion of taking me to Palm Island to witness the whipping of a woman he had never seen, and who certainly had never done him harm. "If you believe Hamid may do this," I suggested, "might there not be opportunities in such a journey? For me to escape, I mean?"

Emily shrugged. “Who knows! Certainly your chances would be better than being chained in this cage. But I don’t think Hamid will ever give you such a chance. He’ll always have you chained or bound in some way so escape is impossible.” She paused a moment before added, “A thought does strike me that perhaps if this Marjory is as beautiful as you say, and if her skin accepts Hamid’s strips well, his infatuation may transfer itself from you to her, and he’ll leave you on Palm Island and bring her here to take your place. It’s just a notion, but with foolish men anything is possible.”

I looked at her notion and found it far less a fantasy than I would have wished. It was something that could happen. But, if it actually became reality, I could only see myself exchanging one master for another. It would not be long before Rankin picked me up again. Of the two men, I unquestioningly prefer Hamid. His chains and his cage were better than Rankin’s pleasure yacht with women forced into being whores.

“I feel affection for Hamid,” I said, “nothing he does to me changes this. Am I being only a silly girl who needs her bottom spanked or a jet of cold water to cool my heat?”

“Stop worrying about such feelings, you’re a perfectly normal woman with perfectly normal reactions. You’re doing fine. If you can cozen Hamid to fall in love with you, I think you should. Right now it’s your closest path to freedom.”

“You think if he came to love me, he would not keep me chained?”

“How would I know, child! It is something you’re certainly more likely to find out than I. When my contract expires, I will not renew it and will return to England and sanity.” Emily Parsons sighed. “I had best go now. Is there anything you would like me to have the servants bring you? I expect you could ask for anything and get it. Except your freedom.”

I watched Miss Parsons departure, sharing her grin as she locked the door of my cage and pocketed the key. When she had gone, I chose a cushion and quietly sat until the wardress thrust in a frightened and naked Inza. I suspected Hamid was having fun.

The wrists of the poor child were corded tight behind her back. Other cords clamped her arms elbow to elbow to bind them cruelly. The cord dug into her flesh in an obviously painful manner. She looked at me uncertainly, no doubt remembering our previous encounter. Shakily she said, tears in every word, “Missy, please to tell, am I to be punished.” She gazed wide-eyed as though I had the power to set her free.

“I’d say you’re being punished right now, Inza,” I suggested. “Come and sit down so we can talk.”

“You are not angry because of the things I had the children do?”

“I am not angry. It is over and done with. I would spare you the punishment I expect you’ll soon receive. But I have no power. Our Master will punish you as he sees fit. Come close so we can share our warmth.”

Inza’s steps were hesitant. I expect she saw me as the sultan’s favorite, even in my chains. As she drew close, she bemoaned the same thing I would have complained about myself. “Please, Missy, the ropes on my arms hurt so bad and there is nothing I can do with them. Please to untie me.”

“I clinked my chains as thought to express a similar impotency. “I am not allowed to untie you, Inza,” I said. “I am a prisoner the same as you. And if our Master finds you in this cage with your limbs free and the ropes on the floor, we will both be punished terribly. I’m sorry but that’s the way of it.”

Inza nodded in complete understanding. She had fastened me to the tree and punished me in her own fashion. To her it was understandable that I should find pleasure in her suffering and would give no aid.

“Come and sit down and don’t think about the pain.”

“I am going to be whipped.” It was not a question but a statement.

The poor child understood the way of this country much better than I did. With a shrug she dismissed her painfully bound arms, accepting that I would not or could not untie them. But now, in the loneliness of bound captivity, Inza sat beside me to slyly thrust her bare skin against mine. We were both totally naked in a sisterhood of shame.

I should have been angry at Inza for what she had done to me but could only feel pity for the poor child who probably faced a terrible punishment such as she had never experienced in her young life. I longed to free her limbs of the biting ropes but instead snuggled close against the frightened girl. Strangely enough, the two of us slept.

In the morning, when the wardress brought my food, she took Inza away to a fate I could not foresee. I learned from the servant that Hamid was absent on business. She also told me briefly that punishments would be made that day and if I wished to watch, I could do so through the bars at the far side of the cage. When I had finished a small breakfast, I clanked my chained way to where I could see the garden down below and its patio and wall. With a gasp of disgust I realized I was already late.

The two women who had kidnapped me for Fayella and Lobo were naked and suspended upside down, their hands tied behind their back, and their feet so far apart that they seemed to be mostly pussy. A pair of young female servants were busily and happily engaged in whipping the two ex-

posed clefts. Each blow evoked jerkings and thrashing of the naked bodies, giving testimony to the high degree of pain inflicted by the leather whips. But the girls could do nothing to protect their tenderest parts from the two teenagers who were obviously enjoying themselves. The two victims could neither scream nor complain—they both were gagged most cruelly with very tight tape wrapped around their heads. From the line of their jaws, I guessed that something been stuffed into their mouths before the tape was wrapped around.

I had not long to wait to behold Inza's punishment. The girl had been completely freed of ropes but was firmly in the grip of one of my jailers, who lost no time in padlocking a leather belt far too tight to constrict the teenage waist in a cruel grip which emphasized hips and rib cage. With an unnaturally slender waist, the girl was led to the awaiting wall and the grim hook. The hook was six feet above the ground. It was all very simple, the jailer lifted Inza and with practiced motions anchored the poor girl against the wall by hooking a ring at the back of her belt. Quiet suddenly the poor girl's weight was totally on the hook and her belt. A few words were exchanged and, in response, Inza's arms were spread wide as were her feet. The girl was in no way bound, but to prevent herself from turning upside down, must exert a constant pressure with her hands and feet against the stone. The jailer backed away, satisfied with her work and went to watch the whipping of female

loins, leaving Inza shocked and wildly clutching at nothing. Around her middle the leather belt cut in cruelly.

I should not have watched but was held by a terrible fascination. The scene before my cage was so horrible as to leave me wondering if it could happen to me. I thought, that Hamid and I had something going between us. But this was Shalima in a strange land I did not even know the name of. And I had to please my master for it would be very easy for him to consign me to a fate not unlike that of the unfortunate girls below. Or he could see my naked body to some other Arab where I might be treated much worse. Hamid could, after all, purchase as many girls as he desired. And the sultan's favorite is often a difficult place to hold on to. I promised myself to please my master.

After a while the two teenage girls ceased to whip the frightfully discolored crotches at which they had been cutting steadily with leather thongs. The unfortunate females hanging upside had ceased their efforts at screaming and were moaning and crying into their gags. Inza remained suspended against the wall with arms and legs spread wide to keep herself from turning over.

Chapter 7

The Pains of Love

My horrible fascination was terminated by my jailer opening the door of my prison. Without delay she unlocked the chains, allowing them to fall to the rug, and making me totally free. I followed her as I was told to in complete obedience to the gorgeous bathroom which she said could be all mine for as long as I desired. Following her down the passage, I had to wonder if the contrast between my present freedom and the way I had been shackled for so long meant anything. But I had no intent of trying to run away. Such foolishness would be wasted and probably dangerous. But this current freedom also told me that the chains I had been wearing were only so much window dressing.

At midday my master returned. If I had been his wife, I would have had no cause for suspicion of him exhausting his energies elsewhere. We made love together in his bed with an ardor and vigor which went on and on. And which I hoped would never end. When we lay together, exhausted in the aftermath, Hamid mused, “You witnessed the justice dispensed in the garden this morning. It continued long after you had ceased to watch. I now possess two women and a girl so properly repentant they are not likely to try their tricks again.” Hamid paused thoughtfully. “There remains a woman still to receive her punishment. I will let you name it. What would you wish done with Fayella?”

“Nothing. She lost her husband, that’s punishment enough.”

“Nothing?” Hamid looked at me in wry amusement. “That is not the way of Shalima. Try again.”

I knew Hamid was enjoying my distaste for the subject. But I also guessed that if I held out long enough, I might end up sharing whatever Fayella had to endure. And I knew perfectly well that by the standards of this land, Fayella had earned herself a penalty.

“You could have her whipped,” I agreed without enthusiasm. “But why not make her one of your servants? I would think that a would be a bitter punishment indeed.”

“I have no need of a servant I cannot trust. I will have her well whipped and then sold to a dealer. If you wish to talk to her, she is below in a dungeon, heavily chained and very sorry for what she did.”

I wanted to say no thanks, but I am female and wanted to see her, so instead I said, “Yes, Master. Thank you.”

He told me laughingly to go and make my visit after I had bathed. He then clicked the handcuffs back on my wrists and playfully swatted my bottom as I left the bedroom.

Later I asked directions from a servant and worked my way down to the gloomy dungeon where Fayella awaited her fate.

My guide was not the least bit curious, a chained and naked woman meant little to her. Fayella cried out in gladness at sight of me, and, forgetting the limitations her chains imposed, stumbled in my direction only to be snubbed and tripped by the heavy links attached to her on every possible place. The crudest was an iron collar tight around her neck. The weight of its chain was such that had to hold it in her hand. I hurried forward to clutch her in my arms and found myself with as much metal as girl. I was obliged to rearrange her iron and steel restraints as best I could and we laughed together over my own handcuffed condition.

“What is my punishment to be?” she asked anxiously. I pretended I did not know. I could not be sure if she would regard the whipping of her flesh and her sale to a slave dealer as moderate or severe. Looking at her nakedness so weighed down with irons made me long to cry and I made a resolve to plead on Fayella’s behalf.

“I must be terribly punished,” she mourned as we clutched. “You are Hamid’s favorite so he will spare me nothing. When will his justice be done to me?”

It was a strange situation which would have lent itself to an artist. Two naked women, one simply handcuffed, one held from neck to ankles by heavy chains. What a painting it would have made.

My heart reached out to this poor woman. Enslavement would be hard on her because she would go to it most wickedly marked by Hamid's whip. I had never felt more helpless to offer aid.

I told her she was already forgiven for any sin she might have committed against me. I think this might have cheered her up but she vowed her conviction that she would be terribly flogged and her flesh branded with an inscription proclaiming her a whore. She would then be even more cruelly chained and left in the rat-hole of a dungeon the rest of her life. Fayella's vision of her own punishment was so terrible that I broke down and told her the truth. It would not be nice but certainly less than her vision. I think it eased her misery and when I went away it was with the feeling I had done some good. I little guessed the shock awaiting Hamid and myself.

Hamid listened tolerantly to my pleas and request that Fayella be forgiven the whip before she was sold. To this suggestion he made his customary sardonic retort that if I wished to bear part of her punishment, her pains would be thus reduced. But I did not wish to take him up on this bit of humor and we retired to one of the lovely patios in the courtyard for our drink before dinner. It was there it happened.

Hamid and I heard a noise but thought little of it at first. It was not until uninvited guests intruded. We both jumped

to our feet and I gaspingly beheld Marjory! And with her a formidable female who I instantly thought of as “The Dragon.” The servants fell back in awe while the visitors strode forcefully to where we stood. Unconcerned and undaunted by Hamid’s eagle eye, Marjory introduced her companion as Mrs. Reba Rigby from the United States Consulate. She added sweetly that they had come to take Celie Collins home.

Marjory and I were vibrating signals in wave after wave of remembered joy. But her concern and mine was primarily elsewhere. Beneath the disapproving gaze of the Dragon, my nakedness wilted to leave me shamed and wanting enough hands to cover portions of myself from disapproving eyes. And I wished the hands I had were not joined in steel.

Our party was then joined by a pompous little man in a business suit, who was introduced as J.P. Jeffers, another member of the consulate staff, apparently anxious to take Miss Celie Collins back where she belonged.

Unless he called in his private army, Hamid was outnumbered.

My master impressively acknowledged introductions and suavely suggested the newcomers sit down and enjoy a cocktail. He clapped his hands and cushions and drinks appeared. It was only a few seconds before all were comfortably sitting with glasses in hand. But I saw quite well that

their eyes still held firm intent. The Dragon was firing the first volley by offering that she would feel more comfortable if Miss Celie Collins wore some clothes.

“Miss Collins is my guest. She dresses or undresses as she pleases.” Hamid was still very much master in his own house.

“And the handcuffs? Must I assume that all your guests were them?” The dragon’s tone was icy.

“It is an understanding between Miss Collins and myself. It need not concern you.”

J.P. Jeffers uttered a disapproving cough, eyeing my nakedness with complete approval while forcefully stating the obvious, “Miss Collins handcuffed condition reinforces our belief that you are holding her prisoner.”

“Miss Collins and I have a complete understanding.” Hamid clapped his hands once more. “I am sure you will all enjoy a refill.”

With her fresh drink, the dragon fixed me with her gaze. “You are a prisoner here, aren’t you, Miss Collins?”

It was the question I dreaded. I would cheerfully lie to the dragon and her male friend but Marjory would detect a lie. I was between a rock and a hard place. I gazed appealingly at Hamid for help. He gave it in a measure to make me gasp. “Miss Collins and I are going to be married.”

The two consular people gazed at each other in a manner to indicate they just considered this one more obstacle. “May we presume, Sir, that you always keep your brides-to-be stark naked and handcuffed?”

“It is a small pleasantry between the two of us. None of your business.”

“And how do you explain away the whip marks so clearly visible on the poor girl’s skin?”

That was a bad one. The whip marks Lobo and Fayella had placed upon my flesh were still visible. “It’s a long story,” I said quickly. “I received this elsewhere than at Shalima.” My explanation was waved away by the dragon. But it was Marjory who asked the sixty-four dollar question, “You will come home with us, won’t you, darling? At least for a visit?”

“Of course I will.” I gave Hamid my sweetest smile. “You can spare me for a visit, can’t you, darling?”

I have never used that term of endearment on Hamid before. But he took it bravely and went one better. “I’m supposing you came here by plane, Miss Magnus? May I offer my personal jet to take both you and Miss Collins to Palm Island? That is the place you call home, is it not?”

My heart skipped a beat. Hamid was keeping ahead of a difficult situation with skill. I could image he wanted no trouble with the US Consulate, but I was also sure that if

Marjory and I left on his private plane, we would both soon be prisoners as I was now. Hamid was still pretty much an unknown quantity. And as much as I had fallen in love with him, I was constantly aware of the darker side of his temperament. I remembered, too, his ambition to whip Marjory until she screamed. If Miss Rigby hadn't been such a dragon and Mr. Jeffers somewhat less pompous, I might have gone with them to take me away and to make sure that Marjory and I returned on a commercial flight.

The dragon came to my rescue. "Miss Magnus and Miss Collins will discuss their plans when they are safely back in our consulate. It is kind of you to offer but that would be a long flight and expensive. Perhaps if you would be kind enough to provide Miss Collins with clothes and remove those handcuffs, we will be on our way."

Hamid shrugged. I knew he was displeased and I was quite sure his mind was busy with thoughts of Marjory in naked suspension while he worked her body over with a whip. For all I know, he might be including me in those thoughts. But he simply smiled in agreement and clapped his hands. "Let us drink a toast to the success of this mission," he said without a trace of sarcasm. He nodded at the servant and added, "I am quite certain all of us understand the situation and each other. It will be a pleasant change for Miss Collins to be with you at the Consulate."

I should have known my master would not give up that easily. I felt certain he was mentally consigning the dragon to a lingering demise over hot coals. But with all of us now holding another tall, cool drink, I could find no flaw in Hamid's acceptance of the inevitable. I was a bit miffed over being so easily returned to freedom. All of us raised our glasses and drank. And it was not until I beheld Mr. Jeffers slump to the patio tile and found the dragon becoming blurry that I realized we had all been drugged. Hamid was going to have the last word after all.

Except for the drone of the jet, everything was normal. I was in my customary nakedness with handcuffs clasping my wrists, this time behind my back. The interior of Hamid's costly planewas furnished in the manner of a lounge. In an armchair opposite mine, I beheld Marjory blinking slowly back to life. I was surprised to find that she wore the same clothing as at the interview at Shalima. She was not handcuffed nor bound. Hamid was unconcernedly looking over papers at a desk when Marjory and I first moved. He came instantly to attention and the clapping of his hands produced the usual magic, in this case two cups of steaming coffee. Hamid held mine to my willing lips as he explained the change in plans. At Marjory's insistence, he put down my coffee cup and released my hands, leaning down to plant a kiss upon my forehead.

"I thought it best," his said simply. "Our visitors from the Consulate received a different potion from that of your two

girls. They'll be a bit bewildered for a day or two, and won't be too sure of what happened. I don't suppose either of you girls are the least bit surprised?"

I was not surprised. Nothing about Hamid surprised me anymore. "Hamid, darling," I said sweetly, "you handled the whole thing beautifully. I suppose we're on our way to Palm Island, as you promised. It's a wonderful place and you'll enjoy being Marjory's guest."

Marjory asked for another cup of coffee and said that she would be pleased if Hamid chose to honor her island with a prolonged visit. I knew she was being cautious. While she quietly sipped and watched, Hamid did something that told her more than words. Taking my hand, he raised me to my feet, turned me around and crossed my wrists in a manner all too familiar. I made myself stand limp in obedience as the cord bit and twisted and tugged and was finally knotted with a tight viciousness bespeaking helplessness and my return to the status of a pretty prisoner for Hamid's pleasure. By this time I knew what pleased him most so twisted and tugged and weaved my shoulders becomingly as I said my submissive little, "Thank you, Master." He turned me around and kissed my willing lips as hard as he had bound my wrists. At that moment I was a strangely happy girl.

"I prefer the dear girl safely restrained," Hamid said to Marjory, who had reviewed the whole proceeding with a slight frown. "Celie is a perfect subject for a length of rope.

Behold how prettily she struggles while knowing she cannot free herself."

Marjory made a noncommittal sound and finished her coffee at which point Hamid returned to his seat while I remained standing. I realized I was gazing upon two opposing forces, each one powerful in their own way. I knew it unlikely that Marjory possessed more money than the man who had purchased me on the slave block. But, at the same time, her wealth and influence was something for Hamid to reckon with. She was not a pretty slave-girl to be stripped and whipped.

"If it pleases Celie to have you tie her up, I suppose I should not complain. She came to me naked and handcuffed. On Palm Island I held her captive because, as you have just said, she is perfectly designed for restraints. Celie was completely mine—I hope you do not contest my ownership."

I ceased struggling and stood tense, a bound and naked girl who's flesh was up for grabs. I wished this confrontation had ever happened. We were in Hamid's plane over goodness knows what ocean. What came next was no surprise to me but I knew it had to shock my mistress half out of her skin. Hamid's voice was calm. "We don't need to call a spade a spade, Miss Magnus. You and Celie and I understand each other." He laughed. "Quite possibly you understand me more than I would wish. But, anyway, Marjory Magnus, the request I am about to make will answer every

question you might wish to ask. Please be kind enough to uncover your left breast."

I saw my mistress wince, but she was still the woman who lay claim to me and who owned Palm Island. In a tone of make-believe boredom, she replied, "Could we change the subject?"

"I asked you a question."

"I am assuming it was a joke in very poor taste. Why not tell me something of the kingdom you own?"

Marjory was magnificent. In a tone of quiet distaste, she looked Hamid in the eye, "If you are thinking of reducing me to the status of a dancing girl, you had best think again. I was not born to expose my nakedness to any man, or to wear his chains. Forget me, and let's have some pleasant conversation."

"Have you ever been whipped, Miss Magnus?" My mistress sighed and my heart bled for her.

"You are being needless offensive," she complained. "My breasts are my own property. I have never in my life bared them for any man."

"You will do so now." My mistress made no motion to obey. Instead, she spoke charmingly of Shalima, the American Consulate, and the current price of oil. She spoke of Palm Island and the estate the family owned in England. Hamid

listened, I believe genuinely interested by his victim's poise. But when the poor girl paused for breath, he repeated, "Uncover your tits, Miss Magnus."

Marjory sneered. "I notice you've advanced to wanting both?"

"That's correct. In the matter of undressing you, we have to go. But first I wish to enjoy the delights of your twin mounds. Between your formal attire and the breasts you are about to bare for my inspection, it's a piquant situation, don't you agree?"

"I am in your plane and subject with your mercy. Why don't we dispense with these polite thrusts and parries, and be honest about your intentions. I am still willing to believe you are a gentleman."

I found the heat rising in my loins as I realized what must now happen. I had no opportunity to talk to my mistress to warn her of Hamid's desires. And, in any case, it would have done no good since we had been drugged. For me it made no change, I was Hamid's slave-girl and the bit of cord I had been fighting on my wrists represented no change. Ever since the auction he had been able to do whatever he pleased with me. But for Marjory this was a whole new scene and I listened breathlessly.

Hamid was, in a sense, playing a role in which he had cast himself. Still outrageously polite, he inquired, "Perhaps a

double scotch or a brandy might make this moment easier to bear?"

"You're determined to shame me. I don't understand why."

Hamid shrugged. "I am simply a man who believes in the subjection of women. Women are made to obey and to give her owner pleasure. Look at darling Celie, she is the ideal prototype."

Marjory Magnus sniffed. "I expect darling Celie needs a good whipping. She's actually enjoying having her hands tied behind her. If you care to leave us alone together, and loan me a whip… "

"We are not talking about Celie, Miss Magnus, we are talking about you. Celie's price is beyond rubies. But I fear you have far to go to merit male approval. As I said, I wish you to bare your breasts, both of them. Do so now!"

"And if I refuse?"

"I have only to clap my hands to have servants come and strip you naked. Is that what you prefer? I can understand you might find it preferable."

With a gesture of impatience, Marjory reached for the fastenings of her dress and a moment later her glorious breasts were revealed in all their glory. Even Hamid gasped in their beauty. His thank you was very quiet. I stood in the humility of helplessness while Hamid gazed his fill. Mar-

jory hid nothing of her twin orbs but in the end impatiently demanded, “Isn’t that enough? Don’t tell me you have a childish wish to fondling them?”

“I have the wish, dear lady, but as you said, I am a gentleman. What I next require of you is a full view of the rest of you. Please stand up and remove the remainder of your clothing. We understand each other, don’t act coy.”

I felt my darling’s agony as she slowly stood. Taking her time she slithered her panties down to where she could step out of them and thus be free to toss them into Hamid’s lap. “I believe you want to sniff these, don’t you? In order to excite yourself. Be my guest.” Without word she slipped off the skirt to reveal the feminine treasure of her lovely body. I longed to do or say something desperate but there was nothing I could do.

Marjory’s contempt had struck. I felt certain my master had added strips beyond his original intent, but he wasted no time and proceeded to enjoy the humiliation of this woman. She turned this way and that to provide Hamid his full satisfaction. He fingered nothing but I knew his eyes burned holes in Marjory’s loins and I would not have been surprised to behold her pubic hair go up in smoke.

Frostily, she said, “You have the indecent curiosity of puberty. I would have thought you would have exhausted it on poor Celie. May I now put my skirt back on?”

Hamid's sigh told me he was a quite happy man. "You are quite delightful," he conceded. "And I can only hope you understand how greatly your private and most intimate possessions are enhanced by your reluctance to show them."

Marjory was almost panting. "You should write a novel," she said acidly, "it would undoubtedly be a bestseller. But then you don't need the money, do you?"

"I would advise you to avoid sarcasms," he offered politely.

This was getting near the bottom line. She was nude but there are worse things than being nude. Marjory frowned at Hamid but made no move to cover her private parts with her hands. Instead she put them on her hips.

Poor Marjory! She was not used to this kind of treatment. I knew Hamid was enjoying this show very much. Once more there was a breathless silence until Marjory said, in a voice heavy in disgust, "I suppose now you want me on my back on the floor?"

"You do not know me well," Hamid rejoined. "There is something else I must do to you before entering the into that area of last delight. In any case, I expect I would enjoy myself more with Celie. I doubt your ability to match her artistry. Do you notice the rings fastened above your head?"

I looked up and there they were, the wicked rings with which I was all too familiar, the rings meant to hold a girl's hands above her head and make her totally available. Marjory looked, too, and both of us were aware of Hamid's smile. I supposed he had intended to wait for Palm Island and then to whip its owner in the midst of all her possessions. Quite evidently the plan was changed and Hamid's voice took us one step further into his mastery, "Give me your hands, Marjory, I am sure you know what comes next."

"You intend to whip me?"

"Of course I do. Let it comfort you that I will never have whipped a more beautiful subject."

"And your men wait outside the door?"

"Of course. It would be much more pleasant if you simply yield."

Marjory looked at me and shrugged hopelessly, then extended her hands for whatever Hamid chose to do.

My master's choice was, as always, neat and tidy. A leather band snapped tightly around each wrist, and from the band a ring. It was but the matter of moment to rise bare feminine arms to snap the joining links to leave poor, darling Marjory standing with arms held high and out to either side in the total exposure I knew too well. Marjory knew it, too, and must have felt some sort of poetic justice

in suffering the raw nakedness she had so often imposed upon her other slave-girls and I. She looked up at her pinioned hands and made the futile motions that girls do to assure themselves that they are helpless. Then she said to the man who owned us both, “I’m sure this has to be a most satisfying moment to us both.”

Hamid wasted no words. His hands became busy in a tracing of her curves, lingering lovingly over her large breasts and taut nipples. Marjory got a good going over, and when her lord and master stood back to admire her helplessness she was panting. She spoke no word, there was nothing to say. What would happen to her now would be done in spite of any words. I held my breath and I’m sure Marjory held hers, too, as Hamid produced a wicked whip with a single thong which I recognized as imparting agony with every stroke. He dangled it in front of her gaze. “I am sure you approve, Miss Magnus? You understand such matter, no?”

None of us said a word. By some strange magic the whipping of my adored mistress had become a part of the plane, my master, and our visit to Palm Island. Completely detached and completely helpless, I realized Hamid could achieve his heart’s desire without ever landing the plane on Palm Island. He had Marjory totally at his mercy and was cheerfully fingering those parts of her which held male interest. And in his other hand he had the cruel thong by which he would bring her to submission. I could not imagine my mistress showing submission to anyone, but

Hamid had a magic all his own. I simply waited and watched, no longer tugging at bound hands. I knew now I belonged to Hamid, and that was the end of it as far as I was concerned.

The first slash across her back evoked a horrified gasp of anguish beyond belief. But Marjory did not scream, she simply pressed one cheek against a bare arm and gasped in disbelief at such an intensity of pain. Hamid's voice was mocking, "You enjoyed that, Miss Magnus?"

"Please… It is too awful, I cannot bear it. I will say yes to anything you wish."

"I possess everything I wish, dear lady. I have Celie, I have you. I am like the Victorian villain who wishes to bring the haughty lady low. We still have far to go."

Marjory said nothing. What else was there for her to say other than to plead for mercy? And this she would not do. I watched the second and third strokes of the leather thong bite hard to leave their scarlet imprint on bottom cheeks and ivory back. I longed to cry aloud for Hamid to show mercy and to whip me instead of the loveliness of my mistress. But all of us were too deeply immersed in what was taking place to speak. Marjory's heaving gasps and moans of shock were the only sounds as Hamid once more drew back his arm.

When the leather had sung its wicked song six times, Hamid paused to extract from my tightly strapped mistress the ultimate in mockery. “You bear this well,” he said in genuine tribute. “You have not yet screamed. Am I correct in assuming you find this punishment double painful because of your awareness of innocence? I am whipping you simply for my own pleasure and to make real a fantasy which took root some time ago.”

Marjory stopped her agonized motions long enough to stare her tormentor in the eye. “There’s nothing to say, is there?” she retorted in a small, choked voice. “We have already agreed you are not a gentleman. Every time you lash my skin, you come closer to being a beast.”

My master sighed and said, “I had hoped for a nice conversation. Both of us might have benefited from your reactions to this undeserved punishment.”

“Why don’t you shut up! You’re just a bastard who likes to whip naked girls. It’s just that simple. You can’t ennoble it by analysis.” Marjory allowed her head to sink forward once more as if dismissing Hamid. And once more the whip sang its terrible song to implant another red weal across innocent skin. This time the man who owned us both did not pause again until the tenth strip sent my mistress into a frenzied dance of pain where both her feet left the floor. She cried a strangled gasp that was just short of a scream.

Hamid watched with bright eyes and a slight smile. When she had calmed down, he calmly asked, “Perhaps you would like to put an end to this punishment? Simply address me as ‘Master’. You might as well add a vow of obedience, assuring me of your wish to be a good slave and please her master. Word it anyway you like.”

“Drop dead!”

“Spoken like a Trojan! Spread your legs far apart.” Marjory said nothing. She was deep into the pain and perhaps did not care what happened anymore. I could have kicked Hamid for forcing such humiliation but his voice was relentless, “If you do not spread your legs, Miss Magnus, I will tie them spread far apart, stretched wider than you would wish.”

It was as though Marjory heard his voice from some far distant place. I knew how she must hate every motion she now made as her legs slowly inched out to either side until she displayed the most humiliating exposure a girl can know. She was instantly rewarded by a quick upward slash squarely on her vagina. She screamed and went insane with kicking and random jerking movements of her body. It was a long time before she again stood exhausted and sweating, with head bowed. Hamid’s voice held the knell of doom. “Open wide once more, Miss Magnus. Your performance deserves a repeat.”

A total of five times pain and shame was repeated with Marjory screaming lustily upon each impact. The thong cut with deadly accuracy against the most tender part of her being. After the fifth deadly slash Hamid once more paused to contemplate the droplets of sweat forming on her body. He even made Marjory spread her legs once more so he could kneel for a closer inspection of the havoc he had created. When he got ready to wield the whip again, I could stand no more, but flung myself to my knees at his feet to beg, “Stop, Master, please stop! You have punished her enough. She doesn’t deserve it. Please, please, please!”

“Dear Celie,” he said as he raised me up to plant a passionate kiss upon my lips, which I shamefully returned. “I suppose you are getting ready to offer your skin in place of our dear Miss Magnus?”

“Yes, oh, yes! Please unbuckle those straps.” I was kissed again and again, my master’s hand clasping the plump orifice of my sex. It came away wet and he thoughtfully wiped it dry upon my hip while I strained fruitlessly against my cords. “There is something I must tell you, darling child,” Hamid said softly, “when I am finished with this charming creature, it will be your turn. You can absolve Miss Magnus from nothing because she has no sin but yours is grave indeed. Do you understand?”

“But what have I done? My hands are tied and I haven’t said a word.”

“You said a word too many to that couple from the Consulate. When they asked if you were held a prisoner, you should have laughed the thought away and assured them you were only a guest who was sharing a few erotic notions. You failed to do this but gave them a total affirmative that you were indeed my prisoner.” Hamid paused to kiss lovingly not only my lips but my eyes and the hollow of my neck. “For this betrayal you must pay a painful price. When I am finished with your whipping, you will not betray me again.”

“Yes, Master.” Hamid nodded curtly and was about to thrust me aside when I clamped my nakedness against him to kiss and kiss again before whispering in outrageous humility for his ear alone, “Thank you for the punishment, Master. You are right, I deserve it.”

“You have trained her well,” said Marjory bitterly. “But remember, I owned her first, and the way you keep her chained or tied renders anything she says without validity. If you were close enough, I’d spit in your face.”

We were back at the beginning with me tugging at corded wrists and my beloved mistress standing naked and bound. Once more the whip sang its message of male dominance and Hamid smiled.

In a dither of misery for Marjory and apprehension over the punishment I had earned, I lost count of the slashes across Marjory’s skin and those delivered upward in her

crotch, until suddenly she sagged and hung unconscious in her bonds. Hamid stood back in unconcern, pleasurably fingering the whip. He was gazing at every curve and contour of a helpless nakedness that could endure no more. In the same thoughtful manner, he found brandy and held it to my loved one's lips. After a few seconds she revived and returned to a world of pain.

Marjory's eyes were dull as she looked at her tormentor, a creature with no interest in what was happening. But little by little the brandy found its way between her lips until her feet once more sustained her weight and Hamid set aside the glass. "You are ready for me to start whipping you again?" he inquired.

The bowed head raised wearily as her lips whispered, "I will call you Master."

I knew Hamid was pleased but still spared her nothing. "You took a long while to think about it," he said curtly. "For that and your promise to spit in my face you have ten more still to go."

"Please no, I beg of you, not any more. I will do whatever you wish!"

"I wish to continue whipping you so we appear in agreement. But it would be a nice touch, don't you think, for you to ask nicely for what you are about to receive?"

Marjory tossed her hair to one side in a gesture I knew spelt defeat. Her voice was a dull monotone. “Please continue whipping me, Master. I am your property.”

The whine of Hamid’s tong was a peal of triumph. Once more a servant brought coffee and I was made to recline at my Master’s feet as he drank in the liquid and the sight of a whipped woman’s wicked marked flesh. Marjory’s head was once more bowed in motionless defeat except for an occasional slight tremor of her strained muscles. I could not take my eyes from her punished body but mechanically sipped from the cup my master held to my lips. My hands were still bound behind my back so Hamid was forced to rise to offer the same service of hot coffee to the woman who had suffered so much simply to appease his caprice. We sat thus for a long, long time. My mind was chaotic in its sympathy for the loveliness of whipped flesh and a growing horror at the punishment I must now endure. I shed a few tears of self pity and was a very sorry slave-girl indeed.

Marjory’s punishment was not ended. Hamid unstrapped her wrists and gave support as he produced the handcuffs I had previously worn and locked Marjory’s wrists behind her back. Then he led her to kneel as I knelt in humility beside his chair. When he sat he was thus flanked by a pair of slave-girls, robbed of their hands and awaiting his commands. He dried my eyes and patted my head to make me wish for the comfort of his arms instead of the cut of his

whip. I don't suppose any man in any age had ever known such a completely mastery of chosen female flesh as Hamid did right then.

Keeping me in suspense was too obvious a ploy for a man of Hamid's experience in the punishment of girls. He did not immediately fasten me with hands over my head as I expected. Instead he drew my attention to a massive coffee table and explained its merits for the purpose of holding maidens for punishment. It appeared my punishment was not to be in any way mundane. When he untied my hands, I instantly clasp his knees in a weird mixture of asking him forgiveness while, at the same time, thanking my master for the trouble he was taking to set me back on the straight and narrow path. I dared not look at Marjory.

It was probably the most versatile coffee table in the world. It was made to change its shape and craftily hid a draw which contained all sorts of little treasures I could not name but which made me shutter. I agreed devoutly that it would be a long time before I betrayed my master again.

Under his direction, I placed my nudity face down upon the table's shining surface. A thoughtful innovation was the two circles of wood which Hamid lifted out to make way for my breasts, assuring they would not be flattened on the hard, cold wood. My head overlapped the table so I found myself staring at the rug. And to insure I would not look back in alarm, a rounded metal clamp was thrust down on

each side of my neck to click safely home and leave me powerless to rise. A similar hoop now bit my waist and was thrust hard down to compress my spine and make me thankful that my breasts were not flattened out as was my belly. I was quite helpless but Hamid was by no means done.

The coffee table was of an ordinary size and thus my legs and feet protruded beyond the end. But each foot was instantly bent back at the knee as one more of the adaptable clamps welded it hard down upon my thigh. When this was done with both feet I knew myself very helpless indeed. My legs were doubled painfully tight and could not move at all. My tummy was squashed against the wood and my neck held tightly down. Just being bound in this position was a punishment. When Hamid made adjustments by which my hips were raised against the metal holding down my waist and legs, I realized how cruelly my bottom had been made available for whatever he wished to do with it.

To keep me horribly informed, he now placed on the rug before my anguished eyes a length of yellow cane, limber and flexible enough to wrap itself around the contours of my bottom.

What had been done to me already should have been enough, but it was not! Hamid now placed beside the yellow cane a pair of yellow plastic cups and a glass jar of small, living objects which made me moan. “They are a

breed of ants you will not enjoy," my master explained patiently. "You see, I empty the ants into this cup then put the cup on your breast, sealing it so our little friends will not escape. They will not eat your flesh but you will find them entertaining."

I could not move and fought back screams with difficulty. Each of my breasts was fixed so it was contained within a plastic sphere along with far more ants than the cup could comfortably contain. The result was that, finding their plastic prison uncomfortable, they turned their attention upon my breasts and nipples. I was getting ready to emit the howl of a life time when Marjory's discarded panties were thrust hard into my mouth and pressed deeply home to fill my cheeks by a strap buckled between my teeth and behind my neck. I could make sounds but they were sad little gasps and moans which communicated nothing expect distress. The ants bit at me happily as the first stroke of the cane cut hard upon the tight stretched cheeks I could not move.

My hands and arms were still free and pathetically I used them to try and reach the first of the wounds upon my flesh. But I could reach nothing while Hamid's voice cheerfully explained, "You may enjoy your hands and arms, dear child. Use them as you wish. Consider them my gift to you in this ordeal."

My master was right. I could touch nothing of importance. I could reach my gag and the globes containing my breasts with fingertips but could not remove either. I could feel the contours of the clamps at neck and waist and judged them to be no more than half an inch of steel. When Hamid slashed me once again, I used my arms to flail at nothing. When Hamid's cane cut hard at the soles of my clamped back feet, the pain was so awful I knew for sure I was going to die. Sensing my fear, my master's voice came quietly again. "You did not even know you sinned, child. And you think that one wrong word should not warrant what you suffer now. But remember I am an Arab who lives by a code of honor which takes this punishment for you to understand. Your denial hurt me bitterly. So now I teach you an Islamic lesson. You think you will die but you will not!"

I did not die, a girl never does. And between the various afflictions of my flesh I count of the impacts of the cane. But I think it was only six or seven strokes before the hateful thing was cast aside and Hamid began the task of setting me free. When the clamp was taken from my neck and the cups released my breasts, I was the happiest girl in the world. And, when totally free, I was raised and clasped in two male arms, I could think of nothing but thankfulness in a master I knew had shown mercy in his punishment of a thoughtless girl. Once more I evaded Marjory's scornful gaze. My breasts were tender and red from ant bites, and I feared to touch them. But I was happy the ordeal was over.

It was then that everything happened at once. The chatter of discordant sounds from both engines sent my master forward to consult the crew. When he came back he was tight-lipped and angry. “We have been sabotaged,” he said. “And I am going to lose this plane. We are in the middle of an ocean but fortunately down below there is a ship beside which my pilot will land us in the water so that we may swim to safety.”

Quickly he unlocked Marjory’s handcuffs before returning to the cockpit. Our pilot was highly skilled and two frightened young women peering from the window beheld ahead of us the solid bulk of a ship towards which we sank. When our plane first touched the water, it was not with a solid blow but a glancing one. The plane fairly skipped off the water like a flat rock tossed sideways by a child. Several bounces later the plane settled down to the water very close to the boat which had come to a stop. Marjory and I, both free and both naked, leaped through the open door through which the crew had already abandoned ship. Beside us was the huge hulk of an ocean vessel, while behind us was the tragic, shocking vision of the plane sinking slowly beneath the waves. Without much thought, Marjory and I swam hard toward where we heard a small boat and the shouts of sailors.

When male arms grasped beneath my armpits and lifted me beyond the reach of sharks, I looked up in gratitude at the grinning face of Rankin Teller.

Chapter 8

Branded

Marjory and I stood before the desk like a pair of teenagers who have incurred the wrath of our high school principal. The Grand Inquisitor who is Rankin Teller surveyed us across the oak and was running true to form in what he said. “You can’t accuse me of arranging this whole affair,” he said sarcastically. “Nobody seems to know what went wrong with it, but the pilot and that Arab chap, Hamid, both went down with the ship so maybe we’ll never know.” He laughed. “But I’m grateful for the two of you being dropped into my lap, so to speak. Welcome home!”

I don’t know where Rankin gets his ideas but Marjory’s neck was encircled by a collar to which her wrists were fastened so that she must hold her elbows out to either side and provide anyone interested in her anatomy with a perfect view. For me, he got a beastly sort of yoke which clamped my neck and held my wrists out to either side by means of metal circlets I knew I’d never get out of. Both us girls had total freedom except for our hands which were safely disposed of.

“You really are a gift from the skies,” he chuckled. “We were all getting a bit bored. But now, by way of a diversion, I’m going to have you sort of mingle with my guests and let them have a good look at everything you’ve got. Particularly those whip marks which you can tell me about some

other time. Gosh, Marjory, you're all the colors of the rainbow, and you, Celie, my gal, have got the best caned rump I've ever seen. Do you get the idea?"

"Don't be a bastard," said Marjory angrily. "Surely you can't send two naked girls out among your guests in this condition. We're so helpless we couldn't swap a fly."

"But you do look good, sweetheart. Look at Celie now, isn't she sweet with her arms out to either side and those pretty little wrists safely locked at each end of the yoke. And at how her fingers keep reaching for something that isn't there."

"I said you were a bastard and I'll say it again."

"Okay, I'm a bastard. But just the same I think the way I've got you fixed, Marjory, is just as cute. I like the effect, it's as though you're offering yourself to anyone who wants to look. And that collar sets off your neck a real treat. Would you like to be whipped again?"

"No, I wouldn't. Don't be such a beast."

Rankin then turned his attention to me. "Celie, girl, you're a sight for sore eyes. You wear that there yoke like you was born with it. I'd say that you two will give my guests four of the best tits they've ever seen. And two pretty good cunts, too." Rankin's voice hardened, "But look, kids, you won't insult the guests and you won't demand that they effect your release. You'll be good little girls and display yourselves

nicely. If a guy wants to cop a feel, you won't kick him in the nuts. Break any rules and your pelts will get marked up damned sight worse than now. Get with it, girls, and earn your keep."

Maybe a girl never gets used to nakedness. I knew it was twice as bad for Marjory as for me. We were like a pair of shy virgins as we obeyed the command we could not contest and stepped out into the sunlight. My hands instinctively went to work to try and cover myself but could not reach either my breasts or pussy. Rankin's yoke thing made me feel like a pretty little girl wantonly displaying herself. I said a hearty, "Oh, shit!" beneath my breath as I stepped bravely forward to become a plaything for a bunch of strange men. Marjory was still cursing Rankin Teller with bitter venom.

It had all happened too quickly to properly comprehend. Rankin had yanked us out of the sea only an hour ago and here we were already put to work on his ship. If we hadn't already had experience with his erotic notions, the experience would have been traumatic. As it was we knew it simply as the luck of the draw, certainly a lot better than drowning along with poor Hamid and his airplane. When I thought of Hamid, I wanted to cry but forced back the tears rather than parade around with wet cheeks my fingers could not reach.

The guests hailed us with joy. I think they were genuinely bored and remembered me from the time I'd been Rankin's prisoner previously. Marjory and I got felt and fingered, and turned this way and that with exclamations of delight as our wounds were examined with awe, while several of the females expressed the hope that Rankin would have us whipped again for their enjoyment. Many expressed the idea that we should be lashed to the riggings, tied to the mast, or dunking us in the water at the end of a rope. It was all great fun.

One of the female guests, a young woman named Lenore, was unexpectedly frank in confiding to us her pleasure in seeing us in our present fix. She had refused Rankin the favors he demanded and had been told to think it over unless she wanted to be hung by her thumbs and given an exhibition whipping to amuse the guests. This ordeal had been scheduled for the following day and she now hoped our appearance would alter her fate. I knew all about this, for I remembered my own case. I would have liked to throw my arms around the poor dear and give comfort but I couldn't throw my arms around anything.

There was no time in which to mourn Shalima, or the regal presence of the man who had bought me at auction. I was pushed and pulled and taken to one side to listen to confidences of sympathy or envy, and asked to explain what it was like to be a slave-girl and be thus nakedly exposed and made helpless. I did my best with my answers for goodness

knows I needed all the friends I could get. But it was noticeable that none offered me help, or freedom.

Rankin was pretty much a man of his word. Marjory and I spent the night, each with one ankle encircled by a metal band and by a length of chain attached to the mast. We pointed out that there was no need to fasten us because we would go to sleep where ever we could, and there was no way we could possibly escape this ship. But he happily laughed away our protests and happily snapped on padlocks to the chains around our ankles. We were told the only good girls were ones who were under restraint.

It pleased our owner to share a festive breakfast with him in his cabin. Marjory and I were safely clothed in handcuffs which Rankin had locked in front so we could feed ourselves. After that damned yoke and collar, it was pretty much like being absolutely free. The trouble with Rankin is that, when he wants to, he can be so damned charming that he melts a girl's inhibitions and makes it that much more of a shock when he gets back to normal. When breakfast was over and done with and we could drink no more coffee, we were given an inkling of our day. "The boys and girls have seen those handcuffs aplenty," Rankin informed, "so what I'm going to do is tie them pretty hands behind your back."

"You mean we don't have to wear those horrible things you locked us in yesterday?"

“That’s right, love. Stick out your hands. When I got them unlocked, you cross them behind your back and stand that way until I get around to fixing you real proper.” He chuckled, “You don’t have to thank me, I’m just happy to be of service.”

We could cheerfully have murdered him but were too dispirited to make a messy. As the rings of steel fell away from our wrists, we rubbed and massaged briefly before crossing them behind our back. The first bit of cord told us all too clearly we weren’t going to be doing much with our hands. “That’s one thing I dearly love to do,” Rankin told us as though confiding a secret, “and that’s tie a girl’s arms behind her back. It not only looks real cute but it fixes her so there ain’t no way she’s going to cause you trouble.” There were more laughs at our expense. “Wouldn’t be surprised if the day comes when girls is born with hands tied behind their backs. It’s the most natural and beautiful thing in the world. And don’t you forget it. When you walk out today among the boys and gals, I want you to look real proud.”

We kept a discrete silence while we stood nakedly hating the man who was cleverly twisting and looping his cord around our wrists. I knew it was no use complaining so I put up with the unkind bit of the ropes.

“I’m a sporting guy,” Rankin told us. “You gals are welcome to try and get your hands loose from this here tie. And if you manage it, I’m gonna give you a prize, and that prize is

credit for ten strokes anytime you earn yourself a whipping. But get this straight, girlies, there ain't no one of the guests is gonna untie those hands of yours, and if I hear of you asking anyone to do it, you're gonna wish you kept your mouth shut." Rankin paused dramatically. "How'd it be I gag you both so you don't get into trouble?"

I might have known the simple binding of my hands behind my back would not be enough to satisfy Rankin eroticism. "You don't need to gag us, we'll won't ask anyone about getting free," I told him. "Please don't gag us, it's horrible to be gagged."

I could just as well kept quiet, and Marjory's pleas also fell upon deaf ears. Rankin, like a small boy with a new toy, fumbled around in a draw to produce the objects we were going to wear. I expect they cost a lot of money because they certainly looked expensive and were beautifully fashioned, except what went into our mouths was an imitation phallus of soft rubber. There was a leather band that went over our lips, buckled tight behind our necks and held the copy of the male organ tight within our mouths. It would evidently be a silent day.

"Damn it, you look prettier than ever," Rankin said with feeling. "I've a good mind to keep you like that with your mouth filled all the time. Like I told you, girls are made to tie up. I've got a quite a collection of gags and I'll try them out on you from time to time. But these here will do you

fine for today. Run along and do your mingling and give them all a real charge the same as I'm getting."

Rankin caught my head in his hands and planted a brotherly sort of kiss squarely on my forehead before pushing me out into the sunlight. He did the same for Marjory. Then he patted our bare bottoms before leaving us to wander where we pleased. I turned to consult darling Marjory and discovered I couldn't say a word. I tugged at my wrists but that wasn't any help. My onetime mistress and I looked at each other in desolation as we stepped down the stairway to the deck.

We were an instant success. With the additional attraction of the leather band across our lips, it became a really big deal to ask us questions we couldn't answer. "Each has got a mouthful of rubber cock," informed one of the boys. "Should be real good training for them. Come here, sweetie, and let me feel you up."

It was hateful to be so damned obedient. Everyone wanted to have a good look at our bodies, bound hands and gag. But I think it was the gag that attracted them the most. There is something psychological about knowing that a girl's mouth is filled with a replica of a penis and she can't push it out. Something for both the girl wearing it and the man looking at her. Symbolic oral sex, I guess.

As we were fingered and passed around with our nipples getting plenty of attention, and one fellow even plucking a

few pubic hairs, it was generally agreed that once again Rankin had come up with delightful entertainment. Marjory and I were wondering if we would ever be allowed to sit quietly in a deck chair to enjoy the waves. But our group was joined by a couple of giggling women who had picked up the news of a quite different entertainment. It appeared that Lenore Watson was to be suspended naked by her thumbs.

I have said Rankin kept his word. Quite evidently his promise of punishment to the charming blonde was actually going to happen. Guests crowded the center deck, lining up along the rails or mounting the stairs for a better view. It was not long before the girl about to be punished was escorted into view by a pair of seamen who controlled her struggles by simply lifting her off the deck to plant her dead center on the stage. She was left to stand alone, gazing around without hope of help. After a minute she was joined by the ship's master who quite obviously wanted to make a speech.

Rankin was a quite happy man. The first thing he did was to take possession of Lenore's lovely hair and shake to tell her clearly who was boss. Lenore was not bound and was clothed in a light summer dress. Rankin soon dispelled any notions she might have had about mercy. "Lenore here," he said loudly, "has been a real foolish girl." He looked around with pride. "All I asked her to do was lay down and spread her legs and the silly bitch slapped my face. And told me to

get lost." He paused dramatically. "Now there ain't no one slaps Rankin Teller and gets away with it. I'm a reasonable man but after she tried to kick me where it hurts, I explained that I'd give her overnight to change her mind. If she didn't give an apology and come around with a good performance, I'd have her hung up by her thumbs. And that's where we are right now, ladies and gentlemen."

From the beginning it was obvious Lenore was resigned to the inevitable. No doubt she had witnessed many such horrors on this ship. All she did was look Rankin Teller in the eye and, in a clear voice, say very simply, "Please don't do this to me."

Rankin appeared not to hear. He stepped back a few paces from the frightened girl, who in this moment of her travail was displaying unexpected courage. His tone was cheerful, "Now, sweetheart, what we all want from you is to get out of them there clothes. You look a lot better without them than with them. And when we hang you up the way we're going to, you don't want to be bothered with no clothes, you'll be glad you got rid of them." Rankin chuckled at his fatherly advice. "And, of course, kiddo, there's the little matter of marking up your pretty sun-tanned skin. Clothes wouldn't be no help there at all."

Lenore was standing straight and tense. But now she swiveled slowly around the circle of those who watched and once again the simplicity of her words touched my

heart. “Won’t any of you help me? Won’t you stop Mr. Teller punishing me like this… Please!”

There was no response, only a stony silence. I longed to offer comfort and aid but was totally helpless. As I saw Lenore droop in defeat and watched breathlessly as she reached for the fastening of her dress, Rankin turned and left for the steps to his cabin. He sat on the steps to watch the cruelty to come.

Lenore now stood alone on what I could only think of as center stage. And when the dress she wore fell away and was kicked aside to reveal her lovely slenderness in panties and bra, she paused once more to gaze around the circle of avid eyes before shrugging hopelessly and rendering herself totally nude. She was very beautiful.

A pair of women guests had been briefed in the function they must now perform. Once carried the only instrument they would need, a two foot length of hardwood with metal rings at each end and below each a small leather noose. Each grasped a pathetically slender wrist and inserted the thumb within the prepared noose of soft leather by which Rankin hoped to avoid permanent injury. They positioned the yellow bands below the knuckle of the thumb and drew it tight, which at the same time a male crewman lowered ropes from the rigging above, each with a hook to fit the rings. With a slowness that was cruel, the ropes tightened to rise the imprisoned thumbs until she was compelled to

stand on tip toes and left that way as the women walked away. But they quickly returned, one with a long yellow cane, the other with a single thonged whip, which was of a quality somewhere between cruelty and kindness. It would hurt more than the youthful slenderness seemed designed to bear. The stage was set.

Lenore was now completely helpless. The yellow cane sliced the air with a vicious whine to place a scarlet imprint across the curved contours of a feminine bottom not yet marked. The shock was obvious but the girl did not scream. Lenore jerked and did a small dance on tip toes that told of the pain. But the dance was quickly over as the punished thumbs took weight abandoned by the toes. Quickly she sought to place her toes firmly on the deck again.

When the woman with the whip drew back her arm to deliver a cruel cut around a youthful waist, it drew a scream from lips which had wished to be silent. When the cane cut the second time, Lenore leaped and kicked in disbelief that so much pain could be delivered by a slender cane.

I suppose the whipping and canning of Lenore followed pretty much the pattern of all other such inflictions upon female flesh. She jumped and jerked and tugged in a way which I am sure was all too pleasing to those who watched, and certainly to Rankin Teller. The poor girl, here and there, repeated over and over her plea, “Stop! Oh, please

stop! Please, not so hard!" But the cuts continued and even harder if anything. I could well believe the two of those girls had been whipped and knew what they were doing from sad experience. I hoped they would be whipped again for what they were doing to this innocent girl.

I suppose Lenore's whipping was not all that cruel, or too long. It was not the main event and we all knew it but a prelude to the real punishment to come. The whip mistresses tucked their cane and whip beneath their arm regretfully and retreated to leave behind a sobbing girl who forgot her nakedness in her absorption in pain. She stood in taut constriction with hands that could not dry her tears.

The ropes then tightened and quite suddenly Lenore's reaching toes could no longer touch the deck. She gasped, her eyes widened, and a wail of disbelief escaped her lips. The ropes were snubbed and there she hung, gently swaying against the motion of the ship.

It was wickedly simple and in its way a thing of beauty. The punished thumbs could not move but the fingers betrayed what the thumbs could not. Lenore possessed delightful breasts but these were now partly flattened because of the stress on her suspended body. Her belly had become concave while her rib cage was accentuated in a manner to change the whole contour of her nakedness. From time to time she looked up at the noosed thumbs which delivered an agony she could scarcely bear, and I felt certain she was

doubting the reality of all this. The scorch still burning her skin where the whip and cane had kissed lingered on, adding to her suffering. I wanted to help but if I did so, I would be the only one prompted by mercy and undoubtedly punished for it. Rankin and the guests were absorbed with the scene, silent and watching as if they couldn't tear themselves away from such beauty.

I, too, stood there and watched. Eventually the crowd became fluid, coming and going as the mood took them, and to counter boredom, Rankin had directed that from time to time the suspended girl would be raised or lowered from the top of the spar or hovering with her toes just an inch from the wooden deck. From her wails of anguish, it was easy to tell that the higher the suspension, the more terrifying it was to this tortured girl. I am sure the poor dear often believed she faced a fall in addition to permanent damage to her thumbs. These variations kept the passengers amused throughout the day, a day in which Marjory and I eventually delivered ourselves for their attentions. I suppose both Marjory and I were wondering if the fate Lenore suffered now would be ours in days to come. It was hard to believe the suspended loveliness was simply entertainment.

Just before dinner Lenore was lowered and released. She sank to the floor with arms outstretched. Lenore's nakedness had not imposed upon those thumbs the stress of someone weighing more pounds. In that, she should thank

her stars that she was a slender, slight girl. Rankin insisted that she join us all in the dinning lounge and delegated the two whip mistresses to attend her needs at the table. The girl was dazed and grateful for attention. She made no protests to those who chose to lift an arm and examine the thumbs by which she had been punished. When dinner was over, the same two whip mistresses took charge of Marjory and I, unstrapping our gags and pulling the hated phallus from our mouth, before sitting us down and feeding us like a couple of babies. Our hands were not released from behind our backs. I suppose it could be considered a successful day on the Rankin's Pride.

It was another uncomfortable night. I was curious as to why we were not heavily ironed and locked in the brig but I asked no questions. The brig was not a pleasant place. Marjory and I got dumped on the floor of an empty store room with our necks encircled with a brutal iron collar and chain running to a ringbolt in the wall. We actually had quite a lot of freedom since the tether was lengthy. Yet we could do nothing with it since the door was stoutly locked. We sat together and mourned our fate until we fell asleep.

Breakfast was another state affair in the captain's cabin, and I'm ashamed to say we enjoyed it considerably even though I was certain Rankin was chuckling deep inside over things he knew and we did not. We were not even handcuffed and I was pretty sure we were being tested to

see if we actually would run or jump over board. We did neither of these things but ate and drank our coffee like good little girls. We even got ourselves a kind word.

“You’re becoming properly trained little girls. All today you’ll have to wear is handcuffs behind your back. And a beautiful clip on each of your pretty tits.” He laughed at the flash of alarm on our faces. “Don’t worry none, gals, I wouldn’t have you lose them tits for anything in the world. The main attraction today is going to be little smart ass who got hung up yesterday. I’ll think up something to make it interesting.”

Marjory and I were actually grateful for our handcuffs. Girls in our situation become thankful for anything that doesn’t hurt too much. And I will say this about handcuffs, if you don’t struggle, they won’t bite.

When Rankin had adjusted the steel bands satisfactoryly around our wrists, we stood still remembering the promised butterflies. “I’ll bet you gals can’t hardly wait,” Rankin mused. “You’re going to fall in love with these pretty little things that clip your tits. But not hard enough to do you no real harm. Take a look.”

They were truly butterflies and, unless you turned them over, seemed pretty and innocent and almost to be desired. Marjory and I had not enjoyed having our nipples pinched and would actually have been grateful for the butterflies had we believed them innocent. Then Rankin turned them

over and we saw the brutal spring and serrated jaws which opened when the two wings were compressed by thumb and finger. We shivered in dismay at the thought of that cold metal biting into our tender nipples.

“Honey, you’re going a real proud of these,” he told us. “And there ain’t nobody going to take them off. You’ll make all the other gals jealous. Now, stand quite still while I show you how they work.”

We stood quite still while Rankin had his fun. He grabbed a breast, compressed the butterfly wings and positioned the open jaws around my left nipple. Ever so slowly he allowed the two wings to close and the metal spikes to bit my flesh. By this time I was panting in apprehension and pain. Once more Rankin admonished me to hold still my anguished flesh. Once more I gasped and Rankin stood back, pleased as punch, and beaming proudly of his work. And I have to admit that when I looked in a mirror the butterfly wings were as pleasing a bit of costume jewelry as I had ever worn. They burned. I watched the same thing done to Marjory and despite the shame and pain of wearing the pretty things were indeed attractive. Once more we got our bottom slapped and were sent upon our way.

Flogging, and brandings, and being stretched upon the rack are horrors so dramatic the one may speak of them over and over. And I suppose they carry for days the marks they inflict. But there was nothing dramatic about the butter-

flies. They might well been the real thing that just happened to alight upon our breasts. Their wings even fluttered as we walked and our breasts bounced. Everyone admired them but no one took them off or ever asked us if they hurt. It was taken as only right and proper that we should be in pain.

I suppose we would have felt very sorry for ourselves if it had not been for Lenore. Lenore wore a leather collar so wide as to tilt her chin and so tight as to seem to constrict her neck. At the back was the usual ring. The poor girl's wrists had been crossed and tightly bound, and the end of the rope used through the ring of her collar to pull her tied hands up and up and her neck back and back in a stress which carefully avoided anything fatal but which made her far more helpless than the usual strictures. If this was not enough, an iron anklet was locked fast around her right ankle, and from it a three foot length of heavy chain attached her to an iron ball of frightening size and weight enough to compel any girl to stick around. Moving would be slow and very hard. I suppose even this might not have been too bad until she told us, her words distorted by the tight collar, that she had to walk three times around the deck during the day or receive other strips to add to the collection on back and bottom. Telling us of this, her voice became a wail, "I can't move the damned thing, it's so heavy. I certainly can't walk with it. All I can do is pull it a couple of inches at a time. What am I going to do!"

Marjory and I had no answer. I didn't know what I would do in her plight. It seemed no girl on the Rankin's Pride was ever free of the threat of leather thongs biting at her skin.

If he had possessed hands, we could have helped tug the ball and maybe completed the assignment. But we had no hands, all we had were rings of steel around our wrists and butterflies upon our breasts. We kept the poor girl company until a group of passengers crowded around and one of the men laughingly picked up the ball and told poor Lenore to follow where he led. We watched as they went on round number one of the ship, and wondering if what we saw might not earn the poor girl another punishment. But such thoughts were soon distracted by girls who insisted on flicking our butterflies to see how much they hurt. We longed to kick at them but a vision of our nakedness hanging by our thumbs acted as a deterrent. We suffered as we must.

That night was the worst yet. The ship's carpenter provided a couple of stout planks which extended out beyond the rail, each one well secured to the deck but protruded above the seething water to a length of at least twelve feet. At the far end of each was a single handcuff. In demonstration of the safety of the plank, Rankin stood straddling us on either side as we obeyed his order to crawl out far enough for him to lock the waiting steel cuff around extended wrist. The plank bend alarmingly under the double weight

but resumed its normal condition when Rankin left. Marjory was locked on the other plank as I was. The watchers all made comments on how long it would be before we fell and either hung agonizingly from one wrist or fell into the waves below. Since we were not ready to try to sleep, Marjory and I found it easier to sit astride our plank with our one shackled hand stretched behind and our other clutching the wood. When everyone left and we were quite alone, Marjory told me, “We can survive, Celie dear, if we just keep our head. Don’t get excited, don’t get to feeling you’re going to fall. We don’t have to fall. Remember that and hold on.”

It would have been wonderful to hold her in my arms or to have her hold me as a terrible loneliness descended with the night. Many hours later I abandoned the sitting posture and inched myself to lay on my belly and clutch the wood with my free hand. I had no idea if that handcuff would hold my weight and made up my mind never to put it to the test.

Sleep did not come easily. I was quivering with a terrible fear as I gazed below at the dark depths. I had no doubt of frightful monsters and watching eyes. No doubt of huge sharks waiting for us to fall, no doubt of anything except survival. Should I fall, I was certain, and hung suspended by one wrist, I would not be able to work my way back onto the plank and would hang over the water like shark bait. I was positive I could never sleep.

We both slept in tiny catnaps interspersed by the horror that awaited us. I got little comfort from the thought of falling and being rescued by the cruel cut of metal around my wrist. But here and there, between nightmares, I fell asleep and when I awoke was surprised to find myself still on the plank. It seemed an eternity before we were freed, handcuffed and ushered to Rankin's office.

Ours had become a world in which we lived from hour to hour and were convinced we would never be free.

The guests were a sensation-loving lot who had to be constantly entertained with something painful to a girl. The oldest of them was little more than thirty and most of the girls were a lot younger. Playing the perfect host, Rankin decided not to allow them to become bored with Marjory and me, but to alter the punishment of our bodies with the punishment of others. Apparently everyone understood that on these occasions, every female would pull a number from a hat and the unfortunate maiden who pulled the wrong number was supposed to gracefully accept her fate.

Marjory and I learned the details of this pleasant game while eating breakfast with our master. It appeared we were to have a peaceful, if handcuffed, day, with the choice of watching some tearful maiden get her bottom caned, or simply catching up on the sleep we missed. Rankin told us that the plank with its handcuff drove a good many females into hysterics or a state of shock. He complimented

us on our performance and suggested that we would like to try the same thing at another time. Marjory and I kept a discrete silence. It was wonderful to know that nothing would be done to us today. We wore our handcuffs jauntily as though proud of them, mingling happily with the boys and girls who were discussing the fortunate of the draw. A portion of the deck had been cleared and a smirking crew member was busy positioning the props of Rankin's latest notion. So far there was an office desk and a black board. There was a swivel chair behind the desk but the other seat was a hardwood kitchen chair and a wooden stool. That it was suppose to be a school room was obvious.

Even Marjory and I, used as we were to punishment upon punishment, could feel the rustle of sensation, the breathless hush of hazard, as the hat made its way around the circle and every female present knew her pretty skin at risk. One of them was going to have a bad, bad day. And about half way through the draw there was a squeal of excited horror as a youthful female displayed the fateful number. I doubt if the poor girl, who wasn't a day over eighteen, found much comfort from her boyfriend's kiss of fond farewell. Her name was Juno Stanley, and she marched bravely out to meet her fate in the person of Rankin Teller.

In his chosen role, Rankin then produced an academic gown of black with a bit of red trim. Motioning to his victim, he said, "Might as well get them clothes off, honey. They'll just get in the way."

The girl had been wearing a very brief string bikini, one of the only girls to be wearing anything. She untied the strings with trembling fingers and let the two tiny scraps of cloth fall to the deck. Rankin pushed a pair of black high heels across the desk to her and she slowly put them on. The heels made a tapping sound as she walked on the hardwood deck.

Juno was a scared girl, all could see that clearly, but she bravely faced her fate. She was quite beautiful, with the loveliest long legs made all the more lovely by the shape of the muscles induced by the very high heels. Juno stood there, blushing furiously, with one forearm shielding her breasts and the other hand cupping her pubic bush. At that moment Juno Stanley was the perfect picture of innocence.

“I guess you get the idea, honey. You’re the pupil and I’m the teacher. Let your arms fall limp at your sides. I am going to touch one single part of you with this pointer, which ain’t gonna hurt none, and then I want you to go to the blackboard and write down all the names you can think of, including the crude ones. By the way, sweetheart, you’ll call me ‘Sir’. Ready?”

“Yes, Sir.” Juno looked very sweet and very frightened. The gowned master extended his yellow cane to lightly touch the left nipple of a quivering nudity. “There you are, honey, this is your first taste. Get busy with that there chalk.”

Juno was almost one complete blush. And when her fingers found the chalk, they were trembling so hard that the word "Nipple" which she tried to write was hardly readable. Before she could use the duster to erase it and try again, Rankin issued stern reproof, "That ain't good, honey. You ain't gonna tell us you ain't ever learned to write?"

"I'm sorry, Sir, I'm nervous. May I try again?"

"After you've been punished for making that damned awful mess. Come here and hold out your left hand. Palm up."

Horrified, the poor girl who stood there naked holding the bit of chalk shivered and dropped the chalk to shatter upon the deck. Her voice was a quiver of disbelief, "But we just started, Sir. You're going to use that cane upon the palm of my hand, aren't you? And that will get me so upset I won't be able to write anything properly."

"That's just a bridge you can cross when you come to it. Right now just extend your arm."

Juno shrugged and slowly held out her left arm with its taut palm open and turned up. Rankin was in his element and went through all the damned fool motions of measuring distance and tapping the small, young hand waiting to be hurt. Then, quite suddenly, the cane cut the air to impact hard upon the palm.

The audience was silent in awe. For a second Juno stood perfectly still in shock before tucking her wounded hand in

her armpit. “Ohhhhhh!” she cried as she steadied herself with her uninjured hand against the desk. Obviously the pain was far worse than she had anticipated or ever dreamed. Juno was strangely beautiful as she remained her motionless in the centre of a breathless silence. Rankin had no doubt used this punishment before and stood as a naked girl slowly sobbed her way back into awareness. “You done fine, honey,” he said cheerfully. “Don’t hurt all that bad, does it?”

“It’s terrible!”

“Whatever you say, sweetheart. Now get up to that blackboard. Here’s a fresh piece of chalk. You write down all them names… ”

Juno took the chalk in her uninjured hand and slowly managed a descent “NIPPLE.” She stood unhappily looking at the make-believe headmaster, but, finding no mercy in his eyes, turned back to the blackboard and wrote down the word “TIT.”

“I told you you could do it, honey. Write them all down and that way you won’t get the cane.”

“I don’t know any more.” The young voice faltered. “If you want to be polite, you call it a nipple. And if you want to be vulgar, you call it a tit.”

“Honey, you sure is a disappointment. I ain’t gonna be hard on you so give me the names of this pretty thing.” The cane lightly tapped Juno’s breast.

The poor girl obediently wrote “BREAST.” Then she added “BOOB.” Once more she turned to admit she had exhausted her knowledge of descriptive words.

The headmaster took her statement bravely, visibly bracing himself against such innocence. “I gave you a break once, sweetheart, but I can’t give you a break twice running. This time hold out your right arm.”

“But then I won’t be able to write at all!” If I can’t write with either hand, I know you’ll be real mad at me. Give me a break.”

“How many breaks do you want?” Juno shifted from one foot to the other, her young eyes riveted on the yellow cane. “You’ll have to forgive me,” she explained, “but I just don’t know all these names people use. Couldn’t you let me have one more try?”

“Okay. You don’t seem to know nothing about your tits and boobs, so let’s go down to something everybody has an interest in. It’s got more names than you can shake a stick at. Clean off that blackboard and get ready to write.” This time the cane prodded the young lips beneath the pubic hair. “Give this one all you’ve got, honey,” he encouraged. “’Cause if you don’t, you’re going to be hurting.”

Poor Juno had evidently been well brought up. Her vocabulary of four letter words was decidedly limited. She started off with “VAGINA”, and, after a good deal of foot shuffling, “CUNT.” She was obviously shamed and was close to exhausting her stock of blushes.

“I want to be real helpful, honey,” Rankin said. “How about ‘TWAT’, and ‘SNATCH.’ Try them out for size.”

The poor girl obediently wrote down the two words with distaste. She then searched the intent ring of faces for inspiration. But after a lengthy silence, Rankin said with regret, “There ain’t no way out of this, honey, you’d best hold out that hand and let’s go back to business.”

I expect by this time the agony of the first stroke had reduced to enough so Juno could find the courage to extend her uninjured hand. It was a swift and wicked slash to make her squeal in anguish and fall to her knees, holding each hand beneath an armpit. Her lovely head was bowed and her shining yellow hair fell forward to the floor. Once more I saw her as an artist’s dream of innocence in agony.

If the silence had been tense before, it was doubly so now. I could see no where for Rankin or his victim to go. It was pretty certain Juno could not hold out her hand again. Rankin’s use of the cane had been hard. At his brisk command, poor Juno struggled to her feet and held her injured hands before her face in a sort of wonder that they were still there. But she faced the headmaster and said quite

simply, “Sorry, I can’t hold the chalk. And I can’t possibly hold out my hands again.” She shrugged her shoulders and returned her hands to her armpits. “I expect I’m a terrible disappointment.”

“I should have explained to you right at the start, honey, that if you back out of this little game we’re playing, the alternative is to be strung up by your thumbs like Lenore yesterday. Would you prefer that?”

Juno was wiser that she knew. Instinctively she threw her arms around a startled headmaster and sobbed her heart out on his gown. There was a choked admission uttered into a black gown that she had never known there would be such things like this or she wouldn’t have signed on for the trip.

I am sure the poor dear girl was totally innocent of guile. She had just run into something that was too much for her. And after expending about a half pint of tears on Rankin’s gown, she suddenly turned and fled back to her boyfriend who accepted her back into his arms but who’s features displayed extreme embarrassment. I don’t know what would have come of the scene had not a single woman stepped out of the audience to come face to face with Rankin Teller, who was far from pleased. This woman was close to thirty, and I don’t recall her having any boyfriend among the guests. Her voice matched Rankin’s own, “Look, Mr. Teller, that poor kid can’t take it. We got an unlucky

draw. What say we leave her where she is and I take her place? I've already got my clothes off."

Rankin eyed her with interest in the sense of accepting an challenge. He came up with a lame, "You think you can take it?"

"What do you think?" The tone was flippant. The girl was laughing without dismay at the agonies that await. I had to wonder about her. I have heard of girls who enjoy being hurt by men but I'd never really believed it. But there was something about Rita that matched the mood of the pretty play Rankin had designed. Rita pushed her advantage with the curt demand, "Well, do you want a girl who can take it or another pretty little pussy who doesn't want to play?"

Rankin grinned and ordered her to pick up the chalk. "You can bet your ass I'm going to make you a very sorry girl," he growled.

I watched as Rita stepped forward, a muscular and mature female body of good proportions and nice firm breasts. "Do you want me to go on writing or do you want to cane me first?" she inquired. "Please don't be bashful, we all know you're an asshole. Might as well behave like one."

Rankin was breathing heavily. This girl was a fresh experience. Gruffly he told her to go ahead and write down every dirty word she knew for her sexual organs between her legs. With a shrug of amusement, Rita picked up the dis-

carded chalk and turned to the blackboard where she wrote down more descriptive names than I had ever heard of. I think she was ahead of Rankin when she turned and asked flippantly, “How’s that for starters?”

In this sort of erotic play, Rankin was often a good sport, secure in love of female flesh. He clapped and offered, “You did good kid. You got some in there I never heard of. Now let’s see how you do with your pretty little ass.” His yellow cane tapped a firm curved cheek suggestively.

Rita was well aware of playing a game she could not win but it pleased her to make things as difficult for Rankin Teller as she could. Once more she came up with more four letter words than I had ever heard of. There was admiration in Rankin’s voice. “You’re really something,” he told Rita. “I expect you’ve got just as many answers for any part of your body. But I can always get the best of you in the matter of attitude. You’re a real smart ass. And that’s something I don’t tolerate in a pupil in this here school. Let’s start out with your hands. What do you say to six cuts on each as a reward for insolence?”

I gasped in a sort of fascination and disbelief. A girl might very well be caned six times on each open palm by a female or some man not striking as hard as he could. But certainly not Rankin hitting as hard as he could. Beside his strength, a girl melted into helplessness. My heart went out to Rita as she laughed in Rankin’s face and held out not her

left hand but her right. “Go ahead,” she invited politely. “Do you want to cut the whole six all at once or shall we alternate hands?”

It seemed to me like a death wish. I might have endured one or two on each palm but most certainly not six. But here was this lovely creature positively asking for it. Her palm held out made me cringe.

Rankin did not bother to answer but abruptly swung his cane to impact it in a swift and sure stroke across the flesh of a girl who dared look him in the eye. Rita’s arm remained outstretched and only the slightest flinch of her eyes told of the pain. The palm even remained wide open.

When number two cut hard and fast it was just the same. Rita’s eyes were glowing with a supernatural light, her lovely breasts rose and fell a little faster, but her hand was still there as was the smile upon her face. Rankin struck again.

I realized we were not simply watching the caning of a girl’s hand, what we beheld was a matching of wills under the stimulus of an eroticism greater than I had ever known. I remembered often becoming horny under the first lash of a whip or cut of a cane. But that heat quickly dissolved under continued blows. Rita had now received her sixth stroke across the open palm but did not lower her arm. Instead she asked, in the sweetest tones, “May I now drop my hand, Sir?”

“Of course you can, you silly bitch, that’s the deal, ain’t it?”

I could sense the agony and guess the pain. Rita’s control was perfect but I sensed in her a force most girls do not have. Smiling, she extended her uninjured hand to invite the venom of Rankin’s cane. Everyone present was breathless in admiration and poor Juno was staring bug-eyed at what she must have thought was a miracle. Perhaps it was.

Rankin should have been pleased to possess so marvelous a subject but I could sense his anger at being deprived of the spotlight. No doubt he would break the spirit of this beautiful woman if he could.

He was going through the measuring of the distance with the cane while Rita’s smile continued to mock him. Breathing heavily, he cut her swift and hard.

There was agony in the girl’s eyes but her control remained perfect and, even though that blow had driven her arm down several inches, she returned it to level instantly. I saw Rankin purse his lips and slash again. His gown flapped about him. For his next blow he put all his strength of his arm into the downswing. She displayed only the slightest wince before once more sweetly inquiring if she could lower her arm. Rita openly stared at Rankin Teller, as if waiting to hear whatever words of wisdom he would care to impart.

The school room charade had run its course to resume it now, after Rita's superb performance would be anti-climactic. A couple of crewmen took away all traces of it to leave the two stars of this drama facing each other across a small open space. Rita was really beautiful as she stood in both agony and defiance to try and stare down the man who had hurt her. But Rankin Teller returned stare for stare, his angry eyes matching those of the girl he had punished.

"You're a smart assed bitch," he said heavily. "And you're not going to get away with it. You're the most insolent female I've ever come across."

"Thank you," she replied sweetly. "How'd it be I tie you across a stool and see if your ass is as tough as your hands?"

"As you wish, Sir."

"Don't try getting ahead of me. I'm going to tie you so you can't even twitch. And then I'll lay a good, hard hundred across your rump. How's that grab you, girlie?"

A cane in the hands of a strong man can wound a girl's bottom terribly. I think if Rankin had been satisfied to name a more reasonable number, say twenty or even thirty, everything might have gone as he wished. But everyone present knew that a hundred such strokes across the bottom curves Rita displayed meant an injury far beyond the fun and

games the guests enjoyed. A hundred slashes with the cane was cruel indeed.

It began with the golden haired Juno who broke from her boyfriend's arms to enter the arena. Even though they had suffered only one stroke each, her hands were limb against her hips as were those of the other caned beauty. Rita turned at the interruption of Rankin's sadism.

"You mustn't do that," Juno cried. "You mustn't punish her anymore, she's had enough. And, anyway, it's my fault for running away. I draw the piece of paper and have to pay the price. Tie me over your stool and cane my bottom instead of Rita's." She paused, breathless and panting, before adding, "Do you want me to drape myself over the stool?"

"Well, I'll be damned," Rankin exclaimed. "Sure, honey, if that's the way you want it. Your pretty little ass is every bit as good as Rita's for marking up."

"You shouldn't do this, Juno," Rita said softly. "A hundred strokes the way this guy gives them is too much for any girl. You'll be seriously hurt. Leave this to me. I'll probably live through it."

Rankin was enjoying all this noble sacrificing of female flesh. But his pleasure was interrupted now by Juno's boyfriend who had been silent up to now. "Look, Captain, couldn't we call this quits? I don't want Juno caned any more than she's already been, and I don't think any of us

want to see Rita slashed with a hundred. Can't you think up something entertaining that doesn't leave us all feeling guilty?"

"Maybe you got a point, Wilbur," Rankin conceded reluctantly. "Okay, I'll cut that hundred down to fifty. This gal Rita will probably enjoy every strip."

"I can agree to twenty-five, but that's the limit," said Wilbur with surprising fortitude. "I'm sure Juno will offer to take half of those if you would be willing to spread the caning around a bit. But for Pete's sake don't hit the poor girl so damned hard."

Rankin stood his ground. "Look, fellow, you telling me how to run my ship?"

"I'm telling you how to avoid killing a guest." Rita did for Wilbur what she had done for Juno. "Look," she said reasonably, "I expect I'm half to blame for this whole damned thing. I was just too willing. I don't mind being whipped a little, it's stimulating and makes me as horny as all get out. But I was scared of that hundred. Thanks for cutting it down to fifty. I expect that's bad enough but I'll probably live."

"I'll be damned if this don't beat anything I ever did see." Rankin regained his good humor and probably realized Wilbur had gotten him out of a bad situation. By way of making his contribution to the general good will, he added,

“I’ll go you one better and cut it down to forty. And instead of that there cane, I’ve got a lighter one the gal probably won’t like much but it won’t do her no harm.” Rankin’s eyes swept the assembly as his voice boomed, “That okay by you folk?”

Rankin made a swift trip to his cabin and returned with rope and a new cane. True the cane was lighter as he had promised, but I had to wonder if it would hurt more or less. My experience was that every cane hurt more than a girl could bear. We all watched Rankin select some lengths of cord then knee beside lowered head of shining hair he had to thrust aside in order to find the willing wrists. He bound those wrists with his usual expertise. There were four legs to the stool, and two of them would get girlish wrists while the other pair were to hold feet. Poor Rita’s hands were limp but he was no longer concerned with them. The fingertips touched the deck but the cord was wound and twisted again and again to secure the slender wrists hard and fast against the leg of the stool. When the bindings were complete on both wrists, he patted the upturned bottom, then turned his attention to the ankles at the end of those long, muscular and very shapely legs. Each ankle was lashed to a stool leg tightly. Rita was left with her bottom sticking up in the air and no means of moving or protecting it.

Standing back, Rankin studied the effect for a moment then took two lengths of rope and bound each elbow to the stool

leg. Rita could wiggle her bottom, but that was an action she wisely did not practice. It would have been too inviting.

Knees were also bound to the legs with tight ropes cutting into the flesh. Rankin's promise of immobility was now true. I feared that the only possible movement on Rita's part might be to throw her body sideways and tip the stool over. I've never been tied over a stool like that, but I was sure she would not want to endanger herself with such an action.

I saw Rita's muscles strive against the ropes but there was no response. She was beautifully secured for the punishment to come. She could not even look up at us because her hair again hid her face.

Rankin resumed his command with gusto. Lovingly his hands caressed the sweet curves of Rita's bottom. As was to be expected, his finger penetrated deep with her asshole to bring a gasp from the bound girl. Lovingly he picked up the slender cane.

The new instrument sang its own song as it cut through the air to seek the feminine flesh which could not move. Its impact was different from the first one, but whether it hurt more or less was something Rita would have to tell us later. Even though it had left a rapidly reddening mark, Rita did not scream. At that moment Rankin was probably as happy as any man could ever be. And his circle of guests were too intent upon the bound girl to give voice to descent or make

a protest on her behalf. Rita had had all the help she was going to get. I stole a glance at the lovely Juno but her eyes were as bright in anticipation as anyone in the circle. Rankin rose his arm once more to deliver the stroke which would etch one more scarlet line across the soft curves. I suspected he was giving the strokes everything he had.

Rankin probably thought forty lashes with the cane was mere child's play but when he reached the count of six, he paused dramatically and, as though there was a strange communion between the two, Rita's voice came from beneath the fall of lovely hair with bell-like clarity.

"Thank you, Mr. Teller. I am sure I deserve this. Please don't stop."

Rita was incredible. I wished we could see her face but after all this was as much a punishment as entertainment for bored people. In restored good humour, Rankin leaned across the upturned bottom and turned the stool partly so that all could enjoy visual pleasure from his work. He stepped back and began the awful motions of the second half dozen cuttings of this girl. I longed to go away and scream but remained in pure fascination at what was taking place. Marjory was just the same. Later we might be ashamed but for now the eroticism of the punished flesh held us enthralled.

Six more strokes! And once again from beneath the long hair the clear feminine voice assailed us all. "Thank you,

Mr. Teller. You are whipping me beautifully. Please don't stop."

Rita could not move. I knew from personal knowledge how she was straining at the cords which held her tight. She was not trying to get loose so much as she was finding an outlet for agonized skin by thus simulation her efforts to escape. I was not sure she even wanted to escape. This girl was incredible!

I envied her with all my heart for I knew she was not gagged and I knew also in her condition I'd be screaming my head off and promising everything in return for a halt to the pain.

Rankin said casually, "Well, sweetheart, that's a dozen you've had and I do appreciate what you've had to say. Try the next six and see what you have to say about them." Once more he turned the stool and the cane flashed yellow in the sunlight.

Once more it was the same and Rita did not break. With the end of each half dozen she came up with some glowing tribute to the man who had given her such pain. I knew now that she was mocking Rankin Teller as though daring him to do his worst. I was pretty sure that had not the guests expressed their sympathy the poor girl might have found herself hung up by her thumbs at the end of forty strokes. Or perhaps strung up by her heels to display her beauty in a painful exposure. But Rankin didn't want to

anger his guests too much and cast the cane aside at the end of forty. He began the task of untying the maiden who had offered him nothing but thanks and gratitude for punishment she did not deserve. Rita's bottom was scarlet and purple. She had been well and truly caned and I wondered how she was ever going to sit down.

Rankin knew about women, none of us could deceive him. And none of us were entirely immune to his charm, cruel as it might be. Having removed all the ropes, he tenderly raised the girl, holding her head against his shoulder with one hand while he used the other to explore the surface of the flesh he had just thrashed. Rita took that, too, and spoke loud enough for all of us to hear. "You're a wonderful Master. Thank you for caning me. Is there anything else I can do to give you pleasure?"

If Rankin had been the ordinary horny male, he would have laid her on the deck and taken her. But Rankin could get all the sex he might desire in the privacy of his quarters where a girl could be spread-eagle on his bed or hung by her wrists in the two postures I had discovered he preferred. What he did now raised a question mark in all our minds. He took a pair of handcuffs from his pocket, turned Rita around and locked her wrists in steel behind her back. Then he patted a wounded bottom and sent her to find companionship where ever it might be.

Before the crowd dissolved he made an announcement involving Marjory and me. We were called up to stand beside him while he explained. “Folks, there here girls don’t mean nothing to any of you. They’re the prisoners of the Rankin’s Pride and we do what we please with them. They’re having a rest today and they’ve been watching Rita get marked up the same as the rest of you. But tomorrow each of them is going to be branded with the letters of my initials. You’re all invited to the party.” He slapped Marjory playfully on her bottom and pinched my nipple so hard I cried out. Then he sent us to find Rita.

Our minds were in turmoil. To be branded on bare skin with the initials of a man we had come to loath was a fate we would rather not have to face. But on the Rankin’s Pride there was no escape for any girl. I feared by this time the next day I would carry “Rankin Teller” somewhere on my body, and would carry it for the rest of my life. I trembled and had trouble standing.

“The son of a bitch, I didn’t think he’d do it!” Marjory muttered. “If he wants us branded, it means he’s going to keep us around and there’ll be no rescue. It’s going to happen and we might as well get used to the idea. Let’s go to the bar and get drunk. After all, it is our day to howl.”

The guests always welcomed us at the bar. If our hands were cuffed behind our backs, there were many who would feed drinks to these naked girls. Today our hands

were joined in front and we could lift our own glasses. Rita was already there and even though she had no hands, her needs were being attended to with admiration by all. She was willing to display her wounds, both the hands and the very discolored and sore bottom she dared not sit down upon. She laughed at the exclamations they evoked. “I’m a natural born submissive,” she explained. “I know I don’t look and act like one but I’ve gone through three husbands who simply couldn’t believe I was the way I am. They couldn’t whip me, they couldn’t buy a pair of handcuffs, and they all refused to turn our basement into a dungeon in which I would be imprisoned when I was naughty.” She sighed. “Maybe one of these days I’ll find a guy who’s really into it. I wonder if I could marry Rankin Teller?”

Marjory and I both knew of the wonderful eroticism of being punished by The Male. But neither of us were in Rita’s class. Marjory could control herself far better than I, but in the end both of us could be broken under the male rod, whether it was one to penetrate our sheaths or one to beat our bodies. Marjory suggested that Rita go ahead and propose marriage to Rankin because some girl had to marry him sometime. We were certain he would not bestow such a favor on either of us.

It would have been a pleasant afternoon had it not been for our sentence. Marjory and I tried to be casual about the branding to those who asked about it. The promise of such agony was obvious to all and need not be spoken aloud.

When it gave guests pleasure, we discussed our feelings. Many seemed avidly interested in how we were approaching such an ordeal.

It was probably the pleasantest day since we had been hauled to safety from the sea. That night there was something new. At the appropriate time we were taken to the ship's brig and ironed with every chain or bit of metal the damned place possessed. The weight of the shackles and chains was a punishment. But for me the brig has always been a place of pure terror in the incredible degree of helplessness it overwhelms a girl with.

Marjory and I slept together as best we could, hugging and touching to the limit allowed. The crewman who chained us there and brought us food laughed in genuine enjoyment at our sad reactions to this imprisonment. Most girls never discover what it's like to be the slave-girl of a man and I don't suggest they ever try it.

I could understand the guests becoming bored with the handful of girls on board who would drop to the floor and spread their legs at a command. The little diversions Rankin provided were welcome changes from plain and simple screwing. After breakfast the next day, we were to become the next diversion presented by the Rankin's Pride.

Marjory and I found ourselves upon the same stage that yesterday had provided a school room. But now the props were horrible in their simplicity. There was a pile of ropes

and cords, a heavy timber structure obviously designed to hold two girls, and a smoking brazier of glowing coals with two wicked irons by which our skin would soon be marked. Each had a wooden handle. Knowing the uselessness of struggling, we stood erect as our arms were gathered behind our back, the hands placed palm to palm, and the wrists bound with tight ropes. Immediately our elbows were pushed together and bound with thin cord that cut in incredibly and would have been a punishment all by itself. But today it was merely part of the restriction to hold us for the real punishment. I was then positioned astride one of the strange timbers. Rankin grasped my hair in one hand and my tied wrists with the other to pull my head hard down and raise my bound arms so high I had to bend more than double. I was then pushed forward until the back of my neck came up against a vertical beam. My arms were then tied to that beam forcing my head against the beam on which I sat and holding my head and arms solidly immobile. It was horrible, I could not move. My limited vision beheld everything upside down.

This would have been enough but Rankin used more rope to bind my knees together then my ankles. Then he lashed my lower legs from the knees to ankles to the beam. I found myself in a position somewhat like that of Rita the previous day, my bottom sticking up in the air and all I could do was wiggle that bottom. Marjory was treated in the same way. We were both panting hard from the

unnatural position when Rankin lovingly caressed our bottom and told us we could rest a while before feeling the burn of red-hot irons.

I will never know if the awful binding by which we were secured might not have given us something else to think about beside the coming brands. The guests used the rest period to feel and finger our tightly bound bodies. With gasping breaths we tried to answer their questions as to what it felt like and were we scared. They scattered when Rankin returned. The first thing he did was take an iron from the fire and hold it for our inspection.

I could easily feel the heat from that glowing metal as he explained that we were being marked with the same crude instruments as were used on cattle on ranches. “These irons are crafted to give the simulation of a script rather than the heavy imprint of headlines.” He tone was that of a person being extremely kind. Marjory and I said nothing. What the hell was there to say!

We soon knew where our flesh would feel the iron, as if the position did not so inform. Surprisingly it was not to be directly upon our bottoms as I had supposed. Instead we were to get the letters branded upon our thighs just below our hips on the outside of our legs. Rankin drew a circle upon our hips, one on each side. It was then we learned we would get the letter “R” upon one side, and the letter “T” upon the other. In short, we would be branded twice. I was

trying hard not to think about it, or the fear racing through my mind, when the first brand was pressed hard upon my skin. I could not move but I could certainly scream and that I did, loud and long. Even after the hot iron was withdrawn the agony continued in unbelievable pain. Someone put a cold cloth against the burned skin and immediately the pain abated. Perhaps Rankin had a touch of kindness someplace.

I was still crying when I heard Marjory scream and knew that the first letter had been branded into her flesh.

My second brand came unexpectedly soon and I screamed myself into unconsciousness. I must have been left bound while Marjory received her second brand, and a while after that too. Marjory told me that guests were allowed to come up and examine the freshly branded flesh while our bodies were still held immobile and in perfect position for viewing.

I had never felt so helpless in my life. The exclamations from viewers told us a good job had been done and the irons had left their imprint exactly as they should. I did not care. I longed only to be untied.

The ropes were taken off only when everyone who wanted to had been satisfied with their look. The cords and ropes so deeply embedded were cut away. I almost collapsed but Rankin's strong hands supported me. I recall his voice telling me I was a wonderful girl and now I had permission

to go to the bar where a few drinks would help me cope with the pain.

Almost as an afterthought, Rankin locked our handcuffs back upon our wrists.

The summons to the Captain's stateroom came just as we were starting to feel better under the influence of a cocktail and friendly voices. The crew member urged us to actually run so that we were panting when we stood in humble nudity before Rankin's desk to behold an troubled and angry man.

"Look," he said, "I'm going to leave with you. That Arab chap and his servants didn't die. We fished them out of the water while you were too busy worrying about yourselves. We had them in the brig all the time until his nibs, you call him Hamid, don't you, arranged a pretty fair ransom. In the middle of the night we gave him the long boat and sent him on his way. But I'll be damned if that asshole didn't get the wires humming all over the world. My radio man is picking up enough message to tell me this ship is going to be boarded and searched. Damn! I have to get rid of the two best girls I ever had. Shit!"

I could swear it was the same dingy. And the same handcuffs tight on my wrists behind my back. When we protested before being lowered to the awaiting ocean, Rankin cheerfully told that by a freak of fortune we were at the same position as when he had cast me adrift that first time

where the story started. There was no time to argue. Our tiny craft was lowered and cast loose beside the huge ship. We looked up at the faces leaning over the rail as our hands tugged at the steel cuffs. With frightening speed the huge bulk of Rankin's ship slipped by. In our tiny boat we watched Rankin's Pride recede until it was a tiny dot on the horizon.

"If he's right in his calculations, we'll come adrift on Palm Island," Marjory consoled doubtfully. "It doesn't seem possible now but that's what happened to you, darling."

We slumped on our seats to thankfully take stock of the food and water provided. We examined each other's bonds and brands. We gazed overboard for the inevitable sharks and discussed the possibility of survival.

"He didn't need to handcuff us this way," I complained bitterly.

"What's the difference?" Marjory offered. "If we had our hands there's nothing we could do with them. Except to hold each other. We're going to miss that when night time comes."

"Hamid is sure to find us," I said with a confidence I did not feel. "He'll have ships searching everywhere. He could find us in an hour."

"You can have your beloved Hamid," Marjory said disgustedly. "I'm still wearing the marks that son of a bitch put on

me. Let's make ourselves as comfortable as we can and pray Palm Island really lies ahead. Cheer up, Celie, we're going to make it. I know we'll make it."

Marjory was wonderful but I was thinking more and more of Hamid and his search. I don't know why but I could almost feel his arms in a growing confidence which kept the menace of the ocean at bay. I looked at my mistress and loved her longingly. I am such a silly girl with my divided loyalties.

I wondered how long it would take a brand to heal.