

LOCKED-IN

Where Do You Go To, My Lovely?

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Chapter One

Helana's Ordinary World - The Awakening

Tomas glanced down at Helena's seemingly lifeless form as she lay on the bed in the sterile room. It was very white in that room: white walls, white floor, white bed linen, white ceiling, with diffusing blinds covering the window and lending a translucent white quality to the light. And warm. It was uncomfortably warm for conscious people. The hospital staff kept the room at a constant temperature. After only a few minutes Tomas was perspiring slightly, even though he wore just the hospital regulation white tee shirt and light cotton trousers. The screens and machines emitted a low, barely audible hum as they continually monitored her life signs. He looked down at her. She was still very beautiful.

Her wheaten blond hair had grown and it was now of a length that would allow the controlling grasp of a hank in his hand. When he reached to lay his fingertips on her cheek he found it warm, and that always slightly surprised him because the pale translucence of her skin made one think that it would be cold to the touch. She gave out a little murmur and seemed to lean her head into his touch, and he smiled as he stooped to lay a small, delicate kiss on her lips. He reached with his other hand to lower the sheet from her chest, and saw that the tips of upturned nipples tented the thin fabric of her white gown on her well-rounded breasts. Impulsively, he lowered his head and lightly clamped one of the tips between his lips; when he released the tight bud there was a damp mark upon the fabric of her gown.

He heard footsteps clattering in the corridor outside. He turned to look at the closed door, but the sound of clipping female heels continued on, past the room, and soon faded away. Nurses and doctors only visited her at routine times, he knew, yet he might be unlucky and be surprised by an unscheduled visit. He dismissed the thought and threw the single sheet back. He glanced down at her body. The gown was short, midway up her thighs, and the loose folds had fallen into the creases of her slightly parted legs. He reached to raise the hem of the gown and saw that the hair between her legs was dark blonde and profuse; they plainly hadn't thought to keep it trimmed. A catheter tube emerged from her sex lips, and he gently removed it, allowing it to fall to the floor. Then he laid the palm of his hand over the mound of her sex, cupping it, and probing between her lips and pressing his thumb onto her clitoris. He felt the warm moisture of her cunt, and the small nub seemed to harden perceptibly beneath the pad of his thumb.

His cock was fiercely erect now, throbbing to an extent that was almost painful. He eased her up slightly and pulled the gown away; they hadn't fastened the garment at the rear, and it came off easily. Tossing the gown aside, he laid his palms on her breasts, cupping them gently, feeling their soft plump texture, and then lowering his lips to plant a kiss on each turgid pink tip. Straightening, with another glance at the door, he kicked off his shoes and quickly removed his clothing. It didn't take long. He climbed onto the bed, his knee pressing to separate her legs, pressing her left breast into the palm of his hand with the nipple pinched in the crook between his first fingers, and he eased his cock into her. He pushed his hand under her buttocks, pulling her onto him, and began to piston back and forth. As he did so, he pressed his lips against hers and darted his tongue forward, running its tip along the front of her teeth before probing further. It was an entirely functional fucking and his climax arrived quickly, and she gave a small moan as he pumped his ejaculate into her. He felt her hips begin to move against his, at first slowly and then with some ardour, and she was milking his cock, and her arms stretched to clasp around him. After a while, he eased his cock from her moist flesh and rolled

from her to stand naked beside the bed.

She opened her eyes and gazed at him. He stood motionless for a while, gazing back at her. Then he reached to stroke her breasts, and it made her shudder slightly. With a small laugh of delight, Tomas reached for his clothes.

“Welcome back,” he said, but she seemed bemused and continued to gaze at him, lying naked on the bed, pale and beautiful, without moving a single muscle.

Chapter Two

Call to Adventure - Transported to Another Time and Place

“Who is he?” she asked tremulously, scarcely daring to breathe as she stood naked in the centre of the circle. Her name on earth, in her own time, was Helena Winter. In this world, at that time, she was a captive, without a name.

“They call him Mostel the Head Slaver,” her captor replied calmly.

A slaver! She shot a fearful glance at the strange man whose fingers idly caressed the butt of his multi-blade whip. His dark face was devoid of expression as he calmly eyed her body. He unbuckled the sword belt from his waist and casually tossed it aside with a clatter.

Across the room, beyond the circle, the tall handsome man she had known as Tomas, he who had so cruelly duped her and delivered her to that alien place, leaned passively against a wall. The ragged heap of her clothing lay at his feet. She was all but naked. They had not even allowed her to strip herself but, instead, Tomas had effortlessly held her arms while the other, the slaver, cut the garments from her body with a razor-sharp dagger and only her stockings and shoes remained. And about her throat, replacing the thin chain necklace and locket she had worn, the slaver had snapped a collar, its cool leather worn and slick with the perspiration of others. A long length of thick cord was attached to a ring at the front of the collar, and it hung down her body and pooled at her feet.

The blonde girl cowered and whimpered audibly when the slaver reached between her breasts to grasp the long cord leash that dangled from the collar. Her fear produced a thin, slick sheen of sweat on her trim body. He pulled on the leash, drawing her nearer, and gently touched her shoulder with the whip tracing the leather over the tattooed flame that licked over her flesh there and reached up towards her soft throat. He watched with professional interest as she twisted her body to escape the dangling blades of the whip that had momentarily caressed the nipple of her right breast. The movement nicely displayed her luscious curves. The girl, aware of his cool appraising gaze, crossed her arms over her breasts and eyed him fearfully. “Please...” she said, on the edge of hysteria.

The slaver said something in a harsh, guttural tongue. She remained huddled in her own clasp hug. He shook out the whip and swung it in a shallow arc with single flick of his wrist. The supple leather straps caught her arms and some of her shoulders. She yelped in pain and shock and tried to leap back but was thwarted by the jerking restraint of the leash on her neck. He shook out the whip again, arm outstretched, blades dangling threateningly. His demand was implicit, and she allowed her hands to fall awkwardly to her sides. Nevertheless, he flicked out the whip again, and this time it struck squarely across her breasts. She squealed and turned in terror, as if to flee. The whip then unerringly found the firm globes of her buttocks. It was a harsh sting rather than a full, punishing blow, but a red hue immediately suffused her pale flesh. It was a strike to control her, to block and turn her to his whim. The Slaver smiled thinly.

She tried to suppress a sob and fell to her knees. “Please,” she blurted again as tears ran down her cheeks. “Please, let me go.”

He swung the whip, this time using the full force of his arm, watching the leather blades fly in a wide arc. There was a smooth hiss of displaced air before she screamed as leather lashed against her back. She yelped and rolled on the floor. He struck her twice more, burning her thighs and shoulders.

The slaver said something in even, measured tones, nudging her flank with his toe and jerking on the leash. She yelped in fear, but made no other response.

Helena screeched and writhed as he lashed her once more.

Mostel the Head Slaver spoke again. She looked across to her captor piteously. "I don't understand his language," she pleaded.

"He's ordering you to remove your shoes and stockings. Do it quickly. If you don't obey him immediately in all things, he will whip you."

Helena hastily kicked off her high-heeled court shoes.

"I don't understand him," she wept as she sat on the floor and peeled off a stocking

"You will learn quickly. For now, though, as a kindness, I will ask if I may translate his words."

"Yes, yes, thank you," she said, hurriedly removing the other stocking and bunching it in her hand before tossing it aside.

Tomas spoke to the slaver and the man replied, and they both laughed before the slaver spoke again.

"What did he say?"

"He said earth sluts always have to be beaten raw to make them quickly learn the language."

"Oh!" she gasped.

"But he's content for me to translate. You are to stand and present yourself for assessment."

"My God!" she murmured, aghast, but she scrambled to her feet and ran a hand over her dishevelled long blonde hair.

Tomas shrugged. "He is a slaver," he said simply. "And you must stand more prettily or he will beat you again."

The slaver spat out a command. Tomas glanced at him and nodded.

"Place your hands behind your head, lacing your fingers. Spread your feet wide, suck in your belly and thrust out your breasts. Look straight ahead and don't move until I tell you."

Helena Winter whined piteously but immediately obeyed, and she presented herself well, remaining statue-like except for the rise and fall of her chest as she breathed heavily. The leash dangled between her breasts and trailed on the floor. She stared straight ahead and kept her eyes fixed on the far wall. She must have noticed, probably for the first time since arriving there, that the walls were decorated with exotic mosaic tile murals. Each one depicted an explicit scene of degradation and slavery: a girl held, doubled over, her legs splayed with her feet behind her head as a male ravished her with a hugely tumescent organ; a naked girl dancing beneath the lash while all around her other slaves were being ravished in imaginative ways; a woman on all fours, a whip in her mouth, while a man took her from behind; a girl tied at a whipping post; a girl kneeling and giving oral service at the feet of an imperious male; a girl performing on the block. Also, and she could not have missed it, there was the mural of the huge mythical dragon engaged in the rape of a beautiful, fabulous bird... it was a similar scene to the one that was now indelibly tattooed on her own back. A flush suffused her face and spread prettily over her breasts. Perhaps she was involuntarily aroused by the inspection of her naked body by a strange man, for many girls are like that. However, it may have been that she realised that these men, unlike those she had known before, were Masters, true Masters of women. This, illustrated by the erotic images on the walls she had to keep looking at as she stood helpless, might have contributed to the subtle changes in her body. Her nipples had become tight little buds and the unmistakable fragrance of her sex juices lightly permeated the thin air.

"Head up! Eyes on wall! Open your mouth!"

The slaver rested the butt of his whip on her shoulder, and the leather blades draped down her back as practised fingers pushed back her lips to inspect her teeth. Then he tilted her head to look inside her mouth. He smelled her breath and then spoke.

“Put your tongue out and remain like that until told otherwise!” Tomas said.

She gazed wildly from the corner of her eye, but obediently put out her tongue. She remained thus, tongue poked out between her lips, as the slaver toyed with her pert breasts, kneading them to test the firmness of the flesh, lifting the orbs and then letting them fall to judge the bounce, squeezing and pinching her nipples to tease them into even greater prominence. Only the repeated caress of his whip blades against her back prevented her from recoiling in horror. Then his hands dropped to her waist, and his thumbs pressed into the soft flesh of her belly in an experienced manner. Apparently satisfied, he stooped and ran his hands smoothly over her thighs and calves, each limb alternately clasped. Then he was behind her, tracing his hands down her back, his fingers trailing, she knew, over the multi-coloured tattoo of the mythical beast that stretched from shoulder to hip. Then his hands cupped the full cheeks of her bottom. A broad hand on each of her buttocks, he said something in a sharp tone.

“You must bend your knees,” Tomas told her.

She reluctantly obeyed, and the slaver patted her shoulder with the butt of his whip, speaking a terse, single word.

“More!”

Her protruding tongue prevented her from gritting her teeth, but she remained stoically rigid as he probed her vagina, slipping his fingers into the inevitably moist folds. However, she squirmed perceptibly when he ran the pad of a finger gently round the bud of her clitoris, and she gave a sharp start as he tested the tightness of her anus. He asked a question as he patted her bottom and returned to stand in front of her.

“How old are you?” Tomas translated. As if frozen in position, she remained silent, fingers laced in her hair, bent forward, her knees flexed, her tongue pushed forward. “You may resume normal posture. How many years do you have?”

“Twenty-four,” she said, straightening

Despite the slaver’s hand that cupped her sex, she kept her hands on her head and her eyes fixed on the wall as Tomas reported her reply. The slaver was toying with her, it seemed. He rasped a command. Tomas did not speak but the slaver reached to grip her face in his other hand and forced her to look into his cold, grey eyes. He spoke again, the same insistent words. She gazed into his eyes like a doe confronted by a tiger. The slaver continued to hold her thus, face clamped in his steely grip, his other hand on her genitals. He rasped out the command again.

“You must press yourself against his hand and move your hips.” Helena was about to protest, and she hesitated for precious seconds. “Obey!” Tomas said.

With a strangled sob she pressed forward onto the hand between her thighs, gazing petrified into his hard eyes as she did so. The slaver spoke as she writhed on his hand, and he slipped a finger between the wet lips of her sex. Tomas made a comment, drawing a reply and small laugh from the slaver, to which Tomas responded with a longer diatribe, and all the time the girl was made to squirm against the manipulation of her sex.

“He complains that I never bring him virgins from Earth,” Tomas called to her. “I said they’re hard to find, and it’s not always my fault.”

“Make him stop, please.”

“He says you are a natural hot slave.”

“No,” Helena said, twisting involuntarily as the slaver’s free hand pressed, palm-down against the soft flesh of her stomach as he probed her cunt with the long, practised fingers of his other hand.

“You can’t resist. If you are the right type, then he will know. If that’s the case, they have ways to condition you to become a hot panting slut begging to be used.”

“No,” she wept again, but her hips were moving against the slaver’s fingers.

“They will train you and ignite fires within you that will keep you enslaved by your own needs. I’ve seen it happen so often.”

Eventually the hand left her body and yet her hips still moved slightly. The slaver sniffed at his finger and nodded in approval. He thrust it between her lips and, although she blanched, she obediently opened her mouth and took his finger deeply, sucking it clean as the two men spoke together. Mostel the Head Slaver pulled his from her mouth against her strong suction and, still in conversation, he moved behind her and reached forward between her legs to grasp the dangling leash.

“He thinks you will become an exquisite slave slut, and he’s pleased that your tattoo work has already been done,” Tomas said. “I am glad I arranged that.”

The slaver drew the cord tautly from the collar, manoeuvred it between the girl’s divide from front to rear, and pulled it hard so that it fitted tightly against her inner flesh. He tested the tension to ensure that it pressed against the tender mouth of her bottom. Satisfied, he gave one further pull and she gasped as the lips of her sex separated about the cord and it rasped against her engorged clitoris. He pulled it again, keeping it tight, increasing the tension on the bridge between her legs. He pressed a hand into her back and she was forced to move forward. The slaver kept the cord tight so that she was forced to walk on her toes to relieve the pressure.

“He has agreed to purchase you,” Tomas said as she was paraded past him on arched feet, with the calves of her legs tight, and her buttocks were clenched about the spiteful leash. “I have turned a profit.”

Chapter Three

Crossing the First Threshold - Enslaved

Mostel the Head Slaver took Helena into the bowels of his great house. He kept the leather that divided the clefts of her sex and buttocks very tight, forcing her to walk on the very tips of her toes, and steering her ahead of him with subtle pressure of the whip handle. The calves of her legs, held taut by the unnatural posture, were aching by the time they reached the lowest levels.

Helena was too bewildered and shocked to resist. She stood, weeping softly, when the slaver eventually removed the cord of the whip from her body, untied the lash from her collar, and then peeled the moistened leather away from her extremities. He said something to her and his forefinger rubbed tears away from her cheek. Then the same finger hooked under her collar, and he pulled her close to him. His other hand trailed down her body and delved between her legs, probing with his fingers. The penetration was uncomfortable, and Helena knew that she was dry there.

He released her and wandered to the rows of shelves that lined the entire the far wall of the dungeon. Numerous bottles and caskets lined these shelves, and he checked various items, evidently searching for a particular one. Eventually he returned to Helena, shaking a strangely shaped bota. She watched diffidently as he removed the bung from the bota and sniffed at the contents, closing his eyes as he appeared to savour the aroma. The flask was like nothing Helena had ever seen before, seemingly made from leather, and its neck had an oddly bulbous swelling at the end. Then, in a sudden swift move, before Helena could react, he grabbed her by the nose, pinched her nostrils and forced her head up and back. She opened her mouth in a gasp and he quickly popped the bulbous end of the flask into her open mouth. The bulb immediately expanded in her mouth to fill her cheeks. She gulped and squealed muffled, pleading protests, but he grabbed her wrists and effortlessly held them behind her with one large vice-like hand. Helena realised that she was effectively gagged by the device and quite unable to expel it from her mouth. With his free hand, the slaver grabbed a hank of her hair and yanked her head back until she found herself looking up with wild eyes at the body of the flask protruding from her mouth. Helena spluttered as bitter liquid swilled from the flask into her throat, and she had no option other than to keep swallowing. Terrified, spluttering, she writhed against his grip, trying to expel the contraption trapped behind her teeth. It was to no avail, and she continued to desperately swallow the bitter-tasting draught as it glugged in her throat. Eventually, he released her wrists and hair, and she bent forward, tugging at the flask. The slaver reached forward and rotated the body of the flask and the bulbous gag immediately softened in her mouth.

Helena straightened. Her throat and digestive tract was scorched by the liquor, but a pleasant sensation of languid warmth seeped outwards until it made her skin tingle. An extravagant and visible shudder coursed through her, causing her breasts to quiver. The slaver nodded and smiled knowingly as he saw her response. Helena wondered fearfully what kind of drug the flask had contained, but she couldn't deny the delicious pleasure that now caressed across her senses.

The slaver raised the flask before her eyes, upturned, and a single final drop swelled at the tip of the bulbous neck. He caught this droplet with a finger tip and licked at it. "Zul," he said, smiling. Then, as if in explanation, he half-turned her and tapped his moist finger to the tattoo on her back. "Zul," he said again.

Helena stared at him uncomprehendingly. The liquid warmth continued to seep through

her body, seeming to find settle in a slowly swirling vortex located in her lower belly. She was close to being completely undone by the drug. The slaver stroked his finger down the ridge of her spine and she shivered. He laid the empty bota on the bench behind her, and then stroked the soft flesh of her lower belly. She sighed and leaned into his touch. He smiled and again felt between her thighs, and this time she knew that he would find warm moisture there. “Bennu,” he murmured as his fingers stroked her sex lips from apex to anus.

As if transfixed, Helena surrendered to his caresses, and the heat in the seething vortex in her belly seemed to increase. She watched as he unbuttoned and removed his tunic with one hand, while all the time he continued to stroke her sex with the other. He was naked beneath the single garment, and she gazed wide-eyed at his large, already erect penis. His pubis was completely hairless, presumably shaven, but in place of the pubic hatch there was a vivid tattoo of a dragon’s head, artfully placed so the cock appeared to emerge from its fiery jaws. He saw her looking at his cock and its surrounding image, and his hand stroked the length of the thickly veined shaft. “Zul!” he said again.

Without further ado, he pushed Helena back until her buttocks pressed against the bench. She lay back on the rough wooden surface and parted her legs, and gave out a small sigh as the head of the cock nestled against her pussy. Without ceremony or foreplay, he slowly sank the shaft into her hot, hungry flesh. The vortex of desire swirled inside her belly, and she heard herself moan. The cock was huge, bigger than she had ever taken before, but her channel expanded and embraced it, and she found her legs wrapping around his waist.

Helena had never known such pure, sensual pleasure, and neither had she ever before felt the grip of boundless lust in her belly, seemingly centre on the massive dragon-cock of the slaver. Even as her sodden flesh hungrily suckered around the cock, Helena knew that something had irrevocably shifted in her physiology and being. Never again would she be the same innocent woman.

“More,” she pleaded breathlessly, clasping her legs to his waist and hooking her ankles together behind his back. “More, please.”

He then fucked her hard, his body rising and slamming against her without mercy. Helena revelled in her ravishment as the cock repeatedly thrust forward to fill her cunt. She heard herself mewling and grunting, and her finger nails raked his back in frenzy. A whirlpool of hot lust was spinning wildly within her belly now, seeming to reach down to her clitoris with fine silken strands of sizzling pleasure. The slaver’s passion, though, was controlled and calculated. He fucked her to the very edge of her sanity and then retreated slightly before renewing his onslaught. Only at the moment of his choosing was she allowed the overwhelming and utter destruction of her previous life, wrought by the most shattering orgasm she had ever known.

Helena must have passed out. When she came to, her splayed legs were hanging limply and the slaver was still fucking her. He was intent on his own satisfaction. His hips pistoned back and forth and she lay inertly beneath him, quite unable to move, until his muscles bunched and he groaned loudly. The cock twitched, pumping semen inside her with each pulse.

When finished, without any pretence to affection, the slaver raised his body from her and pushed upright on strong forearms. Helena lay immobile on the bench, her eyes glazed, lips parted lasciviously.

“Zul!” The slaver pointed to his still erect cock.

Helena, thoroughly rutted, was unable to stir a single muscle and she gazed up at him.

The slaver patted her wet cunt and said, “Bennu.”

He then, without pausing to sponge her sweating, soiled flesh, scooped her up and carried her inert body to a slave cell and laid it on a thin mattress.

Chapter Four

The Approach to her Inmost Cave - Locked in a Dark Dungeon

Helena awoke in total darkness, totally disorientated. Where was she? Probably underground. How long had she been there? The air was cool on her bare skin. Her every muscle ached and she realised that the only shred of comfort on the hard ground was a thick padded blanket; it smelled musty, with overtones of carbolic acid or lye soap. She remained lying prone and still in the pitch-black for a few moments, trying to sift reality from nightmare. The sharp animal smell of her own stale sweat assailed her nostrils. Dried semen streaked her thighs. Gradually, she remembered the events: her assessment, her sale, incarceration, the fucking...

Nevertheless, she couldn't remember being put in this hostile, dark place. Panic suddenly gripped her. She sat upright and screamed, loud and long, and the sound echoed eerily from damp stone walls. There was no response, though. Her hands flew to the leather collar that encircled her throat. It was tightly affixed with no discernible buckle, and impossible to remove. It was true, then. She had been enslaved! She fought for her sanity, trying to make herself calm.

'Don't panic,' she thought. 'Think. Think.'

She felt claustrophobic in the pitch black but, reaching into the darkness with outstretched arms, she realised that the area was quite large. Her bladder ached for relief and she was thirsty, too.

She called out. "Hello.... Is anyone there?"

She waited for a few seconds, listening, hearing the steady drip of water somewhere, but there was no reply. She lay back again and fought to ward off the terror that threatened to engulf her. Assessing the facts, checking her resources... she was naked, of course, except for the hated collar. She fumbled with the flat of her hands on the ground around her and found that the floor was either stone or brick, gritty and uneven. Would people know she had gone missing? If so, they might conceivably help. Yet this place was probably beyond their reach. It was like nothing she had ever known. Even the gravity seemed to be subtly different.

"Oh God, someone help me!" she said aloud.

She lay back in the darkness, fighting for sanity and sense.

It all gradually returned to her befuddled mind, the events of the previous day, when things had seemed normal.

Yesterday, when things were 'normal'

"Remember! Your real story begins TODAY, Helena."

She had gasped as she stood beneath the gushing stream of the shower. She wiped the water from her eyes. She looked at the note. Then, looking down again, at her body, she saw the strange new image that curled around her hip, like a feathered tail, the tip of which trailed into the blonde bush of her pubic hair; she rubbed hard at the multi-coloured mark, but it was deeply-ingrained in her skin.. A tattoo. The note was there surely enough, too. She had seen it at virtually the same time as she stepped into the shower cubicle. The note was a small square piece of yellow paper, a Post-it Note, scrawled with green ink, water-splashed and plastered onto the white-tiled wall. As she stared, open-eyed, the note slid down the wet tiles, swirled in the suds at her feet, and then wedged in the waste outlet. Helena stooped to pick up the sodden scrap, cringing slightly as her wet hip touched the cold tiles, but the soggy paper fell apart in her fingers and drained down the swirling waste outlet. She hopped from the shower cubicle, as if shocked by electric, turning off the faucet and scurrying across the room, dripping a wet trail.

Breathless now, she went to the dressing table, reaching for a long white towelling robe that lay on the stool there. As she turned, about to don the gown, she glanced in the mirror and something momentarily arrested her world. There, on her neck, was a red-orange mark, like a flickering flame, which disappeared over her shoulder. She twisted her body and looked back into the mirror.... Looking down, she saw the image curled around her hip, like a feathered tail, the tip of which trailed into the blonde bush of her pubic hair. My God! Her knuckles flew to her mouth in utter alarm. There, on her back, from shoulder down to hip, were emblazoned the multi-coloured images of two strange mythical beasts, a dragon and a bird. The dragon breathed a fiery orange-red flame that curled around her neck and licked up towards the soft underbelly of her throat, and the bird writhed helplessly beneath the scaled beast, impaled from the rear, her long delicately feathered tail curling round Helena's hip and laying against her sex. From the rear view, the lurid, detailed tattoo dominated her entire upper body. It was new, it hadn't been there yesterday, and there was no pain or soreness... She gasped. It was powerfully erotic, and not the kind of image a modern woman would choose to display on her back.

Helena sat before the dressing table and gazed at her distraught face, framed with water-slicked blonde hair. An involuntary yelp escaped her lips as she saw another small yellow note attached to the mirror. A crude arrow, pointing downwards, had been drawn in green ink. Directly beneath the note, propped against the mirror, was a large A4 manila envelope, bulky, a package, addressed in bold green letters to "HELENA WINTER".

Her hand flew to her mouth, and she gnawed nervously on her knuckles. What was happening?

Helena remained there in the pitch darkness for a long time. She held the palm of her hand directly in front of her eyes, mere inches away, but she could not see it. The black-out was total. It was perhaps a full day before anyone came to her cell. She lay during that time on the thin mattress, alone with her thoughts. After some time, unable to wait any longer, she had desperately sought somewhere to relieve her aching bladder. Rising to her feet, using the wall as a guide and reaching out with her foot to detect any obstacles, she had felt her way blindly to the furthest corner of the cell; as it turned out, this was not too far away, and she calculated that the cell was some 3 meters square. Almost ashamedly, she had squatted here and pissed on the floor, feeling the splashes of urine on her feet and ankles. She then found her way back to the mattress. Hunger came and went, and she regulated the rhythm of time there by the metronomic drip she could hear. Water! Her mouth was dry and parched. She half thought to try to find the source of the drip, to at least wet her lips, but she quickly dismissed the thought, aware that the dripping liquid she could hear may not even be water.

Nobody else had ever been in her secret room, to her knowledge. It was not exactly a secret room, merely one of three bedrooms in her Hertfordshire apartment, but it was a place to which nobody else was ever admitted. The room was her very private inner sanctum, not to be sullied. Now, it seemed, even this sanctum had been violated.

Helena's hand hovered over the strange brown envelope on the dressing table. She caught sight of her image in the mirror and thought that she had the look of a wild, hunted animal.

Helena looked around the room. Nothing appeared to have been disturbed. It was a part of Helena that only she could access, and then only when she chose to go there. The room was even more than that, though. It was the museum of Helena Winter's life. Now someone else had been there, uninvited and unwelcome.

When she left her secret room, she made sure it was securely locked and then went to the kitchen. She was going to make coffee but something, a noise perhaps, made her go to the entrance hall. As she again checked the locks, the doorbell chimed and she let out a loud yelp,

startled by the noise. Helena made a conscious effort to regain control of her actions. Hand on her fast-beating heart, she leaned with her back against the door and remained silent. The door bell chimed again. After some moments of indecision, Helena ventured to release the two deadlocks and pull the door marginally ajar against the security chain. "Yes? Who is it?"

"Delivery for Miss Winter."

"Sorry?"

"Helena Winter?"

'Yes.'

"This is it then. It's for you"

Helena realized that she was hyper-ventilating. The voice seemed genuine enough. Peering out, she saw a small, squat bespectacled man standing in the hall, squinting quizzically at the very narrow gap between door and jamb. Drawing the robe about her, she steadied herself and released the security chain. The man sighed impatiently.

Today - in a slave cell

She gave a jolt when she heard a bolt suddenly slam back, metal against metal. A flickering light illuminated the cell. She raised herself up, sitting upright on the support of one straightened arm. A man entered, and he carried a bucket of water, its handle hooked over the crook of his arm, and in the hand of that same arm he held a small shallow pan. He also carried a flaming torch in his other hand, and he reached to slot this into a metal holder high on the wall. The water in the bucket slopped slightly as he moved, and some soaked his white tunic, which was similar to the one the slaver had worn, but of rougher stuff. He also carried a jumble of leather straps loosely draped over one shoulder. He was unshaven and unkempt. She assumed he was a guard or a menial judging by his appearance – he was certainly some distance beneath the exalted station of Mostel the Head Slaver.

Helena blinked, her eyes unaccustomed to sight. The guard turned to face her. She looked round the room, confirming that it was grey and starkly bare, but she saw a metal pail in the corner opposite to where she had urinated. The guard saw the direction of her gaze, and he probably saw the tell-tale damp area on the grimy floor. In any event, he grinned as he placed the bucket of water on the floor, a few feet from the mattress. He then stooped and set down the shallow pan on the floor in front of Helena. She saw that the metal pan contained food, a porridge of some sort, distinctly unappetizing to her, but pangs of hunger suddenly tugged at her stomach. How long was it since she had eaten? She reached for the pan but the guard moved it away from her grasp with his sandaled foot.

Helena looked up at him, uncomprehendingly. The man wagged his finger, side to side. He then raised the hem of his tunic to reveal his flaccid, drooping cock nestling against a pair of large hairy balls. He jerked his hips slightly, expectantly, his meaning clear. Helena shook her head in horror. No! The guard merely shrugged and pushed the food further away. She shook her head once more. She would rather starve. He reached for the bucket and placed it in front of her, and then began to stroke his cock to erection. Helena scooped her hands into the icy cold water and drank thirstily, all the times keeping wary eyes on the guard, like a timid animal at a trough.

The guard held his erect shaft, as if offering it to Helena. She again shook her head and cringed back on the mattress, cold water splashing on her breasts. He laughed. Then he began to masturbate himself, until, after only a minute or so, thick wads of milky-white viscous sperm spat onto the pan of porridge. He then slid the pan back towards Helena with his foot. She stared at it in horror. 'Surely he doesn't expect me to eat that?' she thought in panic.

Instead though, the guard reached for the bucket and casually emptied the icy-cold water over Helena's head, mindless that it also soaked the mattress beneath her. Nevertheless, she used the opportunity to try to clean the excesses of sweat and semen from her body.

The guard grinned as Helena wiped her thighs with the palms of her hands. He took the leather tack from his shoulder and shook them out to disentangle the straps.

Chapter Five

Helena's Ordeal - Inducted as a slave

Helena was almost hysterical, and her back stung mightily from a harsh whip wielded unmercifully by the brute of a guard. To her mortification, while she still dripped and shivered from her dousing with icy water, he had fitted a stylised leather bridle about her head, with a metal bit drawing her lips back, and long trailing reins attached by brass rings. He knotted the reins about his fist and she had no choice but to run or be dragged as he strode from the cell on long, muscular legs exposed by his short tunic. He led her outside onto the forecourt, where the small gravel stones hurt her bare feet. She was utterly terrified and bemused. He had taken her to stand beside the most horrific and strange beast she had ever seen in her whole life, and she screamed in terror, her lips wrenching against the harsh bit, as this monstrous creature's long black, reptilian neck snaked out, and a huge tongue licked curiously at her cunt. The guard merely laughed and whipped her to silence before leaping onto the back of the beast. He now adroitly manoeuvred this prancing lizard-like steed on the forecourt of the slave house. Helena was utterly beside herself in terror. Now, though, a dozen naked women ran from a nearby shed, herded forward by four large hounds that snapped at their heels and made them squeal in fear, and they were herded to gather round the huge snorting beast. Unlike her, these women wore no bridles and ran free. Some of the women had large tattoos imprinted in the skin of their backs, like Helena herself, and each graphic image explicitly depicted the violent coupling of a fiery dragon and a beautiful, reluctant woman-bird.

While the guard reined his mount in the centre of the stone-paved courtyard, the women wheeled around, kept moving by the hounds, taking care to avoid the cracking whip. The dogs occasionally issued loud and booming barks, urging the women to greater activity, and Helena could also hear the wheezy breathing of the guard's mount. This lizard-like beast seemed to be slow and torpid, uncomfortable in the cool air. And it was certainly cold: the breath of the slaves plumed in the chill morning air; Helena's flesh was rendered pink-blue, and the honey-coloured tips of her harnessed breasts had become hard and protuberant.

Then the signal came. A whip cracked and there was a pained shriek from the huddle of women. Instantly, the herd sped forward, and Helena ran too, anxious not to be pulled from her feet. The hounds snapped at the feet of the other women, but they left Helena to run alone beside the beast, with the guard tugging the reins attached to her bit as he urged his mount to a trot and then to a steady canter. Instinctively, she reacted as the leather slapped against her shoulders or tugged to turn her head. Outside the stockade there were more guards, riding the same kind of reptilian animals, and they fell in behind. She was already breathless, but she was also terrified by the phalanx of guards riding behind her and so she struggled to keep up, her breasts bobbing as she ran, her breath coming in heaving pants. More than once, Helena shrieked as her guard caught her cold, sensitised flesh with his whip, urging her forward. The riders allowed no slacking in the pack.

A river carved through rock at the foot of the valley, terminating at a small wharf. A flat bottomed boat, its square sail tilting at half mast, was being loaded with barrels and sacks by a shackled gang of naked women. They looked up and wiped their sweating brows as the herd of slaves trotted past with the hounds streaming around their legs. They crossed a shuddering old timber bridge and turned right onto a wide path that inclined steeply up the hillside amidst trees and undergrowth.

The leading guard called a command, and he reined in his lizard-mount as the party began a long and sharp ascent. The other riders dismounted and walked beside their animals.

Steam rose from the sweating, naked flesh of the women. Breasts tipped with thrusting, erect nipples rose and fell quickly as they trudged up the hill. Helena trooped in front of the guard, acutely aware that her leading-rein was still grasped in his hand. One of the women spoke to another as she looked apprehensively at the path that stretched upward, arrow-straight, as far as she could see, and the other said something in reply. This brought a barking command to silence from one of the guards, and the offending slave screeched as a stout lash rapped against her buttocks. Helena was startled and pulled at the bridle in an involuntary gesture borne of fear. A sharp pain suddenly seared across the top of her thighs. It seemed that their whips were not necessarily applied in punishment but for instruction, too. For about a mile, then, she trudged silently up the steep slope, listening to the strange language of the men, her new masters, it seemed, as they chatted amiably and drank liquor from leather flasks.

The group finally reached the brow of the hill, where the path levelled. They rested there for a few minutes and the women huddled together to keep warm, viewing the sweeping panorama below. The vantage point afforded views of the entire valley, stretching past small villages to a larger town in the distance. After a short time, the riders mounted their beasts, and they cracked their whips. The entire pack moved off again at a brisk trot. They turned sharply off the path, through a coppice and then down through steep pastures. The shrill blast of a horn rent the air. The women darted forward, leaping over rocky outcrops, spurred by cajoling shouts and cracking whips. The running was easier now, downhill, on mossy ground hardened by frost. The hounds yapped excitedly, racing down the valley to where the river fed into a wide pool that was surrounded by a small village. There they stopped again, and the riders dismounted, allowing their lizard-mounts to drink. Helena stood, stooped over, her hands on her knees, breasts heaving and dishevelled blonde hair hanging forward. The guard dropped her rein to the floor.

A number of tunic-clad young men emerged from a stable-block carrying blankets. Chivvied by these men, Helena hurried along with the other women into the stables, the long leathers trailing behind her. It was warm inside and clouds of steam rose from a long, narrow stone-lined trench which circled the large area. The grooms gave their orders, and the slaves hurried down the cobbled slope which disappeared into the deep trough. A groom stooped to grasp Helena's trailing leathers, and he used them to pull her towards him. She was reluctant, but he merely unbuckled the bridle and removed the bit from her mouth before smacking her bottom with the flat of his hand and sending her scurrying to plunge into the warm water. She soon found that her feet did not touch the bottom but the trough was just wide enough to allow a woman to swim and she automatically adopted a breast stroke. Most of the other women, it seemed, were non-swimmers and they made slow progress pulling themselves along by the wooden hand-rail at the side, and soon Helena learned to twist and sidle past each of them. A groom, standing on the central island urged the procession of women around the narrow trough... once, twice, three times. Then, as each woman was allowed to emerge from the steaming, soapy water, another fellow awaited her at the top of the slope.

Trembling, Helena took her place in the line of women who stood with hands atop their heads and legs widely-spaced. A groom vigorously rubbed her body with rough sack cloth. The groom, a blond fellow, smiled at her squirming embarrassment as his hands roamed over her body. His fingers traced over the tattoo on her back and he gave a low whistle of appreciation. The other women, she saw, undoubtedly conditioned by strict discipline and intensive training, betrayed neither embarrassment nor modesty as the grooms roughly dried every inch of their bodies. The blond man presently took out a comb fashioned from bone or ivory, and teased the knots from her lank, wet hair. Then he locked leather cuffs about her ankles and wrists, matching the collar, each with a similar stout brass ring. She was made to lie on her back on a rough hessian mat and then, with practised and easy efficiency, the groom used the rings on the

cuffs to clip her wrists to her ankles. She gasped as he then gently parted her sex lips as she lay with her raised knees widely spread. He said something, his voice gentle and soft, but she didn't understand. Looking to either side, she saw that the other women were receiving similar treatment but they were lying back voluntarily, docile and quiet. The flat of the groom's hand on her belly was at once warmly reassuring and restraining, and she gave a start when his other hand laved thick cool lather between her widely-splayed legs and massaged it into her cunt and anus. Then he was pulling and stretching her flesh and a sharp blade scraped the thatch of her pubic hair. He worked quickly, and she lay back with her eyes closed, not daring to move as he repeatedly laved her intimate parts with more lather and carefully shaved her clean, trailing the tips of his fingers over her soft skin. Presently, he dried her with a soft cloth, and she then felt soothing oil trickle over her soft intimate folds, and he massaged it into her with the palm of his large hand, cupping her sex and probing between her cunt lips with his fingers.

When he unclipped her wrists, she raised herself to look down at her body and saw that her oiled slit was smooth and entirely denuded of hair. The groom smiled as she gazed at her body and he then cleared away the bowl of lather and the soft cloth.

However, another order was barked by a man who seemed to be another slaver, and there was sudden movement all around her from the other women.

Chapter Six

Death and Rebirth - Lana, the slave

A whip cracked and the naked young women hastily stood closely together, in line, one behind the other, waiting to stand before a clerk who sat at a rough-hewn bench with ledger, quill and ink. Helena leapt to take her place at the back of the line and a girl immediately moved closely behind her.

The dank and cavernous area was in the bowels of the building. It was dimly-lit with flickering torches, and furnished with black iron: stout bars, as thick as a woman's wrist; heavy, studded doors with huge iron hinges and locks; massive hooks and bolting rings anchored to rock walls; chains of various gauges...

Helena could feel the stone-hard tips of turgid nipples and the flat palm of a woman's small hand on her back. She inched forward until the tips of her own breasts brushed against the woman in front as they rose and fell. A slaver barked another terse order: 'Silence!' She was already learning some of the words. The line shuffled forward, pausing briefly as each slave stood before the clerk. Each time, the clerk asked a question and the woman before him answered. Soon there was only one girl in front of her. He asked a question, one word, and the girl answered with a single word.

She watched as the man made a note in his book, and as he then reached forward with one hand to cup the woman's left breast, holding it steady as he marked a cipher on the soft mound with a black grease stick.

Then it was her turn. The clerk asked the same one word question he had asked the others. She answered, "Helena." The man looked at her and hesitated, and she momentarily thought that she had misunderstood. Then he said, 'Lana.'

Lana! It was her slave name, she knew. Lana. She would need to get used to the name.

She watched, trembling, as he scratched a note on his ledger, the latest on a long list. He then laid the quill aside and reached to cup her breast before scribing the rounded tip of the smooth grease pen on her flesh, leaving a stark black glyph above her erect nipple. Then a nearby groom grabbed her upper arm and moved her forward into another room.

Three more grooms were waiting in the next room. Lana stood quietly as one of the men weighed the woman who preceded her. Helena quaked when she heard a piteous frightened plea from the entrance to the adjoining room, followed by a screech of pain and anguish. She looked, wide-eyed, firstly to the door from whence the sounds of misery came, and then at the grooms and the girl who was being weighed. The grooms seemed entirely unconcerned. The girl, a pretty dark creature, also shot terrified glances towards the door as one of the men positioned her girl on a giant set of scales comprised of huge brass trays that hung from chains. Lana found herself suddenly thrust by a groom against a post that was crudely marked with graded measurements. The man called out her height to another clerk as he traced another black cipher on her breast with the tip of his finger. When the girl was dragged from the scales to the next room, she was fearful and reluctant.

The groom at the measuring rod looked up and asked Helena the one word question again. 'Lana,' she replied, glancing apprehensively after the other girl. The groom ignored her skittish fears and pushed her towards the scales and she stood on the pan, holding onto the thick chains to steady herself. There was another scream of pain from the adjacent room, and Lana gave a start that made the weighing pan sway. The groom was piling weights on the opposite pan of the scale and he eventually called out her weight for the clerk. Then she was herself being pulled to the next room.

As Lana stumbled into the room, her wild eyes took in the scene there. A vertical iron grid, some 8 feet long and 3 feet wide, was propped on a stout support in the centre of the room. More terrifying to Helena, a brazier stood beside the rack, with iron rods thrust into its glowing coals. She didn't resist as the groom pressed her face forward against the rack, and she remained still as he fastened her there with a thick broad leather strap that encircled her waist, cinching it tightly until her belly pressed against the metal. He then tied her wrists above her head and, when he slapped the inside of her thighs, she spread her legs and remained thus as he secured her ankles too. She knew that the man was going to burn a brand into her flesh but she was helpless to prevent him. Almost drowning in fear, Lana felt the groom's fingers pressing into the soft flesh of her arse, presumably gauging where the iron would be placed. Although tied securely, she could have craned her neck, turned her head, and watched what the man was doing. However, she didn't have the strength of will to do that. She could hear him stirring the coals in the brazier. Then, suddenly, astonishingly, a searing, abominable pain shrieked from her left buttock, ricocheting through her entire body, seeming to burn every nerve strand and muscle fibre, sending her screaming and thrashing in her bonds. She vaguely heard a voice counting in that strange tongue. The iron remained steady, embedded in her flesh, hissing, producing a sharp acrid aroma that of burned flesh. Then it was cleanly withdrawn and pulled away. When she was unfastened, she collapsed into the arms of the groom, with barely sufficient time before merciful blackness descended to feel him scoop her up into his arms.

Helena's Accident Explained

Lana, the newly-enslaved young woman, slept fitfully, restlessly, in yet another slave cell. Are all slave cells the same, in the end? Is every room a slave cell, in reality? Perhaps that depends on your own reality. Lana's dreams were vivid and strange.

She stared at the far wall of the room, momentarily fearful that it might have been desecrated. She knew every single piece that was stuck to that wall, every last scrap, and nothing had been touched. It was the very stuff of her life. The stuff on that wall was all she knew; it was everything she had ever known, in fact, and that was not necessarily the same thing. Helena's whole life, or what she could remember of it, was represented on that wall. There, pinned or tacked to the plain cream painted surface, was a seemingly chaotic jumble of photographs, posters, scraps of material, a small doll, birth certificate, school exercise book with childish handwriting, greeting cards, letters, newspaper clippings, a single dead once-red rose, framed certificates, a wedding invitation, her marriage certificate, a wedding photograph, receipts, bank statements, notes with large block letters recording some significant event or other. There was also a large, glossy photograph of her husband, smiling, happy, and pinned alongside it was his death certificate.

This, quite literally, was Helena's memorabilia. It was the flotsam and jetsam of her life, swept in and out with the tides of her mind. She liked that analogy, the notion of a huge, deep sea where memories floated and swirled like bobbing corks, taken by the random flow, haphazardly washed onto the shores of her consciousness. As each piece was discovered and recognised, for good or bad, it was seized and clutched desperately, and hoping that each tiny precious fragment of memory might expand her consciousness. And once a trifle was recovered, no matter how small, she embraced it and anchored its context by pinning a symbol to her memory wall.

Suddenly, belatedly, the thought occurred to her that the intruder might still be in the apartment. She gasped at her own lack of caution and awareness. Leaving the package untouched, she rose uncertainly and crept to the door, drawing back the bolts. She opened the door and peered out apprehensively, waiting long seconds. Absolute silence! Helena found herself angrily shaking her knotted fists. Her absolutely safe space had been invaded yet there

was just the silence, ominous and pregnant. Heart pounding, Helena crept to the entrance hall to check the locks on the door there... two strong Yale deadlocks, a slip-bolt and chain, everything was secure. She relaxed somewhat and ran a hand through her dishevelled hair.

By the time that Helena had completed her wary inspection of the remaining rooms she was calmer but not reassured. There was no visible evidence of an intruder in the apartment, it was true, but when she again locked herself into her secret room the evidence of intrusion was undeniably there... the bulky brown envelope.

Helena sat at the dressing table and her hands trembled as she opened the envelope. Peering inside the package she saw a small bundle loosely wrapped in white tissue paper. She fished out the soft package and gasped as a thick skein of luxuriant silky golden blonde hair was revealed, tied with a thin red ribbon, draping forward over the palm of her hand. She peered into the brown envelope. There was nothing else there, no explanation or message, just the merest hint of a subtle, sweet fragrance she could not identify. Sighing and shaking her head in bewilderment, she carefully placed the skein of silky hair onto the dressing table.

Briefly, illogically, Helena considered pinning the hair-piece on the wall. Maybe it had a place there? She wasn't sure where it would fit. It had to have a correct and precise place, for the display was not a jumble at all, despite its haphazard appearance. The collage had a very definite structure and its continually growing form was, in fact, a time line of her life, stretching from birth to... well, to the accident and beyond. There were huge gaps still, expanses of bare cream wall between carefully placed pictures, artefacts and records. Almost at the very end of the frieze, on the far right by the corner, was a large colour photograph: a graphic image of the tangled wreckage that had once been a plush Mercedes S600 car. There were vast patches of unadorned cream wall near that photograph. It was these areas that Helena so insatiably hungered to fill with recovered memories. On the adjacent wall, literally turning the corner, the frieze continued on but it was more ordered here, displayed in a symmetrical line. Amy, Helena's half-sister, was there on the wall, pouting seductively, a picture from her very brief and very unsuccessful career as a model. Two other photographs, more recent, were of smiling men, but the pictures had been slashed and disfigured and each bore a vivid dash of red marker ink, crossing it through, negating it. Neither of these men had been able to replace the cherished image of Helena's dead husband. At the very end of the line, though, unsullied, newly-placed there, was a picture of Tomas, serious, his hair unruly, a neckerchief carelessly tied around his neck. Helena spent some time studying that picture, as had been her habit of late. He was occupying more and more of her waking thoughts. Or were they just dreams? Helena was beginning to dare to think that Tomas might just be... No, she dared not thin that! The red marker pen and the Stanley blade were on the table nearby, capped but ready.

Helena opened the dressing table drawer and took out a Harrods paper bag. She placed the bag next to the skein of hair. 'Such pretty, silky hair,' she said heard somebody say.

Lana's Slavery Explained

"You have such pretty, silky hair."

The voice was that of a woman, speaking English in an instantly recognizable Australian accent. Helena opened her eyes as a soft, feminine hand stroked her hair and an olive skinned woman looked down at her with a friendly smile on her heavily freckled face.

Glancing around, Helena saw that she was in a small cell with blood red walls. The colour was made all the more darkly-intense by the first morning sunlight that streamed in through the single barred window. Slowly, as her senses returned, she looked up at the woman in relief. "Whew!" she said, passing a hand over her clammy forehead. "Bad dreams... I get them all the time."

"You were shouting out about your hair," the woman said. Then she added, "I am Eve."

"It was a really bad dream! Also, my bottom feels as though it's on fire."

The woman smiled. She shook her mane of wavy brown hair. "The pain will ease gradually. You'll get used to your brand. Later, you might even come to like it. As least, I did. What's your name?"

"Helena. They called me Lana here, though."

"Lana it has to be from now on then. It's a nice name."

Helena looked at Eve: the nipples of the girl's freckled rounded breasts were pierced by two silver rings that matched the larger hoops dangling from her ears. "You're Australian..."

Helena was then suddenly aware of the pressure of the chain round her ankle, securing her to the wall. It was no bad dream, after all!

Eve was saying, "You occasionally come across an English-speaker here, or French, Spanish, German.... We're quite rare though. They probably kennelled me with you to explain things. Do you speak any other languages?"

Lana shook her head, not having learned any foreign language in her life. Then she blurted: "How did you get here?"

"You'll learn their language very quickly," Eve said, easing back, stretching her arms wide, and then hunching over wrapping her arms round her knees. "They whip tardy trainees..."

Eve stretched and splayed her long lissom legs and lay back before raising her upper body again and doubling at the hip. Spread across Eve's bowed back, was a large multi-coloured tattoo of a dragon in coitus with a fabulous bird, and the dragon's flaming breath licked at her throat.

"Your tattoo..." Helena began.

Eve smiled as she continued her stretching exercise and said, "It's lovely, isn't it? So is yours. It'll add to your value. A good tattoo is a collector's item. Mine was done by the leading skin-artist in Alguna. Who did yours?"

"I don't know, I don't even know what it represents."

Lana's own tattoo, whilst depicting the same strange creatures and scene as the image on Eve's sleek back, was subtly different, both in style and appearance. Eva's eyes widened in surprise as she sat upright and then twisted at the hip, arms horizontally outstretched, from right to left and back again.

"It depicts the rape of the bennu bird by the zul dragon," she said. "It's old, symbolic lore here. The story of the bennu is a bit like the legend of the phoenix, but instead of renewing itself through fire, the bennu's new life is forced on her by the zul dragon's fiery cock. Once that old dragon rapes her, the bennu's innocence dies and she is blessed with insatiable lust."

"My God!" Lana said. "They placed the tattoo on me without my permission."

Eve laughed slightly as she reached forward to touch first one pointed toe and then the other. "It's a slave thing, Lana. Legend has it that once the bird is ravished by the dragon, she's enslaved forever. Don't you get it? The dragon symbolises your own submissive sexuality. Once it's awakened, once you've known the incredible passion, you can never resist it."

Zul! That was the word repeatedly used by the slaver. He also had an image of the dragon tattooed around his cock

Helena saw that the vivid image etched on Eve's back had a further embellishment: two, small scarred ridges exactly delineated the lips of the bennu woman-bird's ravaged sex. Eva leaned forward to clasp her left ankle in both hands, and then eased back, massaging the entire limb, from ankle to thigh, to the very apex of her shaven sex. She rested for a few moments, brushed back her mane of curly brown locks, and said, "It worked for me. You'll be no different. None of us are. They can awaken the fire in any woman. They're experts. They do things to us and feed us stuff. You're a bennu girl now, like me. We may have to fuck to live, but we live to fuck."

“What do they feed you?” Helena asked, instantly thinking back to the bitter liquid she had been forced to drink and the shameful effects it had wrought on her body. “Do they ever make you drink it?”

Eve looked up and smiled, as if immediately following Lana’s thoughts. “They gave you the initial draught of Zul juice? The slavers do that, just to start you off. It’s really potent, as you’ll now. Did he fuck you straight after?”

“Sorry, but I—I have to pee,” Lana said hesitantly, glancing at the bucket in the corner, and she rose and went to squat over it.

“Go for it.” Eve leaned forward to grasp the ankle of her right leg, continuing her exercises as Helena urinated. As she did so, she said, “Your groom will be here soon. You have a groom assigned to you yet? He’ll handle your initial training. Don’t look him in the eye...don’t look any of them in the eye.”

Lana nodded silently.

Eve lay back and raised her legs high, toes pointing at the ceiling, unashamedly revealing the tawny purse of her sex lips. “Best kneel on your mat,” she called, lowering her straightened legs in a slow cantilever.

Lana stood up and returned to the sleeping mat. She paused for a while, running cramped fingers through her dishevelled blonde hair, and then she sighed and sank into a kneeling position. She watched as Eve raised her legs high and then doubled at the waist and touched her toes to the floor behind her head. Glancing to the side from beneath her thigh, Eve said, “You’ll need to kneel properly. Spread your thighs wide. Straighten your back. Push your shoulders back.”

Lana was ready to protest, but Eve was already continuing her exercise. Seeing no viable alternative, Lana complied, spreading her knees and straightening her back.

Eve smoothly rolled to her belly and looked across at Lana. “No, that won’t do,” she said with a small giggle, rising up into a kneeling position. “Look, we have to kneel like this...” Eve knelt on her heels with her back perfectly straight, her legs splayed so widely that the straining sinews in her firm thighs could be seen, her shoulders held back, her breasts out-thrust and her belly sucked in. She sat completely motionless, looking straight ahead, as she said: “See? It’s very basic... the first thing you have to learn.”

Lana tried to copy Eve’s pose, even though she was appalled at the vulnerability and discomfort of the position. Almost immediately, though, she heard a heavy bolt slide in the door latch, and the incoming draught of cool air on her naked flesh told her that the door had opened. Heavily shod and obviously male feet approached, and a pair of sturdy bare legs thighs stood in front of her. She quivered slightly but dared not look up. The well-muscled legs were lightly covered with very fair hairs that glinted in the morning sunlight streaming through the window. Lana instinctively knew that this was the same blonde man who had so rudely handled her and shaved her after the bath.

He said something in a strange, lilting alien tongue, and his voice was light, almost as if it was only recently broken. Eve replied in the same language. Helena glanced across and saw that Eve was still kneeling, ramrod straight, staring steadfastly ahead. The groom spoke again, and Eve translated softly:

“This is what the guy is saying, Lana. Best pay attention, you know? He says, ‘You are a slave. The slaver has appointed him to be your training master. You will quickly learn to speak the lingo, but in the meantime he will train you as a dumb animal. One word you must learn today: Master.’ ” Eve paused and then, her tone changed slightly as she explained: “Their word for Master is Kurios - it’s easy, like the English ‘curious’. Repeat it after me: Kurios.”

“Curious,” Helena said.

“Kurios,” the male voice corrected, emphasising the flat vowels.

“Curious,” Helana said again.

He grunted and then went on to speak in the strange, mellifluous language.

“He says you must practise the pronunciation,” Eve said, “but they expect an accent, so don’t worry. ‘Tee, Kurios’ means ‘Yes, Master’. There isn’t a permitted slave word for ‘no’. You must only address him when spoken to, and then you say ‘Yes, Master’. Tell him you understand: Tee Kurios.”

“Tee Kurios,” Helana said.

“Kurios,” he said again in correction, and then continued on.

Eva translated: “When in your cell, even if with other slaves, you must listen for his approach, learn to recognise his footsteps, and be waiting in the kneeling position when he enters. Otherwise, he will whip you. He’s God, as far as you’re concerned, basically. Tell him you understand that.”

“Tee, Kurios,” Helana said.

“Until your first training is completed, he is your Master in all things. You must do everything he tells you to do, immediately and without question.”

“Everything?” Helana asked, glancing sharply at the kneeling, statue-like slave.

“Like God, right? Everything!” Eve obviously caught her thoughts. “He will fuck you, give you to others... you are a bennu girl.”

The young man spoke again, more sharply this time.

“He wants to know your name. Tell him...”

“Helena,” she said, gazing up at the man.

“No, your slave name, silly. Forget Helena, she’s as good as dead now.”

“No!”

“Yes,” Eve said. “Tell him your slave name, or he’ll whip your ass.”

Helena hesitated for a few seconds, biting her lip, hating herself. “My name is Lana,” she said bitterly. “Lana.”

The groom seemed to have noted her reluctance. He spat out a few sharp words, and Eve translated quickly: “He says you shall obey his commands without question or hesitation. Tell him you understand, quickly.”

“Tee, Kurios,” she said, looking down at the floor between her outspread thighs.

“Is there anything you wish to ask?”

“What’s his name then?”

“I don’t know,” Eve said with an impatient sigh. “It’s forbidden for a slave to ask such things. He is free, you know, you are slave. It’s enough.”

Lana found his loosely-clenched right hand thrust palm-downwards in front of her lips. She saw the fine hairs on the bronzed skin. After a moment’s hesitation, she leaned forward slightly and planted a timid kiss on the second knuckle. He spoke, and she answered instinctively: “Tee, Kurios.”

“He asked if you understand that you are his abject sex slave,” Eva said. “You said, ‘Yes, Master.’”

“You said there isn’t a permitted slave word for ‘no’,” Lana said.

The legs turned and walked away, and the door was bolted with a thud.

“You’re lucky,” Eve said, relaxing her posture. “Although he’s very young, he’s trained quite a few girls already. I know a couple and they couldn’t get enough of him. Huge dick! He’s going to return when he’s eaten, so you have to listen for his footsteps.”

Lana suppressed a shudder. “How long does this first training go on for?” she asked.

“I think it depends on a few things: how quickly you learn, whether there are more new girls arriving, when the great sales are due... Make the most of it, because it all ends too soon.”

So, Helena died, and she was reborn as Lana. She was given no choice in the matter.

Chapter Seven

Lana's Slave Training Commences

The blonde groom returned to their cell in less than thirty minutes, and both Lana and Eva were still kneeling in the prescribed manner when he opened the cell door. Lana watched as if spellbound as he removed the apron and threw it aside, and then he unwound the kilt too. He was naked beneath, and very well hung, just as Eve had promised. In fact, his cock was bigger than any she had ever seen before, other than in pictures in her own time. She gazed as a doe rabbit might stare at a predatory python. It hung limply, and was probably eight or more inches in length and one and a half inches across, with a massive bulbous head that was slightly exposed by stretched foreskin to reveal a smooth purple-pink glans. Like the Head Slaver, tattooed upon this mighty member was an image of the fire-breathing zul dragon.

He said something. Lana remained immobile, staring ahead at the massive organ which, she thought, was showing some signs of becoming even larger. Then his hand was on her head, pulling it towards his cock. 'Oh no,' she thought, 'not that.'

The groom spoke sharply.

"You are a slave," Eve translated as the blonde groom stood naked in front of the kneeling Lana. "Fuck, girl, we're both in trouble now. When a man strips, you mustn't wait for his commands, but you go straight to it. Understand?"

"Straight to it?"

"Yeah, you suck his cock. Quickly, tell him you understand."

"Tee, Kurios," Lana whispered, terrified.

Eve waited for few seconds, and then said urgently, "Well?"

"Well what?"

"Get to it, for Chrissakes."

"What, with you here?"

"At least show some intent, girl. Give it a kiss."

The groom spoke again, and Eve answered immediately, pleading... He sighed and reached for his whip. Shaking out the leather blades and allowing them to trail on the floor, he spoke again, terse and sharp. Although Lana didn't understand what he said, his tone and Eve's obvious apprehension were meaningful enough. He draped the leather blades of the whip over Lana's shoulder. Gulping slightly, Lana placed her lips against his limp cock. She heard him begin to speak again.

"Okay," Eve was saying with obvious relief, "this is a lesson. There is a set process that you must follow when a guy strips off. Unless he says otherwise, you always have to start by stroking his dick with your tongue, every last damned inch, until he is rock-hard. Then you take his balls in your mouth, one at a time."

The groom paused in his discourse and waited for Eve to finish the translation. Lana cast a desperate look sideways to Eve, who merely nodded in encouragement. The cock grew harder. He spoke again, the same words, and manoeuvred her head until her lips nuzzled against the semi-turgid member. She could smell the maleness of him, and the skin of his cock was almost silky as it lay against her cheek. He nudged her head again, and then lowered his hand to firstly stroke her lips, and then to press his cock against them. Lana wasn't new to oral sex, but she had never performed it in a manner such as this, and she certainly hadn't fellated anything of comparable size. The cock glans was slick and moist when her rubbed across her lips. His other hand held her head, gently but insistently keeping it in place and even pushing it towards his groin. There was to be no alternative, no choice to desist, she had already handled the whip and

the cane... The already-giant penis was growing hard and erect in his hand.

Reluctantly, she opened her mouth and flicked her tongue over the glans, tasting its saltiness. She licked down the length of the shaft, to the barrier of his hand, for he continued to hold the now immensely erect cock, and its impressive girth scarcely allowed his fingers to encircle it.

“Okay,” said Eve, “now do his balls.”

There was no escape and, anyway, the fire raging in Lana’s loins could not be denied. Along with the groom’s musk she could smell her own arousal, and maybe Eve’s too. She looked at the new job in hand: she had never before licked a man’s balls; the thought had never even occurred to her. She began very tentatively, responding to the groom’s instructions via Eve’s translation, although she was no longer certain how much of what Eve was saying was faithful interpretation, and how much was Eve’s own personal tutelage. The groom kept her at it for some time, making her use her tongue lasciviously and lavishly. Finally the groom spoke and cuffed Lana’s ear, not unkindly. Eve told her to stop.

“Okay, that’s good,” Eve said. “Now get to work again on putting as much of his dick in your mouth as you can. He says you have to get his dick to the very back of your mouth at least ten times. Do your very best, hun, because there’s a whip lash for every time that you fail. Tell him you understand.”

“Tee, Kurios,” Lana said, wiping her lips with the back of her hand.

She tried to obey, and managed to get the head of the cock very nearly to the back of her mouth a few times. After some time, when her jaw was aching, the groom abruptly told her to stop. It seemed that he wasn’t entirely satisfied with her performance, but it wasn’t clear whether

She gulped and opened her mouth widely, as wide as she could, and took the head between her lips. She managed to get a few inches into her mouth, perhaps three or maybe four, she couldn’t gauge it, and as she did so she could feel him getting harder still, and bigger. Even at this short penetration, her mouth was fully-distended and she was completely gagged by the tumescent flesh.

“Take him as deep as you can get it,” Eve translated. “Come on... I know he’s big, but I’ve had a lot bigger. Go a bit deeper each time.” Lana tried to obey, conscious of the lashes of the whip that were resting on her back, but each time the cock touched the entrance to her throat, she instinctively gagged and pulled back. The groom spoke again, and moved the whip blades, trailing them over her spine. “Take it all the way, Lana,” Eve urged.

‘It will be impossible to take the full length,’ Lana thought desperately. He was murmuring and swaying slightly, and she hoped he would be satisfied with her working on just the first few inches of his cock. There had been boy friends before, and others, who had insisted that she take their whole cock into her throat, even if she gagged and spluttered. So Lana plied her efforts on the first few inches of his huge cock, those above the grip of his hand on the shaft, easing her head back and forth and using her tongue as best she could. Almost before she had realised it, her hand went to cup his large balls, rolling the sacs in her tiny hands as she paused for breath and then licked hungrily at the rim of the glans. He stiffened and the sinews in his legs twitched against her bare breasts, and she realised that he was on the verge of climax. She increased her pace, licking and sucking, twisting her head slightly, focusing her entire being on bringing her new erstwhile master to a satisfactory orgasm. Presently, he gave a loud sigh and she felt the great cock spasm and her mouth was flooded with cum. He did not withdraw, and she could only swallow hard, but some of the creamy white cum spilled from her mouth.

“Just a few more strokes,” Eve said. “Try to get him to the back of your mouth. Just remember that fucking whip!”

Again Lana made the effort, striving to relax her throat to the invasion of the still-firm tumescent flesh. He waited for some time as Lana continued to gulp the viscous fluid past her

tonsils. Then he pulled back, and the cock slipped from her mouth leaving a string of mucous trailing from her lips. Her jaw ached as she knelt back on her heels and spread her knees.

He spoke again.

He spoke at length to Eve as he put on his tunic and leather apron. Eve nodded and said, "Tee, Kurios."

The man then turned and left the cell, bolting the door behind him.

"You'll have to do better than that," Eve said as she sat back and spread her legs, trailing a finger along the glistening slit of her sex. "And, for Chrissake, don't wait in future...as soon a groom walks in, you get his cock in your mouth. And make sure you get it to the back of your throat, all the way. We've already got six lashes coming for your failed attempts. They don't take no for an answer."

"Six!" Lana groaned. "That's not fair."

The Whip and the Cane

Another groom, somewhat older, entered the cell some time later. He carried a thin leash and clipped this to Lana's collar. "Stand," he said, giving the leash a sharp tug.

Lana scrambled to her feet. The man uttered a sharp single word of command and moved towards the door, pulling her behind him. She half-turned and gave a small, despairing glance to Eva. He jerked the leash again, uttering a word of command.

"That means 'heel', loosely translated," Eva called as she left the cell. "Good luck."

Lana kept her eyes down but, as soon as she dared, when he paused in the corridor to shut the door, she peeked at his rear. He wore a brief tunic of rough cloth, not unlike a kilt, and over that was a soft dark leather apron, covering his chest but leaving his broad back bare. He slammed the door and rammed the bolt shut and then led her up a long sloping corridor flanked with similar heavy doors. At the end, moving across a tee-junction of corridors, he led her up the rungs of a ladder that hurt the soles of her bare feet, and then along another short corridor with more doors and up another ladder. All the areas she passed had windows facing only one way, towards the morning sun. It seemed that the entire place was built into the side of a steeply sloping hill and while no level was particularly big of itself, she soon realised that the overall place was very large and rambling.

The groom moved at a sharp pace and she followed meekly, her bare breasts bobbing, and occasionally she had to add an extra skipping step to catch up when he tugged her leash. Heel! Had he not said he would train her as one trains a dumb animal? They passed a number of other slaves, some with grooms in attendance, and the man acknowledged each leather-clad trainer with a cheery word or, sometimes, just a curt nod. Other naked slaves carried out menial chores, alone or in small groups. As she traversed up the different levels, probably seven or eight (although she lost the exact count) Lana realised that none of the slaves wore anything other than their collars. It seemed that slaves weren't permitted clothing in that place.

Three women were on their hands and knees, breasts pendulous, scrubbing the stone floor and, further on, on another level, steam billowed from the open entrance of a side room where women with sweat-bedraggled hair hauled huge skeins of wet fabric from a large copper vat. At another door, a pretty blonde girl was bent over polishing the copper handle and hinges under the watchful and cane-wielding supervision of a youthful groom. Worse, the poor creature was wearing a gag that drew back her lips and made her drool.

Then, at last, the blond groom paused at a door and unlocked it. The room inside was quite large and entirely bare except for a single heavy throne-like chair towards one side, but there were three other doors surrounding it. He silently led her into one of these rooms. She saw that it was another cell, not unlike the one she had shared with Eva. The furnishing was very simple and austere: a padded palliasse on the floor; a simple table with a shallow bowl and a

terracotta pot mug on its plain surface, and a piece of rough towelling draped over the side rung; by a wall, there was a flat-lidded wooden trunk that, she supposed, also served as a seat; in one corner sat two covered metal buckets; there was a square brown rug on the rock floor.

She raised her chin as he unclipped the leash and then stifled a gasp as he gestured to two objects displayed on the wall. The sinister black leather whip was relatively light compared to some she had seen in her short time there, but she had little doubt that it was capable of inflicting terrible pain on a girl. The whip was displayed with the butt horizontally-cradled in hooks, and with its one inch wide strap-like lashes dangling down at right angles to the butt. And above it, slender and pale, somehow infinitely more terrifying than the short whip, was a simple tapered cane, functional, without pretence to decorative style, with binding of thin plain leather at one end to form a hand grip.

Lana's groom spoke, tersely, again indicating the objects. She realised that he wanted her to fetch one or both of them. Blanching and swallowing hard, she hurried to obey, choosing the whip. 'Surely he's not going to use it on me without reason?' she thought as she returned and held it out to him.

He pointed to the floor and, perplexed, she dropped the whip at his feet. Then, without warning, he cuffed her ear. She yelped, more in surprise than pain. He stooped to grasp the back of her left leg, on the upper calf, pushing forward, repeating the command, and she realised that he demanded that she kneel. She did so quickly, and assumed the wide-thighed position, hoping to avoid further scalding. In fact, rather than scald her, he stroked her hair and pulled her head to the apron that covered his thigh. She smelled the tang of worn leather, and it was soft and sleek against her cheek as he petted her. She had learned another important word, it seemed: kneel.

He stooped to pick up the whip and handed it to her. It was hard for her to interpret his requirements without looking at his face. She examined the whip: its handle was covered with plaited black leather ribbon, presumably wound around a wooden stock, and its leather lashes were about on eighth of an inch round, and probably twenty-four inches long. The blonde groom, her groom, her Master to all intents and purposes for the time, uttered another word: 'whip', she assumed he said, and she replied "Tee Kurios."

"Kurios," he corrected, emphasising the vowels.

He held out his hands, palms up. She passed the whip to him and trembled in fearful anticipation when he shook out its thin lashes in front of her eyes. However, he merely trailed them over her shoulder and breasts before draping them on her back. He repeated the word again: whip.

"Tee Kurios," she said, and she was inordinately grateful when he patted her hair and reached he took a small rock-like object and pressed it to her lips. Her instinct was to refuse it, turn her head aside, but it tasted sweet, slightly sticky and tempting on her lips. She opened her mouth and accepted the candy from his fingers, which he left pressed to her lips, waiting for her to lick them clean. Feeling utterly humiliated and traitorous to herself, she flicked out her tongue and licked his slender white fingers. He then handed the whip back to her and gestured for her to return it to the wall. As she laid the terrible implement on the wall hooks, he spoke again. Looking back over her shoulder, she realised that he wanted her to bring the cane. Her hands trembled as they reached for the rod. It was surprisingly light, well balanced. She returned and knelt at his feet, offering up the horizontally-held cane with both hands. He accepted the rod and held it by its handgrip, giving a couple of dramatic swishes in the air, causing a hiss of displaced air and making Helena flinch so much that she swallowed the hard sugar crystal. He laughed at first but when she began to choke on the hard object in her throat, he stooped in concern and patted her back, waiting until she subsided, and then he stroked her breasts and arms while uttering soothing words. After a minute or so, when she had recovered her composure, he returned the cane to the wall himself, and came to stand in front of her again.

The groom, shorter and stockier than the blond man, stripped off his kilt and apron. His cock too was very large. Eve was obviously correct: the grooms were chosen for their heavy masculinity. Again she sucked the cock, without need of instruction, remembering Eve's lessons earlier that day. This time, though, the man threw her to the straw mattress and fucked her rough and hard. It took less than five minutes, but she was gasping when he had finished.

He stroked her hair again and then retrieved his kilt and apron. Reaching into the apron pocket, he found another rock of sugar and pressed it into her mouth. She accepted it gratefully, welcoming the sweet taste over the salty viscous coating on her tongue. When he had wrapped the kilt around his waist and donned the leather apron and turned and walked from the room, bolting the door behind him

She rose and went to the water jug, firstly filling the small cup, and then pouring water into the large bowl. After drinking the cold water, enjoying swilling it around the rock candy in her mouth, almost but not quite replacing the taste of him, she placed the cup to one side and cleansed herself as best she might from the bowl. The water was icy on her skin, but she didn't care. It made her nipples thrust into even more prominence, and she suddenly realised that they were throbbing. After she had dried herself, she opened the lid of the wooden trunk. Inside were some functional items: eating utensils, a couple of chains, a bit-gag similar to the one she had earlier seen a slave wearing. There was a spare rough towel, and some soft cotton-like squares, soap too. It didn't surprise her that there was no clothing in the trunk.

Lana was just settling in what she thought was her new home when the door opened and yet another groom entered. He was very young, perhaps only sixteen or seventeen years old, and the he was amused when she scrambled to kneel in the stiff posture. However, the youth merely jerked her to her feet and took her back along the same route, opening a door and thrusting her inside. It was pitch black in there when he slammed and bolted the door.

"Eva?" she called. "Are you there?"

There was no response. She was left alone in that pitch black darkness.

Chapter Eight

Allies and Enemies - Tomas Revisits

Tomas moved along the metal walkway above the slave cells, opening each trapdoor in turn. The cells were quite full, which wasn't surprising given the time of the year: the slavers would be stocking up for the great annual fairs and festivals. It was the first time he had been to this slave house before, but it would be little different from all the others. Slavery was a long-established system and slavers' practices and methods had been well-established over many centuries. They were a conservative breed, on the whole.

He peered through the next trapdoor and smiled when he saw the activity below. Four women, naked but for leather collars and cuffs, were training under the tutelage of two cane-carrying grooms, one of whom was little more than a youth. On this occasion, the grooms were both males, but that wasn't always the case. The grooms were entirely different to the guards, a class apart, schooled from a relatively young age in the arts of subjugation, training and presentation of slaves. The youngster was giving one of the women a lesson in deportment, making her walk to and fro, erect and proud, breasts held high and hips swaying. The lad rapped his cane across her thighs, making her yelp; the strike had been sharp, but for instruction rather than punishment, meant to condition the woman to strive for perfection; she would be rewarded with a kind word when she did well. The older groom glanced up and Tomas, who gave a silent wave of greeting before lowering the trapdoor and moving on.

When he raised the next trapdoor, he found the woman he had been seeking. She was sitting huddled against the rough-hewn wall, her knees drawn up, her arms wrapped around them. She looked up, startled and afraid, blinking as light flooded down into the bare cell. Tomas smiled, and he lowered the trapdoor, knowing it would leave her in utter darkness again. He climbed down the ladder into the well, and unbolted the heavy iron door. Before opening the door, he took a flaming brand from its sconce on the wall. When he entered the cell, he saw her gazing in recognition.

"You!" she said.

"Have you eaten?"

She shook her head, and scrambled to her feet. He looked at her steadily for a few moments, assessing her in the flickering light of the flaming torch.

"I will go mad here alone in the darkness," she said.

"I will arrange for you to be fed. And I'll ask them to move you to another cell where there is some light, and perhaps some company," he said. "I can't promise that. The slavers have their own methods to break a girl, and they might not agree."

His eyes took in her beauty. As on the previous night, when she had been stripped in the slaver's circle, he was seeing her in a completely different way from before, despite having previously assessed her in her own familiar time and place. He felt his cock stir under his tunic; it was an automatic reflex whenever he assessed a naked woman. She was taller than most girls, almost five feet nine inches, and her prominently-badged breasts were relatively large with minimal sag. He knew she was twenty-four years old and, despite the accident, she was in good shape. Her blond hair was long enough to grab in a hank. The pale bush of her pubic hair was natural and untrimmed. She cowered before his gaze. His erection strengthened.

"Do you need to relieve yourself?" he asked.

"Yes," she said, and it seemed she had difficulty in bringing herself to admit it.

He looked around and saw a pail in the far corner of the cell. He motioned her towards it. She hesitated and shot him an anguished look, but then went and squatted there. Within seconds

a steady stream spewed into the bucket and the sound echoed in the bare cell. When she stood again, she moved back quickly, distancing herself from the pail.

"Please, I don't understand," she said.

"What is there to understand? You are a slave."

"Where am I? And how did I get here?"

He shrugged and placed the flaming brand in a sconce on the wall. Then he turned to face her and said: "I brought you here."

"Yes, but how?"

"We slipped through a rent in the fabric of time and space."

"You mean a rip or a tear? That's crazy."

"It doesn't matter. All life is a fiction anyway. This is a parallel universe. There are millions of them. It's best not to try to work it out. You are here and there's no way back."

"Surely, if I got here, then I can get back the same way," she pleaded.

"No, only the condition of your own brain permitted it, Helena, but there is no return. These rents quickly repair themselves."

"It's ridiculous nonsense, and you know it."

He shrugged. She was getting close to hysteria, he could tell. He tried to keep his voice calm and rational as he explained: "Slavery is present in virtually every universe where humanoids exist, hundreds of thousands of them, perhaps millions.... Slavery is found more often than not. We are social animals. Sometimes it is legalised and structured, sometimes not. Even in your own universe and earth it exists, even if it isn't structured within society. You know that better than most."

"This is ridiculous. It can't be real."

He shrugged, melting to her vulnerability, and his cock was now fiercely erect. He said: "Perception is reality, Helena. Believe that. Actually, the technology isn't sophisticated: all it takes is one chance discovery and the privileged inhabitants of a specific universe are freed from the shackles of dimensional space. I don't really know how it works; that's the role of other, more brilliant minds. All I do know, though, is that they can find the rents and slip between them, but they can't control things beyond that. I doubt whether you or I will ever be able to return to the time and space you once knew."

Helena seemed about to scream. She rose up, her eyes wild, as if looking for a way to physically flee. "Please, help me," she whimpered, slumping down. "Promise me... promise you'll try to take me back. Please."

"Alright, if I ever get the chance..." he said, humouring her. "It's almost impossible. It'll be hard for you here unless you accept things as they are. It's why I take time to visit you, to explain, to save you from madness."

"You brought me here and sold me," she said bitterly. It was a statement rather than a question. "How could you do that, Tomas? I had deep feelings for you."

He felt his hard cock throb under his tunic. She was utterly vulnerable and delectable. However, he replied simply: "I'm a slaver. I specialise in making acquisitions from other times and places. I assessed and acquired you, and brought you here. I've done my job and now you must do yours. This" - he paused to gesture around at the bleak cell - "is to break you to your slavery. They always do that to a new girl. Afterwards, they will train and condition you. You will become a perfect slave, despite yourself. So it's best to embrace your slavery from the start."

"Never!" she spat.

Almost surprising himself with the speed of his own action, the back of his hand suddenly rapped against her jaw. She reeled away and he immediately fell upon her, throwing her back onto the padded blanket, simultaneously tearing at his own clothing. He took her,

breathlessly and without consideration, pounding his aching, tumescent cock into her cunt. He had fucked her a few times before, but never like this. He had always previously felt constrained to affect consideration. Now, though, he simply ravaged her. When he was finished, she lay there panting, head to the side, biting on a knuckle, refusing to look at him as he adjusted his clothing. She didn't cry, he noted. He reached to take the flaming torch from the wall and left the cell without another word, shutting and bolting the door.

Lana is force-fed

'No,' Lana thought, "I will eat... please."

The small team of attendants, two women and a man, had entered her cell. One of them carried a tray of equipment and as soon as she saw their intent Helena cringed back and protested. It was to no avail. Her protests went unheard and the small team of feeding attendants went about their work as if she were no more than a mere animal. They quickly rendered her immobile, securing her propped in a sitting position with her head supported by a cushion. Try as she may, she was quite unable to resist. The attendants were efficient, except for the young man who seemed to be training. Helena gritted her teeth tightly, but they were examining her pert nose, pressing the flesh and even inserting a small wooden spatula into her nostrils, one after the other. Then, nodding in satisfaction, the eldest female attendant tapped the flare of Helena's right nostril. The other women took a length of thin black tubing and held its end on the bridge of Helena's nose. It seemed unnaturally large as Helena tried to focus on the object so close to her eyes.

'No, they can't be doing this,' she thought desperately, trying to show her anguish in her eyes.

The woman calmly and blithely continued her work, however, measuring to the point half-way between Lana's sternum and the navel, and then quickly marking off the measured distance on the tubing. She then took a small vial from the tray and began to smear a glaucous substance on the first few inches of the tubing. The attendant then passed the tube to the young man.

"Insert it in her right nostril, past the pharynx, into the oesophagus and then to the stomach," the older woman told the man. "Be careful now, and don't force it. If she resists, rotate tube slowly while moving it downwards. Do not force." She paused and looked at the young man, who had beads of sweat on his forehead. "Are you alright?"

"I'm a little nervous," the young man replied.

"It's never easy the first time. Just take it steadily. Stop immediately if she starts gasping or coughing, or if the tube coils in her mouth."

"Or if she complains..." the other woman added, bringing a chuckle from the other two.

Lana felt the tube invading her pharynx and she desperately tried to swallow to assist its passage downwards. She thought she was going to choke and the pain in her throat was intense.

"That's it... advance the tube until your reach the mark," the woman instructed. "Well done."

The man straightened and the other woman quickly taped the tubing to Lana's upper lip and cheek.

They waited for a few moments, watching Lana carefully. Then, apparently satisfied, they fastened the tube to an enteral feed-bag, and then hung the bag from a clip high above, and waited as gravity fed the thin gruel into her stomach.

Then they collected up their accoutrements and left the cell, chatting amiably, and leaving Lana to fume silently and bitterly.

True to his word, Tomas had arranged for her to be fed. Also, they returned Lana to the cell she had shared with Eve, the Australian girl.

Chapter Nine

Mentors and Tormentors

“Hurry and wash,” Eve urged, shaking Lana from her fitful sleep.

“Good morning, Eve,” she murmured. She was glad that the cheery Australian girl was sharing her cell again.

Lana opened her eyes and stretched on the padded mat. It was still very dim in the cell, with weak light filtering through the high narrow slit of a window, but infinitely better than pitch darkness. She panicked momentarily, thinking she had over-slept, but her cell-mate laid a reassuring palm on her shoulder and she lay back again.

“Wake up. They’ll be arriving soon.”

“They?”

“The sex trainers. Half a dozen or more today, I shouldn’t wonder. It’ll be great.”

Lana eased herself upright, propping herself on one stiff arm. She was aware of her own arousal, even as she woke. It was habitual, and she knew her sex was wet and ready for use. Inevitably, within the next few minutes, like every other day, her handsome blonde groom would present his large cock for her service, and she was coming to anticipate it with fervid anticipation. She lay back and idly caressed the shaven slit of her sex.

After Tomas had visited her cell and used her so roughly, Lana’s life in the slave cells fell into a steady routine. The blonde groom would arrive early each morning. In the early days he would whip her from the sleeping mat, rudely awakening her. She had soon realised, though, that he expected her to be waiting, alert and kneeling, when he entered the cell. She learned to listen for the sound of his footfall, just audible in the passage. Then she would hurry to kneel, with knees widely spaced, breasts thrust forward and belly sucked tight, facing the door. And each morning, as he coolly viewed her position with an objective eye, the butt of his whip clenched between his teeth, the groom would strip off his leather apron and tunic. Lana was then required to perform utterly submissive sexual service. Indeed, apart from waking at the required time, Lana learned that this was her first duty each day and every day. She found herself becoming aroused and heated, ready for use, even before he arrived. Initially, in those early days, after he had whipped her awake, he merely demanded that she arouse his flaccid penis and take it into her mouth. In this, though, Lana came to strive for perfection, mindful of the ever-ready, biting whip poised at her back as she worked her mouth on his huge cock, responding to his instructions and orders but never managing to take his full, huge length deeply into her throat. At first, that was enough. After those earliest days though, he took her fully, manipulating her shamelessly writhing body to boiling point until she screamed and begged for release. Language was a continuing problem. She learned by rote and repetition, made to do things over and over again until the trainer was satisfied and she had learned the commands, with a simplistic method of reward and punishment. Even the smallest correct gesture was met with smiles and petting, while infractions brought an instant, painful stripe of the lash. In this way, her training progressed. She knew it was all designed to break her will and inflame her burgeoning sexuality, and she also admitted to herself that it was very effective, even though limited by the lack of verbal explanation.

That problem had been addressed by Eve, of course. The beautiful dark-haired girl spoke English in a broad Australian drawl but, more importantly, she had also learned the new, unearthly language of their captors. Eve had the responsibility of interpreting their demands for Lana, and teaching enough of the language for Lana understand important basic commands. Lana soon learned that any tardiness on her part not only earned a whipping for herself, but for

Eve too, and this made them both all the more assiduous in their efforts.

“How did you arrive here?” she asked Eve.

“If you only knew how often I’ve wondered that myself,” Eve replied in a matter-of-fact way. “One moment I was swimming in the sea off Cairns, and the next I’m in a slaver’s house here. Shit happens, I guess.”

“You don’t mind what they’ve done to you?”

Eve shrugged. “No point in minding. Anyway, it’s got its compensations... What about you? What kind of slave do you plan to be?”

This unexpected question nonplussed Lana. It seemed to her that her only option was to react to whatever degradation they chose to inflict upon her. “What choices do I have?”

“You’re a bennu girl, like me,” Eve said, reaching to gently stroke back Lana’s hair. “You can both accept it and enjoy the freedom it brings, or you can fight against it and die. You know your body is craving to be fucked. It’s what they have done to us. Might as well enjoy it, I say.”

Lana’s sex training continues

The first of the anticipated trainers sent to their cell came about an hour after the blond groom had left. He was a short and very stocky balding man with arms that were the size of Lana’s thighs. He was not an attractive specimen, unlike the handsome regular groom, but Lana hurried to kneel before him as he began to remove his clothes, feigning eagerness to serve him. When he stripped, he was hung like a horse, she thought. This cock too was adorned with a tattoo of the Zul dragon. She vowed to herself to make an effort and took the limp cock into her mouth, stroking it deeply, and feeling it grow hard almost immediately. He surprised her by reaching down to play with her nipples and stroke her tits, which was something the blonde groom had never bothered to do. More surprising to Lana was the fact that her nipples were already had like small cherry stones. She widened her jaws and slid her cock into her mouth until it nearly reached the back before easing forward and back again, massaging the shaft with long, slow strokes. Each time she eased forward, just as she seemed as though she would take him into her throat, he pinched her nipples. Striving to please and, she told herself, to give the appearance of arousal, she arched her back forward and gave a small moan each time he squeezed the teats. She heard him say something but continued her work, tonguing the cock as she took it as deeply as she could, to the very entrance of her throat.

Eve said, “Easy, see? He says you like having your nipples pinched. That’s good simulation.”

Lana eased her head forward again and this time she did manage to get the groom’s cock down her throat. He sighed and somehow simultaneously grasped both her tits and pinched her nipples hard between his fingers. Lana experienced a delicious wave of pleasure in her loins. ‘Simulation!’ Lana thought, resisting the urge to inhale against the gag of flesh that filled her airway. Then she eased back again, working on only the first three or four inches of the wide cock. After a few minutes, remembering her lesson earlier that morning, she withdrew and took one of his wrinkled sac into the palm of her hand. His balls were heavy and the skin hung loosely around them. Steeling herself, Lana leaned forward to firstly lick the sac in long strokes, tasting the tang of his sweat, and then she took one of the balls in her mouth, rolling it gently on her tongue. She heard his low guttural moan and then he spoke throatily.

“Hey, he says you’re a good cocksucker,” Eve said in delight.

Lana gave similar treatment to his other testicle and she then returned to sucking his cock, curling her lips protectively over her teeth and adding pressure to the shaft directly beneath the large glans. She had had a boyfriend in another time who liked that. On impulse, she took him deeply into her throat again, anxious to confirm her new skill, and she was instantly

rewarded, if rewarded it was, with a mashing of her breasts. Then, unexpectedly, the groom pushed Lana away, and he gave a terse order to Eve, who immediately scurried forward.

Lana knelt back, wiping her lips with the back of her hand and running her fingers through her lank hair. She watched as Eve took him sensuously into her mouth, leaning forward so that her already erect ringed nipples grazed his hairy thighs, and then she began ease her head back and forth, taking every inch of the cock with each deep stroke. The stocky groom quite obviously relished this. He buried his fingers in Eve's mass of wavy hair and pulled her head onto him. Lana found herself watching enthralled, fearing that she was almost dripping with arousal, but kneeling well with breasts thrust out because she was aware that the groom was watching her as Eve worked. For long minutes he allowed Eve to stroke him while he stared at the Lana. Eve was highly-competent and she gave out little occasional squeals of pleasure as she sucked the cock, and she also quietly hummed in a low pitch. Soon he yanked her head away from his cock, and stood as stiff as a statue for a few moments, apparently regaining his composure and control. Then he motioned to Lana, and she crawled forward to slide her lips over his cock. This time, as she took him deeply, she tried to emulate Eve in humming, surprised how the sound echoed in her skull and how it seemed to vibrate around the turgid flesh. He continued to tease her nipples, and she varied the pitch of her humming, experimenting. He spoke, saying something in almost strangled tones, and Lana heard Eve reply.

"He says your nipples will take a thick gauge nipple ring," Eve said.

The words almost made Lana bite down on the cock in her mouth. 'Nipple rings?' she thought desperately. 'They couldn't, surely...' However, even as she sucked on the cock she realized that Eve's pert little buds were pierced and ringed. She had seen other slaves similarly adorned, particularly those who wore the bennu tattoo. The thoughts dissipated though as her arousal took over, and each time he squeezed her nipples, she increased the tempo of her strokes and gave a small squeal. She expected to masturbate him in this way to orgasm, but he always repeatedly pulled away and took a few moments to regain control before that happened. After one such hiatus, he turned and issued a command to Eve.

"Tee, Kurios," Eve said, and she immediately turned to kneel forward with her head to the floor and her apple-like arse high in the air, offering the peach of her sex. The groom stepped behind her and knelt to push his erect cock into Eve's cunt. She sighed deeply as it entered her and kept her head to the floor, wriggled her hips as if to bed the cock more deeply inside her. Then Eve rotated her hips slowly as he began to ease his cock in and out of the suckering flesh of her pussy, and after a few short minutes the cell resounded with her loud ecstatic moans. Presently, the groom pulled his dick out of Eve's cunt and pressed it against the pool of brown swirling muscle between the lush cheeks of her arse. After a moment of squirming, the cock slid inside her, and Eve began to rotate her hips again.

Lana watched this with morbid fascination. She was uneasy and frightened, though. If this stocky, animalistic groom expected the same service from her. The blond groom had never demanded anal sex from her. In fact, she had never been subjected to anal intercourse and couldn't imagine ever being able to endure it. Still, Eve's unquestioning acceptance of the anal fucking, and the movement of her hips, did not suggest that she was in any great pain. The way Eve slowly rotated her hips with each stroke of the cock up her arse, giving at least the impression of pleasure, made Lana wonder what it would be like to have a cock inside her there, but she wasn't anxious to try it. However, after only a couple of minutes, the groom withdrew from Eve and made her turn and clean off his cock in her mouth; she did this without hesitation or obvious distaste. Then the groom motioned to Lana.

Lana obediently crawled to the man and turned to raise her arse in the same position Eve had adopted. She was grateful that he chose to fuck her pussy, and her flesh seemed to grab at the invading cock as it slid into her sodden flesh. She was thoroughly aroused, she knew, and

this time, for the first time since her capture, she surrendered herself totally to her lust, rising on all fours and rocking back and forth vigorously with each thrust, matching his rhythm and grunting deeply, begging for more. He fucked her hard, and the nearest he came to invading her anus was when he pressed a finger on the muscle, bringing an unbelievable charge of pleasure. In her throes of passion she heard him give an instruction to Eve, who immediately came to join them, stretching on her back and wriggling beneath Lana's body. To Lana's momentary shock, she felt Eve's hand on her inner thigh, reaching under to cup the groom's balls as he fucked back and forth, and then, even more shockingly, she felt the fingers massaging her pussy lips around shaft. Then, to Lana's dismay, she felt Eve's tongue stroking up her sex lips. Lana's horror was short-lived and lost in waves of ecstasy, however, as the tip of the tongue expertly found the engorged bud of her clitoris, and her loud moan revealed all.

The groom spoke again as he continued to thrust his cock in and out Lana. From beneath her, Eve passed her ministrations and called, "He wants you to lick my pussy. So do I."

Lana gulped and hesitated, but she gave a small jump as Eve nibbled at her clitoris again, as if in emphasis of her words. She glanced at Eve's lovely svelte body that was stretched beside her, angled underneath her own raised hips; the shaved sex, with the crinkled inner lips protruding, was like a delicate pink and cream flower. Obediently, and admittedly with some excitement, she altered her position so that her own body straddled Eve, her pendent breasts stroking the firm belly. Tentatively, she lowered her head and poked her tongue into the divide of the puffy sex lips. She probed inexpertly until she could insinuate the tip of her tongue near the small protuberant bud, tasting the salty juices that seeped there, and she was inordinately gratified to hear Eve moan deeply in response.

At that moment, the groom reached beneath Lana and gently squeezed her right nipple, keeping his other hand positioned so that his finger pressed against the ring of her anus until it slid in to the knuckle. Lana trembled with delicious delight and thrust her hips back. Everything was lost to Lana from that moment on. Her senses were flooded with exquisite pleasure, and she made no effort to think. Instead, she luxuriated in the skilful teasing of her clitoris, responded to each thrust of the groom's cock, and lapped at Eve's pussy as she squirmed beneath her. The flood of pleasure was rising high, threatening to engulf her completely. The groom was making crooning noises as he rocked back and forth, and Lana could feel Eve's hands stroking his balls near her pussy.

Lana's orgasm was irresistible and when it arrived it overwhelmed her with a flash of intense, all-consuming ecstasy, and the sensation rolled on and on, wave after delicious wave. It was followed immediately by the groom's orgasm, and he roared loudly as he shot his cum into her with great pulsing spurts, pulling her back on to him with her breasts. Then, after only a few seconds he withdrew and smartly smacked Lana on her right buttock.

"You have to clean him off," Eve said, before giving Lana one more long, delicious stroke of her tongue.

After Lana had taken the rapidly shrinking organ in her mouth and sucked it clean, the groom quickly donned his tunic and apron and left. As he reached the door he turned, paused briefly, and gave a brief nod of satisfaction. Eve continued to lie supine on the floor, her legs akimbo, gently wanking her clitoris with the pad of her forefinger, gazing up at the ceiling. Lana, though, rose to her feet, and went to the washroom, her mind in turmoil with a welter of strange emotions. She had never before performed sex with another woman.

Whipped

"Six, Kurios!" Lana gasped as the vicious straps lashed down on the soft and tender flesh of her lower belly. She raised her head and craned her neck to look up past the spread of her breasts and between her tightly-drawn splayed legs, feeling the tumult rising in her sex. Her

ankles were raised high and widely spread, tied to a rack in the training room, and she was squirming on her back as the blond groom stood between her legs and whipped her cunt. She had unwittingly earned the humiliating beating because of a tardy response. In the training room, punishment was always immediate, within seconds of the offence, without explanation, invariably painful and, often with the added bitterness of intense humiliation. Lana writhed on her back, oblivious to the other women who looked on as she suffered a vicious alliance of scorching pain and deep-seated, irresistible arousal. At each hissing swing of the biting lashes, her belly tightened in instinctive spasm and she vainly tried to close her legs, but she knew that resistance was hopeless, be it against the groom's whip or against the fierce flames he had somehow ignited in her body.

The multi-tailed whip slapped down on her inner things, and the tip of one of the lashes curled against the exposed moist flower of her inner cunt lips. She raised and ground her hips in anguished response, calling out the score: "Seven, Kurios!" Her call came in a strangled sob as she tried to clearly enunciate the alien word.

Lana was accustomed to beatings now. She had quickly learned the words for all the numbers in their language: missed or incorrect calls resulted in additional strokes. They trained her as they would train a mute animal, with punishment and reward. The punishments, usually, were beatings, with either whip or cane. Rewards, though, came in the form of humiliating but exquisite feeding of the sexual fires already ignited inside her. Her hormones, she knew, were kept perpetually on the brink of orgasmic chaos by the serums they injected daily, together with unknown aphrodisiacs administered with her food. Knowing she was drugged and helpless to resist only enhanced Lana's inner torment at her own wanton responses. In a few short weeks, despite herself, they had turned her into a panting, helpless slut. Worse, she recognised that the effects were cumulative, with fewer intervals of remission from the tormenting arousal. Maybe the effects would soon wear off, were they to stop the treatment at that point. However, if they continued, the condition of ever-blooming sexuality would soon become permanent and virtually constant.

"Eight, Kurios!" she screeched, as the lashes bit against the wet flesh of her cunt, cruelly exposed by her spread-eagled position. The blond groom, her personal mentor and tormentor, seemed to delight in her debasement. Lana's cunt stung unbearably and her clitoris throbbed. She found herself wondering what might follow the beating. The watching women, she knew, would each be suffering her own inner torment. She had herself watched other slaves enduring and even embracing a beating and knew the arousal it engendered.

"Nine, Kurios!" she sobbed as a final, viciously spiteful lash of the flailing tails smacked down between her parted nether lips and curled under to sting the ring of her anus. She whimpered as she lay in her bonds, perspiration trickling from her forehead, her belly convulsing. The longing continued to build inside her. She put a hand to her mouth and bit her knuckle, turning her head to the side. They had told her of the trainers' ways, how they somehow ignited a woman's own needs to helplessly and permanently enslave her. She now knew the truth of those claims, which she had initially dismissed as preposterous.

The groom unclipped her ankles from the frame, and she gave a start when his hand, warm and sweaty from the leather handle of the whip, was laid along the burning flesh of her inner thigh. If he touched her clitoris, she knew that she wouldn't be able to withstand that. It wouldn't take much to induce a shattering orgasm. However, that would not be granted. It was a punishment, after all. Such releases were only granted as a reward, and she would have to strive to earn it. In the meantime, she would feel the urge to drag her sex along the floor like a bitch in heat. Lana shivered at that thought and rolled over to climb to her feet. She resisted an urge to rub her stinging flesh, knowing it to be forbidden, too close to self-love. Often, in the slave cells, the wrist-cuffs of slaves in training were clipped to their collars. Their heat and need

must be allowed to build.

On this occasion, though, the blond groom pushed Lana to her knees and allowed her to suck his cock. It was the nearest she would get to her own satisfaction and she eagerly sucked it, rimming her tongue around the rim of the glans, a tuneless hum vibrating her tongue. As she bobbed her head back and forth, she heard the groom utter a terse command to the other women, ordering them to commence a new training activity, but she continued to fellate him, taking the bulbous head to the very back of her throat.

Chapter Ten

Helpless – Her Body in Their Hands

Three grooms arrived together in the cell. Eve, kneeling with a very straight back, cast a sideways glance to Lana, who was visibly quaking. Then, though, one of the men spoke tersely to Eve and she hurried to stand and present her wrists to him for binding. He quickly looped a leather leash around them and led her out of the cell. Lana looked up, wide-eyed. “Surely they aren’t taking her from me?” she thought desperately, having come to depend on the cheery Australian girl. However, other matters were pressing. The remaining two grooms were looking at her critically, and discussing something animatedly. They both moved to stand on one of the sleeping mattresses as they spoke, and seemed to be arguing. Finally, though, one of them laughed, gave the other a playful punch on the chest, and without further ado he began to remove his clothes. Lana hurried to kneel before him, unbidden. Even as the man pulled the tunic over his head, Lana leaned forward to gently kiss the velvety end of his cock before taking it into her mouth. The penis was shorter than those of the grooms she had previously fellated, but it was fat and rounded with a huge unsheathed purple head, and it quickly became hard, distending her mouth. He gripped a hank of her hair as she worked, and without allowing her to remove his cock from her mouth, he lowered himself to the mattress, lying flat on his back, and she fell to hands and knees, straddling him.

The other trainer was behind her, and she heard the now familiar sound of a buckle being loosened and the leather apron being tossed aside. Strong, hard hands fondled her bottom as she continued to stroke the cock with her mouth, taking it fully to the back. She gave a small start when the hands spread the cheeks of her arse, exposing what was hidden between, and she gave a small mewling noise when a finger tapped the rim of her anus. Lana grunted around the cock in her mouth, horrified at being exposed in this way. The finger pressed against the ring of muscle, and she flinched, and yelped a small protest. Both of the men laughed.

“Deeper,” said the man beneath her.

Deeper? It was a word she had learned. She had already completely swallowed his cock on more than one occasion, her lips nestling hard against his hairy pubis, but she immediately took him fully again. As she did so, the finger slid into her anus, making her snort. The cock in her mouth seemed to twitch and she expected her head to be wrenched away at any moment to prolong his pleasure, but instead the trainer began to move under her, fucking her mouth with long steady strokes, each time plunging it into her throat as she fought to stay relaxed. However, the finger buried deep in her anus was being used as a purchase to manipulate her hips up and down, and she had no option other than to move with it, rotating and bucking her hips. Perhaps excited by her involuntary swaying motions, the cock suddenly pulsed strongly in her mouth and pumped thick wads of cum down her throat. She spluttered and swallowed but viscous white rivulets escaped from her mouth as she continued to bob her head back and forth. The man behind her reached around to rub the palm of his free hand over the slick ejaculate that smeared her chin. Then the hand was gone, and the finger was also abruptly withdrawn from her anus, dragging at the clinging ring of muscle. Lana raised her head from the spent penis. She glanced back and saw that the man behind her was lubricating his cock with the other groom’s cum. Then he was pushing against her, the head of his weapon poised against her pulsating swirl of virgin muscle.

She had never been used there before. Eve had spoken about it, of course, advising Lana to relax and pant to facilitate entry into her anus when the time inevitably came to yield in this way. However, in the event, Lana couldn’t help tightening against the cock when it was poised to

plunge into her most secret orifice. The groom smacked her bottom sharply with the flat of his hand, and the sudden shock of pain seemed to momentarily ease the tension in her sphincter and the shaft was suddenly admitted inside her. The pain made her squeal and squirm as he eased the cock into her. It was even worse when he moved back and forth, mindless of her squealed protests. Despite Eve's advice, Lana couldn't avoid clenching her anus. She closed her eyes tightly and prayed that he would quickly reach an orgasm so that it would be over. However, even as she thought this, she realized that her own arousal was raging, and that this anal fucking would not even begin to satisfy her. After only a couple of minutes the groom grunted and shot his load into her anus.

Without further ado, the grooms retrieved their clothing and quickly dressed. They left Lana sprawled on the mattress, soiled and sore, but inwardly screaming for more.

She was still lying like this when Eve was brought back to the cell. The usually chirpy girl was weeping softly, and she collapsed on the mattress beside Lana.

"Eve?" Lana raised herself up and looked at the girl. "What's happened?"

"This," Eve replied miserably, spreading her legs widely to reveal two large and heavy rings that now pieced each of the outer labia of her cunt. "The body-piercer is here today."

"My God!"

Eve's nipples were already adorned by rings, of course. But, now, her sex lips were swollen by the recent piercing, and the new steel rings, probably fully two inches in diameter, seemed alien, side by side in her soft flesh. Eve reached to spread the lips of her sex at the apex of her slit with her two forefingers, revealing the pink flesh beneath. Lana gasped again. She saw that a short length of slender chain traversed from each of the large cunt rings, leading to a small, fine ring that now adorned Eve's clitoris. "That's awful," she said. "Does it hurt?"

The Australian girl gave a weak smile and shrugged. "Yeah, it hurts like hell."

"It's barbaric," Lana said, her knuckle at her mouth.

"Nah, Bennu girls are usually fully ringed," she said resignedly. "Anyway, how are things with you, Lana? You've been crying. Has anything happened while I've been gone?"

"No, I've been fine," Lana said, her own recent ordeal suddenly seeming to diminish in the general scheme of things.

Then, though, a groom came to the cell and dragged Lana out. She struggled and protested, knowing that he was taking her to The Piercer.

As Lana stumbled into the Piercing Room, her wild and fearful eyes took in the scene there. A horizontal iron grid, some 6 feet long and 3 feet wide, stood in the centre of the room, and there was a stainless steel trolley placed next to it, laden with implements, jugs and dishes. The Piercer took Lana's elbow and led her to this rack, pushing her against it. Lana understood his gesture and, although terrified, she climbed onto the metal surface. He placed his hand between her breasts and pressed her back until she lay on the metal. The Piercer strapped her ankles and wrists to the grill, spread-eagling her across the unyielding surface. He then fastened a longer, broader leather strap around her waist, cinching it tight until she felt the metal hard against her back. Lana could only lie there, utterly helpless to resist. She closed her eyes, as he plucked at her nipples, teasing the buds, and despite her efforts the treacherous nubbins instantly responded into turgid erection. Then she felt his hands at her cunt, palpating its outer lips, distending the flesh. Finally, she gave a small mewling sound as he turned his attention to her clitoris, and he seemed to be alternately stroking and pressing on the little shaft, sending tremors through her belly. Then he left her, moving to his trolley. She craned her neck to watch him, her heart pounding. He took a jug and poured clear liquid into a dish, and then selected a clean cloth from a box that lay on shelf under the trolley. Next, to her horror, she saw him carefully sorting through a box that contained a variety of rings. After careful deliberation, he selected five rings: two steel rings, about an inch in diameter; two smaller ones, finer, made of gold; and another tiny

ring of fine gold which had two 3 inch lengths of fine gold chain dangling from it. Satisfied, he dropped the items into another steel dish before taking the cloth, dipping it into the liquid, and swabbing each of Lana's nipples. The Piercer then picked up a pair of long-handled pliers, the jaws of which appeared to incorporate an intricate mechanism of some kind. He carefully selected one of the larger gold rings and fitted it into the jaws. She closed her eyes, quaking, hearing his approach, and she then felt him grasp her right nipple and distend the flesh. The cold pressure of the pliers clamped the stretched flesh. There was a sharp metallic click, and a sudden pain shot through the tip of her breast. She screamed and writhed. The Piercer worked efficiently, ignoring her howls, and he then pierced her left nipple in the same way. She lay sobbing, tears flooding from her eyes, as The Piercer stood back to survey his handiwork, looking at the gleaming golden rings that now adorned her breasts.

Satisfied, The Piercer again took up the cloth, dipped it in the antiseptic fluid, and she felt the cold sensation when he swabbed the lips of her cunt. She craned her head in a vain attempt to see what he was doing, but she could only see his face, rapt with concentration, as he prepared the intimate, target flesh. He then loaded one of the heavier steel rings into the pliers and returned to grip the first nether lip into the jaws of the tool. When the pressure tightened its jaws and the ring pierced her tender flesh, the metallic click as the spring released was drowned by her loud screech. She lay there weeping as he recharged the piercing pliers with another steel ring. When the instrument returned to grip her other cunt lip, she jerked in the bonds as the ring immediately bit home, and her scream again echoed round the room. The Piercer leaned forward to separate her now-ringed cunt lips at the apex, swabbing the hooded clitoris and the pale moist flesh that surrounded it. Lana gave a jolt. She then felt him plucking at the clitoral hood, pulling it clear of the engorged nubbin. Then, instead of the pliers, he used a steel needle to pierce the hood. He worked so quickly and skilfully that the needle was removed and the ring was fastened in place by the time Lana's anguished shriek rent the air. He smiled and quietly took another small pair of pliers and fastened the loose end of each of the tiny, tiny chains to the large cunt rings, in effect imprisoning her clitoris in jewellery. It was over. The Piercer unstrapped Lana from the grid. Eve had been right, the piercings hurt like hell!

The groom carried Lana back to a cell and laid her on the rough pallet. He applied a salve to each piercing and she could feel the cool astringency of the soothing balm on her throbbing flesh. She gave a start when the fellow tugged at one of the rings between her legs, and the movement was transmitted to her clitoral piercing. She miserably raised herself on one outstretched arm to look down at the denuded slit of her sex. Two fine silver chains emerged from the slit, and she could see that each chain was brazed to a link on one of the large rings that pierced her cunt lips. The tension of these fine chains wasn't great, but it was tight enough to keep her nether lips slightly parted below her clitoris, and to ensure that any movement of the cunt rings would immediately register. Seeing her looking in bafflement, the groom separated her puffy labia between two fingers of one hand, exposing her engorged and glistening clitoris, pushing proud of its hood and adorned with a small gold ring linked to the chains. He flicked one of the chains slightly and she instantly felt the odd sensation it caused, reverberating in the very centre of her being. He smiled at her startled expression and then applied some cooling salve there with the tips of his fingers. Lana closed her eyes and lay back. As she drifted into fitful, exhausted sleep she found herself fearing that this fiendish device would keep her permanently on the edge of arousal.

Chapter Eleven

Lana is pronounced fit for purpose

Lana had never seen this room before.

The two trainers had simply arrived at the cell, ordered Lana and Eve to their feet, and taken them through the labyrinth of tunnels to this large, airy room. A timber beam traversed the whole area, just above head height, supported at intervals by stout pillars, and several buckled leather straps hung from it at regular intervals. The guards were busy fastening Eve to this beam, hoisting her up and looping the straps under her arms and across her chest, both under and above her breasts, cinching them tight and fastening the buckles. A thin leather thong was cinched and tied between Eve's breasts, tightly linking the two broader straps that circled her chest. She was left dangling, her feet vainly reaching for the ground inches below her toes. Then, though, they raised and bent her left leg to loop another strap under her knee and tight it until her knee almost touched her breast. The right leg was similarly fastened, and she was held bent double, her hips lifted to display her splayed, ringed vagina. Evidently satisfied with their work, the trainers turned and beckoned to Lana.

Lana stepped forward apprehensively and docilely allowed one of the men to grip her round the waist. He hoisted her up until her shoulders were pressed against the beam alongside Eve, and the straps were quickly cinched tightly around her chest. The leather, although broad, bit into the flesh beneath her arms, and the bonds were tight across her chest and upper ribs, beneath and above her breasts. As the trainers worked, four other women were brought to the room, accompanied by four more trainers. Suspended from the beam, Lana looked across at the girls who cowered naked against the wall, and she saw that they were watching her treatment with some horror. Lana, though, had other matters to command her attention. She gasped as a thong was tied in place between her breasts, cinching the two larger chest straps together, tightly constricting and pinching her breasts and making them point outwards. The trainer worked quickly, and he raised her legs high, looping the leathers under her knees, pulling the straps tight and buckling them, leaving her splayed with thighs widely spread. She was not suspended in a high position, and her bottom swayed perhaps three feet from the floor.

The other trainers then similarly strapped each of the waiting women in place. The men were sweating copiously and breathing heavily by the time they had finished their work. They stepped back to survey the row of six women who hung invitingly splayed upon the beam. Then, one of the trainers left the room and returned in short order, carrying a bundle of leather botas, each hanging from a strap in his hand, and each with a bulbous neck. Lana cast a helpless glance to Eve, suspended beside her, and the Australian girl gave her a small weak smile and licked her lips as the man distributed the botas amongst the other trainers. The men then approached the line of suspended women, each carrying a bota in his hand. In no position to resist, Lana meekly widened her jaws agape and allowed the trainer to thrust the gag of the bota into her mouth, feeling it instantly expand behind her teeth.

Lana felt the bitter liquid spurting into her mouth as the man squeezed the leather bota, and she obediently swallowed, feeling it burn down to the pit of her stomach. She could hear the slurping sounds from the other women, and she knew that they too were being dosed with the potion. Presently the bota was empty, and the trainer released the gag mechanism and removed the bulbous gag from Lana's mouth. He then left her there to hang miserably from the beam, aware that a strangely powerful aphrodisiac had once again been administered to her helpless body. She hated the way that they could just impose drugs upon her, and that she was utterly powerless to resist. Her only recourse, however, was resigned acceptance. That had become her

way of life. They made the decisions, and she merely accepted them, not even knowing the likely effects of the concoctions they introduced into her body. Immediately, though, pleasurable waves seemed to lap at her senses. The effect of the drug must be cumulative, she thought in desperation, acutely aware that the effects were even greater than the first time she had received the bitter liquid. Her belly churned and the flesh of her sex channel seemed to ripple with want.

The slaves remained suspended from the beam for some time as the six trainers chatted and laughed together. With each passing minute the straps seemed to tighten around Lana's ches, affecting her breathing, and her nipples tingled as her pinched breasts began to throb. However, the trainers' demeanour changed instantly when the door opened.

Hanging on the beam, Lana looked across at the door and she suppressed a gasp as the Mostel the Head Slaver entered. He glanced at the row of displayed slaves and then nodded cursorily to the trainers. Mostel walked over to the beam and wandered along the line of suspended, splayed female bodies, glancing at each one in turn. He then turned to the trainers. "They have all healed without infection?"

"Tee, kurios," one of the trainers replied.

Master! Lana noted with some surprise that the trainer had addressed the Slaver as 'Master'. Yet these men were obviously free. The word, then, was used as a generic term of respect. Lana felt peculiarly reassured by that, even though she was cruelly displayed in such a degrading manner. She hated addressing any of the men as Master, hitherto regarding it as a shameful word associated with her abject submission.

Mostel the Head Slaver was standing in front of Eve, inspecting her, his hands on her body. Bent as she was, Lana couldn't quite see what he was doing, but she thought that he was examining the rings that pierced the lips of Eve's vagina. She could hear Eve murmuring slightly, and guessed that the Australian girl was squirming and in need, particularly after the Zul wine. It would be surprising had Eve not been aroused, for the heat in Lana's own body was rippling through her senses.

The vortex in Lana's stomach seemed to lurch when the Mostel suddenly cracked his leather tawse across Eve's up-turned arse. Eve screamed, and Lana could see the swiftly-deepening strip of scarlet that appeared on the pale flesh. The Slaver struck again, making Eve writhe and jerk in the straps. Lana, made dizzy and hot by the Zul wine, empathized deeply with Eve's distress and she writhed in the straps as her own sex pulsated.

"She is ready for sale at the Fair. Grade A Bennu," Mostel said, cracking one more stroke on Eve's thighs. "See to it."

The slaver then stood in front of Lana. She closed her eyes as he inspected the rings that pierced her out-thrust vulva. He fingered the metal and stroked the surrounding flesh. She flinched, but the piercings were virtually healed now. He traced the fine chains and the tiny ring that pulled back the fleshy hood of her clitoris. The tiny ball attached to the ring constantly rested against the exposed tip of her permanently engorged bud, and she trembled as the Head Slaver flicked it with his finger. Lana heard herself moan, almost honey-sweet and begging, and she was immediately ashamed of herself. His hands were then toying with the rings on her nipples, which were already tingling from the constriction of her breasts, and he teased the teats until they hardened to the consistency of India rubber. Then the tawse bit hard into the raised cheeks of her bottom, and she yelped and twisted, causing the straps to further tighten against her breasts. He lashed her twice more, and a hot glow suffused the flesh of her arse and thighs. Lana hung there, panting with ragged breath, the fires in her loins raging.

"Grade A, Bennu," Mostel the Head Slaver said. "Sell her at the Fair."

He then moved to the next woman.

After only twenty minutes or so, the Slaver had inspected and lashed each of the six women. And he had pronounced each of them suitable for sale at the Fair. He then left the room

and the trainers immediately relaxed again.

“It would be a shame to waste the heat of these sluts,” one of the trainers said.

The men all laughed.

Lana was almost grateful when one of the trainers approached her, throwing aside his tunic. She gave a loud moan when he speared her with his erect cock. She wriggled in her bonds as the tattooed shaft sank into her hot, sodden flesh. It was the first time she had been fucked in her cunt since her flesh had been pierced.

Beside her, she heard Eve begging shamefully to the trainer who was rutting her: ‘Ah, yes! Please fuck me, Master...’

Lana could hear the grunting sounds of copulation all around her, and a strong aroma of female sex pervaded the room. The trainer clasped his hands under her buttocks as he rammed his cock into her. She groaned in wretched delight with each brutal thrust. The fucking was rapid and functional and the trainer soon snorted like a bull as he came inside her. When he pulled his cock out of her and stepped back, Lana hung miserably in her bonds, and the Zul fires still raged in her belly. The trainer merely mopped his brow, retrieved his tunic, dressed, and left the room with the others, leaving the slaves to hang from the beam.

“Did you hear what he said?” one of the women asked breathlessly. “He said we are going to be sold at the Xanadalia Fair.”

Even Eve appeared not to have heard of this. “What is this Xanadalia Fair?”

“It’s held annually on the great plains of Xanada,” the woman replied with a giggle. “Everybody knows that. It’s a huge honour and we will all command a high price. That means wealthy owners.”

The Australian girl gave a weak smile and shrugged in her bonds. “That’s it then,” Eve said, panting slightly.

Chapter Twelve

Docile Meat - Prepared for sale at the Fair

The slavers roused their stock early on the morning of the day of the Fair. As they marched the girls in single file to the ablutions area, the morning was already unseasonably fine and balmy, with a pinkish haze hanging over the plains. Lana looked beyond the iron railings that encircled the inner perimeter. Travelling vans were already trundling into position in the early morning light: drifting traders and showmen who had camped outside the boundaries, waiting until they were permitted to enter, anxious to secure a good pitch on the 'Surrounding' (the open area around the main fair ground).

The prime inner spots of the fair were already allocated and occupied, of course. These plots were in the fief of the old families and merchant houses of Xadana, handed down over the centuries, and used proudly by the lineage, year after year. Overnight, that ancient part of the ground became a flimsy city of gaily coloured canvas, burlap, sail cloth and silk. Mostel's great slave house had its own magnificent marquee there, as usual, in a prime place at the very edge of the inner. The city's families and merchants vied with each other for the grandest and most innovative turn-out. Wonderful entertainments and banquets would be lavished there over the next few days: grandees and great merchants paid vast sums to bring fine performers, dancing troupes and poets to their own glorious feasts. It was a question of honour and pride.

However, in the open area that encircled this privileged inner keep, common tradesmen set up their stalls: small traders of every imaginable type, slavers and their wares, food purveyors, minstrels and musicians, chancers and villains, tricksters, snake charmers, all manner of show people with freakish exhibits and fantastic claims, animal trappers, soothsayers, wrestlers and fighters, gamesters, whores... the dregs of the hinterlands. The result was a raffish hurly-burly that was arguably more exciting than the expensive and elite inner part of the Fair. Lana had been told by one of the other girls that the slavers in the Surround did a rollicking trade, but nothing compared to the great houses of the inner sanctum. This didn't appease Lana's nerves, however. She wasn't looking forward to her sale by auction, however prestigious the block.

She still wore the sleeved vest-like woollen garment from her sleep. The slavers made the girls wear these rags in the cages after dark. It could get quite cold at night on the plains, even in the summer months. The pleasant warmth of that morning was, apparently something of a rarity. Now, as she entered the adjacent tent. She pulled the garment over her head and handed it to the fellow, and then went to the ablutionary. This was a communal ritual that she still found difficult, given her life conditioning, but the other slaves had no such problems, even under the supervision of men, and they laughed and talked together as they performed at toilet. Lana, though, saw it as degrading, and the odours assailed her nostrils, but it was a fact of life and she had to submit to necessity.

Afterwards, another groom with a spiteful little whip sent her, scurrying and squealing, to a nearby tent. Once inside, she saw that it had been erected over a round and shallow tiled pool, some 6 metres in diameter. Anxious to escape the stinging lash, she hurried to lie down with other women in the water, with her head on the low wall and her limbs stretched out towards the centre. She sighed and relished the rare indulgence as the lovely warmth seeped into her. Slaves were not usually coddled in that world. The poor wretched girls to be sold from the ragged tents of slavers camped on the Surround certainly wouldn't receive such luxury that morning. However, for those deemed worthy to be sold at the fabled Xanadalia fair, it was the custom, and they were traditionally bathed, scented and pampered in that way. That tiled pool was used but

once a year. The attendants must have had to work for days to get the place ready for its annual usage, cleaning the river filters and decoking the underground furnaces. In any event, the clean, perfumed water in the pool was well-heated and steam drifted in the air as Lana lay with the other women to be sold that day, each one with her feet to the centre, lying like the decorative spokes of a wheel.

The slavers' men were somewhat begrudging and surly, and Lana thought they may be suffering the mind-slugging effect of their bibulous eve of Xadanalia. She had heard them return in the small hours of the morning, not much before dawn. Now, only a couple of hours later, they stood back against the awning and supervised the bathing women in a desultory fashion. The handsome blond youth, Lana's own groom, was particularly sombre. He seemed to glower at her and she avoided his gaze. Indeed, she concentrated on her bath and refused to look in his direction until he ordered out and made her lie on a massage mat. There, she lay back with her eyes firmly shut as he lathered her cunt and shaved her clean. He worked with quick, clinical efficiency, except when his finger suddenly penetrated her, slick and with soap, and she opened her eyes in surprise. She saw him looking down into her face intently, with gentleness, as his finger impaled her deeply. Lana remained immobile, holding his gaze, bemused. Suddenly though, his gentle expression was gone and he withdrew his finger.

"Water," he ordered, pointing to the sunken bath, slapping the flesh of her inner thigh with his other hand.

Lana rose and scampered to the pool, sitting in the water and rinsing away the residue of the lather. Without looking, she knew that his eyes were still upon her. She lay for a few minutes there, until he called and beckoned her towards him. She rose obediently and returned to the massage mat, hips swaying and belly tight.

She wondered if he would use her again, fuck her, make her suck his cock... After all, he had done so every morning since she had been delivered into his care. It had become a morning ritual. Something seemed different today, though. Perhaps it was forbidden on a sales day. Or maybe he suffered unduly from the drink of the previous night. Whatever the reason, he did not fuck her that day, or ever again. Instead, he massaged her deeply, kneading her knotted muscles and burnishing her flesh with his strong fingers, rubbing in scented oils, and unguents from the East, with particular concentration on her intimate parts. All of this might have been calculated to inflame her, and she struggled to resist the urge to writhe under his hands. Her scarcely hidden arousal heightened when he applied a slightly astringent crimson dye to the haloes of her nipples, and her heat rose even further when he applied the briefest smear to the ring-adorned divide of her sex, rubbing the soft, puffy lips to blend the colour into a blush. She sat with her breasts rising and falling rather more than usual as he painted her lips and lined her eyes with kohl. Then he made her kneel as he angrily brushed her hair until her scalp was sore.

One of the other grooms cast a glance and a low whistle as he passed, making a good natured remark that Lana didn't understand, and the blonde youth blushed. He pushed her away and busied himself gathering up the cosmetics. With some surprise, she suddenly realised that he was going to miss her. He had allowed feelings to develop for her, beyond his strictly professional interest. This gave Lana inordinate pleasure, why she couldn't say, and she found herself smiling slightly as he brusquely ushered her back to the main pavilion.

Chapter Thirteen

Preparing to move on - Lana in the Viewing Cages

Lana, like the other slaves, was exhibited naked in the viewing pens that flanked the promenade leading to the main sales pavilion. She quickly understood why her groom had spent so much time and effort preparing her, painting and polishing her, readying her for critical inspection. The viewing pens were simply crude makeshift cages, surprisingly without locks, twelve feet square and seven feet high, fabricated on site from modular sections of bars, with a canvas thrown over to leave the front open and exposed. The ground had been covered with rugs and cushions, but Lana and her three cage sisters had little time to sit or recline. They were repeatedly ordered to their feet. Lana was conscious that it was almost impossible to rise gracefully from the floor whilst naked, and after a while she preferred to remain standing.

Throughout the morning, potential buyers paused to peer through the bars, inspecting the lots, making the nude slaves turn this way and that, coaxing them to adopt poses and display their bodies. Sometimes the women were required to press against the bars and submit to intimate handling and assessment. As ever, the women were overseen by a whip-wielding slaver, and Lana dared not protest as strangers hefted her breasts, inspected her teeth, and tested the tone of her flesh. When it was quiet, the slaver often ordered them to move back and forth, to pace their cage, for no purpose other than to attract the attention of passing prospective buyers. Lana, despite herself, afraid of the whip, and undeniably caught in the arousal of the day, walked well. And, all the time, her young blond groom stood glowering nearby.

Chapter Fourteen

Lana is sold at auction

A canvas was drawn over the fronts of the viewing cages at midday. The allotted viewing time was over. However, despite the nudity of the slaves, it soon became hot and stifling in the enclosed, dark cage, and mercifully the rear canvas flap was lifted at one corner to admit a welcome cooling breeze. A slaver brought water and plain grey bread, nothing more. Then the blond groom returned, with three of his colleagues, and they fell to reapplying cosmetics, brushing hair, and generally titivating the slaves' appearance. Lana patiently endured her groom's attentions, keeping her fingers laced behind her neck, as instructed. She noticed that this pose wasn't required of the other girls by their grooms. He polished and tugged at the silver rings on her breasts and pinched the already turgid nipples to even greater prominence. He then stroked the slit of her sex, finding the hidden bud and gently circling it with the pad of his forefinger, all the time holding her gaze as if searching for a response. Lana closed her eyes to avoid his stare but she compliantly surrendered to his touch, standing immobile, her breasts rising and falling with deep breaths as he relentlessly masturbated her, raising the now familiar and irresistible heat in her belly, and she remained thus, until a slaver came with a large bronze bowl. The groom gave her clitoris a final pinch and uttered a single word of command. She understood. It was another of the commands she had learned. Fingers still laced behind her neck, she squatted over the bowl and relieved herself and then stood acquiescently as the groom applied a wet sponge between her legs and then dried her with a soft cloth. Then to her surprise, he gently took her wrists and lowered her arms to dress her in a gauze tunic. The garment hardly served to conceal her body, and it seemed to her to be almost lewd in its pretence at modesty, but it was the first thing she had worn for many days other than her sleep vest.

The slaver had moved with the bowl to the other slaves, and each obediently squatted over it in turn. Then another came to the cage and ordered the girls out. The four slaves from the adjacent cage were also being ushered into the gaily striped pavilion, and they entered together, walking under a high bank of seats that was supported by a framework of stout wooden poles. There was a strange compendium of smells there, dank mud, cooked food, and human sweat, all combined with their own sweet and heady perfumes. Looking up, Lana could see the audience, their legs and their arses hanging over the rough planks, and all the seats she could see were taken. She could hear buzzing noise of the crowd intermingled with shouts, and someone, presumably the auctioneer, was calling repeatedly in a theatrical, deep-booming voice. An icy hand seemed to grab at her entrails and she thought, for a split second, to flee and hide. The whip-wielding slaver walked closely behind, however.

The small group was led under the temporary grandstand, their bare feet on cool grass as they wove in and out of the supporting stanchions, until they emerged into a gap between the rising tiers, where some spectators had also gathered, perhaps unable to find a seat elsewhere. Lana yelped when one of these men reached to cup her buttocks in the palm of his hand. The leading guard stepped forwards and brushed him away with a smiling, good natured rebuke, but not before the man had slipped his hand under Lana's wet sex.

Lana trembled and cringed back amongst the other slaves. She blinked and looked around. Out in the arena, flanked high on either side of the entrance lane where she stood, hundreds of people gazed down at the illuminated block in the centre of the ring. They sat in a circular arrangement of steeply banked seating, looking avidly down at the central plinth. This block was some two metres high and, perhaps, five metres in diameter, and it was lit with startlingly bright white limelight. Here and there, in narrow aisles, vendors carried trays and

purveyed their ware. On the block itself, a large man in a white robe striped with crimson (he of the theatrically booming voice), strode back and forth, dragging a naked woman as he went, turning her this way and that, calling out, coaxing and cajoling the crowd, taking the bids that were yelled out to him. Lana watched in horrified fascination, her heart seeming to hammer against her ribs. Presently, the auctioneer clapped his hands together, and it seemed that the woman was sold, for he then grasped the wrists of the slave and bent to lower her from the block into the waiting arms of a slaver below. Lana looked at the newly-sold slave as she was ushered past, and she saw that the girl was perspiring heavily and flushed almost scarlet. Already, though, another woman was being lifted high by a slaver. The girl, a luscious little creature with long curly auburn tresses and pale translucent skin, was lifted by the guard's large hands around her waist, almost like a ballerina, and she raised her arms towards the auctioneer who stooped to haul her up beside him. Surely it would be easier to use steps or a ladder? Or did they just prefer the slave to cooperate in her own degradation?

Lana shuddered, hardly understanding a word of the auctioneer's sales pitch as he strode back and forth, but knowing that he was undoubtedly extolling the virtues of the girl on the block. She watched him parade the girl around the tight circle of the raised wooden dais. The beautiful, petite creature walked prettily, as a slave, red hair flowing, her pale skin harshly illuminated by the limelight, her svelte body exposed in the diaphanous tunic that she wore. Lana couldn't even imagine herself parading thus. Then, in response to a call from the tiers, the auctioneer casually reached to tear the thin tunic from the girl's body while continuing to harangue the crowd. Lana watched open mouthed, as if mesmerised, as the man handled the girl with utter assurance, each gesture obviously emphasising his words, cupping her breasts, stroking her flanks, patting her bottom... In the few preceding days since her capture, Lana had almost become accustomed to enforced nudity in public, but just then, watching the slave sale, she felt that she would rather die than be exposed to such barbaric treatment, stripped of all dignity, to be so openly and lewdly pawed and pinched as the auctioneer and crowd brayed over her.

'She's being handled like a show animal,' Lana thought as she watched. However, almost unbelievably to Lana, the red head on the block played her pliant, subservient role with a mien that suggested enthusiasm. She even smiled, turned her hip and pointed her toe, twisted seductively this way and that, and sashayed on command, her hips swaying extravagantly. Lana knew that she would never cooperate so shamefully. They would have to drag her to the block, kicking and screaming. 'I can't be made to display myself like that before this baying mob. I won't be sold off like this. I won't.'

Yet even as she thought this, she knew that she had repeatedly and uselessly said such things since her transformation from a modern career woman to an abject, helpless slave. A loud cacophony in the tier of seats to her left interrupted her thoughts. Two potential buyers seemed to be arguing with each other amidst laughter from surrounding onlookers. Everywhere, it seemed, there was a tumult of discussion, argument and banter in the carnival atmosphere in the Slaver's Pavilion. The auctioneer, gazing up at the arguing bidders, took hold of the girl's red mane, turning her towards the men, bending her backwards, stroking the bow of her belly with his other hand, suggestively caressing her body, from the bared the slit of her sex to her pert upturned breasts. The girl, bent far backwards, spread her legs for balance, exposing the glistening folds of her sex, and the auctioneer cajoled and challenged the bidders as he stroked her, bringing more laughter from the crowd.

'What is she thinking?' Lana thought. 'I could never allow it.'

Then, from a pocket of his white robe, the auctioneer produced a large black carved phallus and rubbed its tip along the girl's enlarged and reddened nether lips. The crowd yelled its approval and, to Lana's shock, she saw the man lean to adroitly position the phallus and slide

it into the girl's cunt. The slave moaned audibly, her mouth wide, but she didn't resist or fight and merely remained thus, impaled, as the auctioneer manoeuvred the carved cock

Immediately, more bids tumbled from the tiered banks of seating, one after the other, each offered up and bettered in an instant. Lana had no notion of the economics of that strange place, but it seemed that almost everyone had the wherewithal to bid for the beautiful young slave.

'They all seem to be wealthy,' she thought, 'or perhaps we slaves are almost worthless and incredibly cheap to buy.'

The phallus was withdrawn from the girl's pussy and she was made to lick it clean, which she did with an artful show of passion.

Presently, the tumult of bids faded, and only three competitors remained. Lana saw that the two original protagonists on her left had fallen silent. The bids seemed to be coming from the better seats now. The flame-haired girl's sale eventually reached its conclusion with a dramatic clap of the auctioneer's hands and a ripple of applause. The girl, sold, smiled shyly and the auctioneer took the carved dildo from her and stroked her long red hair in a gesture that almost seemed affectionate. She was then lowered from the block; and when she ran lightly towards the alley where the waiting slaves stood, she was breathlessly excited and blurted something that made one or two of the other girls laugh. Even as Lana watched this behaviour with baffled incomprehension, she felt a push in her back, between her shoulder blades, and she was propelled forward towards the block.

"No, I won't —" she cried in terror, trying to pull back, but her protest was stifled in a screech as a blistering hot pain seared her buttocks. She turned, wild-eyed, and saw that a guard stood with his leather paddle poised to strike again. The stiff flat leather caught her with a loud slap on the left buttock. She screamed and heard herself revert to English to hurl a sharp exclamation of abuse: "Leave me alone you fucking bastards!"

The crowd responded to her shriek of alien language with a swell of raucous comment and laughter. The guard grasped Lana by the hair and dragged her forward. She found herself unceremoniously dragged to the block and saw that its surface was more than two feet above her head. She could smell the curious tang of pine resin there, amidst the surrounding melange of aromas. Again, she pulled away in, terrified and weeping, but the crowd bayed all the more. It seemed she had only succeeded in arousing their excitement and interest. The guard's paddle smacked with a thud against her upper thighs, making her yelp and dance on her toes. The guard said something she didn't understand, but his hands were then at her waist, effortlessly lifting her high. She found herself offering her hands to the broadly smiling auctioneer, and he reached to grasp her wrists, hoisting her up onto the dais. The gauze tunic had torn with her struggle, and it draped around her waist as she stretched up, baring her breasts. The auctioneer pulled her unceremoniously onto the block and she crumpled onto the wooden surface. It was covered in a layer of clean yellow wood spoil, which was obviously the source of the pine resin smell, and the wood chippings were fine enough to cling to the clammy sweat on her thigh as she sprawled there. She looked up, frightened, through her dishevelled blond hair. The auctioneer motioned for her to rise. 'I can't,' she thought. 'This cannot be happening to me.' When she didn't respond, the auctioneer leaned to look down at the guard and said something. She saw the guard toss the leather paddle to him in response, and he caught it deftly by the handle. He then rattled off to the crowd some information that Lana couldn't understand. 'This really isn't happening to me!' she thought again as she lay crumpled at his feet, hot tears streaming down her cheeks and falling onto her exposed breasts.

The auctioneer was a huge man. He towered above her as he thrust the paddle into his broad belt. His booming voice continued to harangue the crowd, and she miserably peered through the drape of her hair at the rows of faces that stretched high in that makeshift tented

arena: some were cold and calculated as they viewed her; others grinned in expectation and licked their lips; many leaned forward, craning their necks to see her better. The encircling gazes focused to her exposed flesh on the sawdust strewn block, assessing her body and relishing her degradation. Lana thought she would die when the auctioneer leaned down to grasp her arm and effortlessly pull her to her feet.

Yet she stood well enough, even though her breasts trembled and quivered with sobs. She was acquiescent and resigned when he ripped the already-torn gauze tunic from her and tossed it to float to the ground below the block. He took her by the wrists and held them stretched high above her head, easily clamping them together in one huge vice-like mitt. All the time he was calling out to the crowd, and she was suddenly glad that she couldn't understand what was being said about her. She could guess, though, because he stroked her hair and pinched her nipples with his free hand as he spoke, and only then did she squirm and try to twist away with renewed fight. The paddle suddenly smacked hard across her bare arse and she screamed and danced on the spot, her toes scrambling ineffectually in the saw-dust as if to run away, much to the delight of the crowd. He hit her again, twice more, and each time she screeched her agony and writhed, dangling by the wrists from his hand. He uttered a terse command and she understood: she must desist. She nodded miserably, and when he released her wrists she remained quiet, even when he tugged at the rings that pierced her nether lips. Inexplicably, she felt an immediate surge of heat in her loins. Then he grasped her by the jaw, his finger and thumb strongly clamping her face as he pushed her chin high, forcing her to rise on her toes and instinctively spread her feet as he arched her back. Suddenly, she realised that this was precisely the way he had treated the red haired girl. To her horror, she felt the caress of his hand along her nether lips, making her squirm more, and then he plunged a long, fat finger into her cunt. Worse, as he probed inside her and pressed against the front wall of her vagina, as the crowd shrieked approval, she knew that he found her shamefully wet and sodden there. She could even smell her own arousal. The bids began to come thick and fast and he took them with good natured banter.

Then his finger withdrew and he had her by the hair, bending her low at the waist, marching her to a different point of the block, presenting her rear to a different arc of the audience. He maintained her in that position, bent forward and bowed low. Her pendent breasts seemed inordinately heavy as they hung beneath her. His hand was on her arse, trailing the divide of her buttocks, and one of his fingers tapped at the rim of her anus. Then, to her horror, she felt the hard carved phallus as it nudged against her nether lips and clinked with metallic sounds against her cunt rings, separating and easing them aside.

"No, please, not that..."

She twisted away, and the tip of the dildo trailed along her inner thigh. It seemed huge. However, despite her terrified yelps and squirming struggles as he held her by the hair, unrelenting and merciless, and he again manoeuvred the carved cock into position and thrust it into her hot, sodden sex. She moaned. Contrary to her expectations, though, rather than hard and utterly unyielding wood, the dildo seemed to be made of a kinder and more resilient material but, even so, her sex was fully stretched and distended by its immense girth. The auctioneer again called out to the cheering crowd and still more bids arrived. She involuntarily worked her inner muscles, struggling to dislodge the dildo, but the resulting pressure on her cunt rings made her realise that they were somehow clipped to the base of the object, holding it firmly in place. Her efforts only served to make her sodden inner flesh wantonly embrace the yielding surface of the firm shaft. The paddle again rapped against her upper thighs. She fell to her knees, her breasts pressed into the saw-dust, her arse high. The bids continued to come. They had slowed now, and the auctioneer was asking for more. Lana was almost oblivious to everything other than the all engulfing shame and humiliation. Nothing else seemed to matter. The phallus was

suddenly unclipped from her cunt rings and withdrawn from her, dragging against her flesh. She was hauled to her feet, and she stood, breathing heavily, brushing aside the hair that hung in front of her face. The auctioneer thrust the dildo against her mouth. She obediently took hold of the rubberised shaft in both hands, her fingers only just encircling its girth, and then she dutifully licked at the rubber shaft in long, slow strokes, tasting the tang of her own sex juices. The scent wafted into her nostrils, but she continued to lick the dildo clean, consciously readying it for the next victim.

Then, almost before she knew it, the auctioneer closed her sale with a clap of his hands, confirming the winning bid: "Sold to Jiffa Song."

She had been sold!

"Who is Jiffa Song?" she thought, casting wild glances around her, wishing she had paid more attention, anxious to see from whence the winning bid had come. However, even as she thought these things, the auctioneer was prizing her fingers from the phallus and he then lowered her down from the block into the waiting arms of her blond groom. She felt her legs give way beneath her and was only vaguely aware when the groom scooped her up and carried her from the arena.

Chapter Fifteen

NEW MENTOR - Lana meets Jiffa

The man asked Lana a question as he stared through the bars of the makeshift holding pen at the back of the pavilion. She immediately scrambled to her feet. He was a large, bulky black man, dressed in a fine flowing robe of fine crimson silk with a leather satchel slung by his side, and his bald head gleamed. She stared up at him, anxious to understand. He spoke again, a single syllable, and this time she recognised the word and responded. "Lana," she replied. Then, for good measure, she repeated her slave name and added the word of servile respect they had whipped into her in the cells. "Lana, Master."

"Jiffa Song," the man said, jabbing a podgy thumb at his own chest. Then he indicated the ornately bone-handled whippy rod that hung like a sword from the belt that sat beneath his huge girth. "Cane," he said, raising his eyebrows meaningfully before breaking into a smile.

Lana nodded solemnly, shuddering as she affirmed: "Cane."

'Cane' was another word she'd quickly learned in the training cells, and she had also learned the searing pain associated with it. She thought, though, that this man, this Jiffa, despite the cane at his waist, did not seem unkind. He had a fat and affable face and a ready smile. On the other hand, she had little doubt that he would readily use his cane on her, should he feel it justified.

Jiffa pulled the front panel of the cage aside and gestured her to come to his side. He then produced a leash chain from his satchel and stooped to clip it to one of the slave-rings that dangled from her sex lips. It wasn't a thick chain, perhaps the girth of her small finger, but its weight on the piercing was immediately apparent. She stifled a gasp as she realised that she was to be tethered in such an outrageously undignified and humiliating manner, but he abruptly turned and strode away with the leather handle of the leash looped loosely over his wrist. Lana hurried after him, making sure the chain remained slack so as not to cause any pressure to be put on the cunt ring, and its swaying movement as she took each step, constantly transmitted to her clitoris, induced a strange and intense sensation in her belly.

Lana followed closely on the heels of the giant black man as he pushed his way through the crowds that thronged the tight avenues between the gaily coloured marquees of the fair. There was a great air of fiesta and carnival, with music, laughter and the shouts of the fairground barkers. Few people seemed to pay her much attention as she walked obediently, as she must, attached to the cunt chain, although she did notice that some gave interested, assessing glances, and one man pinched her thigh in the crease directly below her buttock, eliciting a small yelp that made Jiffa turn his head, only to break into a broad smile as he saw the fellow darting away. The constant movement of the cunningly weighted and chained clitoral ring was affecting her, lighting familiar warmth in her belly and sending tremors of treacherous pleasure through her engorged bud. There were plenty of other naked slaves in the fair ground: some danced and performed on raised stages in the canopied side stalls or just posed prettily as raucous barkers tried to entice customers to their tents; other naked, or near-naked, beauties carried trays laden with candies, sweetmeats, and such things; a couple of well matched blonde-haired women were closely chained one to the other by their breasts, facing each other, the rings on their nipples clipped together, and they had been tethered to a rail outside a large refreshment tent; some girls, nude, simply followed their owners unencumbered. But although many of the other slaves were naked, and a lot of them wore slave-rings in their flesh, none of them was leashed by the cunt. Lana was conscious that her nipples were hard nubs in their slave rings, and her upper chest and

neck had become suffused with a blush of warmth.

Lana's breathing was becoming heavier when Jiffa paused beside a cart with an open oven, speaking to the attendant and eventually carefully choosing two meat rolls from a selection that sizzled on a griddle over glowing coals. As the attendant used steel tongs to take one of the hot rolls and wrap it in a large olive coloured leaf taken from a wicker basket beside the cart, Lana watched intently, feeling the heat of the coals on her breasts, and feeling the weight of the leash on her sex, and feeling the resulting exquisite tension on her clitoris. Jiffa accepted the roll and placed the tip of his tongue against it, swiftly withdrawing from the heat, blowing and spitting on it, and then testing it again and taking a bite. He munched on the meat snack until the man had prepared the second one. Jiffa took the second leaf-wrapped roll too. He paid the man, and he then turned and held the first, half-eaten snack to Lana's lips. She hesitated, conscious that this man, her Master, had spat upon the meat, but the aroma of the meat made her own mouth water and she then leaned forward and took a bite. It was savoury and greasy, and surprisingly good. She suddenly realised that she hadn't eaten that day.

"Come, Lana," Jiffa said in command, and she felt a tug on the cunt ring.

"Yes, Master," she said, hastening to follow as she continued to eat the deliciously piquant roll, with warm fat running down her chin and dripping onto the upper swell of her right breast. She shuddered as the fires were stoked in her loins - a result of her lewd and humiliating public leashing, and of the unremitting teasing stimulation of her hungry sex bud.

Jiffa seemed oblivious to this as he led her to a space at the periphery of the inner fair ground. There, beside the big guarded main gates, some carts and carriages were parked. He took her to the open rear end of a large wagon with massive wooden wheels and high solid-panelled sides and no roof; the bed of the wagon was at the level of Lana's chin as she stood looking up at the five naked women who were seated on benches that flanked the wagon, three on one side and two on the other. The women were looking on with some apprehension, Lana thought, and she saw that they were chained by their ankles to iron rings threaded onto a central bar that traversed the length of the wagon. One of them licked her lips as Lana popped the remainder of the meat savoury into her mouth.

Jiffa placed the uneaten portion of his meat snack on the wagon bed, and he removed the leather handle loop of the leash from his wrist; Lana felt the full weight of the chain stretch her nether outer lip as it dangled from her cunt ring. The giant man crouched to grip the lower part of her left leg at the calf and just above the ankle with both hands, letting one hand come around from the rear of the leg, the other from the front; with hands firmly grasping her limb, he rose up, effortlessly lifting her. Not realising his intent until the last moment, she quickly twisted to sit on the flat bed of the wagon, feeling the sun-warmed planking beneath her buttocks. Jiffa smiled. The palms of his hands were soft on the flesh of her inner thighs as he parted her legs before reaching for the clip of the leash and detaching the chain from her cunt ring. He smiled up at her as his fingers stroked the moist flesh, and she looked away, blushing furiously, the fires in her belly raging. Then, moving with surprising agility for one so large, he vaulted lightly onto the wagon and pulled her to the bench seat on the right, pushing her down beside a delicate bronze-skinned, slant-eyed creature with small but perfectly uptilted breasts; unlike the other slaves, this Oriental woman still sported a silky black triangle of hair at her loins, probably indicating very recent enslavement. Lana's her nipple rings rose and fell heavily as she sat, right leg outstretched, while Jiffa knelt to fix a chain to the cuff on her ankle.

Lana remained silent, but one of the other women dared to venture a question. Jiffa rose to his full height and stared at the slaves, his face stern. His large plump fingers played with bone hilt of the cane at his hip, and for the first time Lana realised that the handle was carved in the image of a phallus with the swell of the bulbous scrotum serving as a pommel and the slim tapering rod emerging from the tip of the glans. Then his face cracked into a smile and he went

to retrieve the meat snack from the edge of the wagon bed. He returned and gave it to the woman who had spoken and she gratefully bit into it as the others looked on.

Later that day, after two more women and two men had been added to the slave benches, Jiffa supervised some burly roustabouts as they threw a heavy canvas over the high-sided wagon; this completely covered the top of the wagon and shut out the bright sunlight, and it also draped over the hitherto open back; Lana could hear ropes being cinched to tighten the canvas, and she also heard the sounds of other activity. It seemed that they were getting ready to leave. Her heart was suddenly pounding.

She looked around in the darkness under the canvas. The swathe didn't completely black out the interior of the wagon because chinks of daylight shafted through the odd rent here and there in the canvas, none of which were low enough for them to see through. The other slaves, all stark naked like herself, their left ankles chained to the central bar, were all young and slim: the women were sweetly slung, while the men had broad, well-muscled chests. For the most part, they all seemed reasonably calm and sanguine about the whole thing. The men, unlike the women, were shackled with their hands confined behind them, and they had been seated at the end of the two benches, nearest to the wagon tail. The five slaves on the opposite side of the wagon, four women and one man with fine shoulder length blonde hair and a large flaccid cock that hung below the bench, whispered and laughed together. However, it was somewhat different on the bench where Lana sat: the petite Oriental woman sitting next to her, newly-enslaved it seemed, wept softly throughout, and Lana, too, was traumatized and appalled by the entire situation; a sturdy young man, bearded and scarred, sat silently morose next to her at the end of the bench, his wrists confined behind his back.

They all sat in the gloom of the wagon. It appeared that they weren't yet ready to leave. The leather seat, slick on her skin, was shaped and indented against her bottom, probably worn that way by the naked buttocks of countless. Lana sank within herself, dozing as she sat there. For no apparent reason, in the drowsiness of half-sleep, her thoughts drifted back to another time, another place, another reality, and another fateful journey.

Chapter Sixteen

Another time, another fateful journey

Helena was sitting in the back of stretched limousine with three other nude women and a lone, clothed, man. The vehicle seemed to be ridiculously long. The driver was seated some yards away up front, behind a semi-opaque glass screen. The smoked glass windows of the vehicle effectively shielded the occupants from prying eyes. She sat rigidly on the rear, deeply-upholstered bench seat, uncomfortably aware of the slick leather sticking to her naked flesh. She squirmed a little.

The man next to her seemed to read her thoughts. "Leather on skin does something to a woman," he said.

Helena didn't reply and concentrated on trying to keep her bearings. She was only vaguely familiar with the area, but saw that they had turned left to join Nortstrand Avenue and heading south.

"Where are we going?" she asked.

"Silence!" he said, placing his hand on her thigh and pinching the soft flesh.

One of the other women shifted uncomfortably. Helena was again conscious of her naked thighs in direct sticky contact with the leather seat. She inhaled deeply, noticing the cloying fragrance of man's cologne and hearing the low hum of the car engine. She glanced at the driver but he seemed to be concentrating on the road ahead. The man beside her casually moved his hand on the inside of her thigh, high, keeping her legs apart.

They shortly arrived in a dense area of apartment blocks, with cars parked closely together on either side of the road. The limousine cruised to a halt in the centre of the road.

"We're here," he said, removing his hand from her thigh and leaning over her body, his arm brushing the tip of her breast as he reached to push the door open.

The man nudged Helena to get out of the limousine. The night air was cool on her flesh as she stepped onto the forecourt of a large house. The man followed and waited for the other three women to join them. An elegantly dressed woman stood there under the pale light of discrete lamps, evidently she had been awaiting their arrival, and she critically inspected each of the naked women, one after the other; Helena blanched before the woman's candid gaze but she submitted stoically to the appraisal; after some moments the woman nodded briefly and handed an envelope to the man who had accompanied them; he smiled, bowed slightly, and then returned to the limousine. As the car drew away from the forecourt, the woman then led the quartet of naked women to the entrance door. Helena could hear the strains music. She caught sight of herself in a long mirror in the hall: completely nude except for very high-heeled strapped sandals that adjusted her posture so that her rear jutted out. The Madam gently patted Helena's buttocks in approval before moving to inspect another woman.

"Enter the salon in single file," the Madam instructed in heavily accented tones. "Smile prettily at the guests."

Then the Madam opened the large mahogany door, and pushed Helena into the room beyond. Helena glanced round as she stepped forward and she remembered to smile as all eyes turned expectantly towards her. As she had anticipated from previous experience, a number of men were seated in the large room, and others were standing idly chatting. Unless other whores were due to arrive, it would be a strenuous and busy night for Helena and the other girls. She inhaled deeply, thrust out her breasts, and stepped forward. A naked man, his cock erect, was serving drinks from a silver tray.

Back to today's reality

When the vehicle lurched forward, Lana was rudely jolted from her strangely disturbing day dream of another dimly-remembered fateful journey. She reached to steady herself against a strut on the high side panel of the wagon. The yellow-skinned woman was thrust against her by the lurch and, in turn, Lana found herself pressed against the body of the male slave seated next to her. The woman's small pert breasts were somehow both luscious and firm against Lana's upper arm, while her own soft flesh yielded against the man's hard muscles. They all settled back, adjusting to the irregular movement of the wagon. The leather seat was padded well enough and the wagon seemed to be sprung. It was comfortable enough for slaves, she supposed. She could hear the grunt of the draught animals above the buzz of surrounding activity. Soon though, the calls of vendors and the general cacophony of gathered people faded away, and she could only hear the creak and rumbling of the wagon and the cracking whip of the driver. She assumed they had left the Xanadalia Fair Ground.

Lana found herself gazing in the gloom at the large cock of the slave opposite, and wondering why he had been purchased. Was it for the same purpose as women such as she, whose intended usage was scarcely doubted? Her eyes glazed a little.

Lana was not shocked when the girl seated next to the bond male slave reached over to stroke his large organ. After all, Lana's own slave conditioning inured her to such things: naked cocks, slave or free, were usually stroked and sucked, and she had had her full share. The fellow's cock quickly became erect under the expert handling of the olive-skinned girl. Its large head was exposed and glistening, and its girth was scarcely confined by the small finely-boned female hand. The slave was smiling slightly as the slave cheerfully surrendered to the girl's artful ministrations. This went on for some time, for mile after mile in fact, until the man was moaning softly and a string of viscous cum trailed from the girl's hand each time her slender fingers released the organ, only to curl around it once more. A warm aroma of sex pervaded the air in the wagon. The slave girl, a voluptuous beauty with olive skin and large rounded breasts, smiled and fluttered her eyes as she bent to place her full lips round the head of the cock. The action revealed the tattoo on the girl's back... 'Another bennu girl,' Lana thought, 'helpless to resist her own wanton desires.' Lana watched, fascinated as the girl's head bobbed up and down, and she caught the slight smile of one of the other women on the bench opposite. Even the yellow-skinned woman had stopped weeping and she also watched, her small neat mouth agape. With a practiced motion, the bennu slave took the man wholly into her mouth, and Lana knew that the big cock would be embedded deeply within the girl's throat. Lana glanced down at the genitals of the man next to her, and she saw that his cock had also become erect. Familiar, irresistible stirrings of warmth had begun to seep through her belly. She vainly tried to push her lascivious thoughts aside as she gazed at the man's tumescent penis, with its small eye exposed and a small pearl of moisture at the very tip. Her fingers fluttered, as if to move to encircle the shaft. He seemed to catch her thoughts and turned to look at her, his dark brown eyes seeming to burn into her own. On the other side of the wagon, the male slave's groans became louder, more insistent, and Lana could hear liquid sounds as the girl assiduously sucked his cock. Lana continued to look into the face of the man sitting beside her. He smiled and licked his lips. Lana held his gaze but didn't return the smile, and she was glad that his wrists were shackled behind him. This man, she saw, was no primed and simpering house slave: although degraded by enslavement, he was proud, resentful and, she sensed, dangerous. His jaw moved, as if he was about to speak, but he made no sound. Instead he held her gaze with arrogant power. There was a loud, hissing moan from the fellow on the other side of the wagon. Lana tore her eyes away and looked across to see that the olive-skinned girl had turned to straddle the man, facing him, and the erect organ was now buried inside her. She saw the vivid tattoo on the girl's back, with the dragon's scaled penis raping a voluptuous and deliciously vulnerable bennu bird.

Lana realized that the heat of her own desires was raging. Suddenly, almost before she knew what she was doing, surprising even herself, she twisted her body, rising from the bench, throwing her right leg over the man's strong thighs, pressing her breasts against his muscled chest. She let out a small sigh as she lowered herself onto his cock, feeling the tumescent organ slide satisfyingly into her sodden cunt. Lana heard the yellow-skinned woman gasp in shock. The man gave a throaty chuckle. She closed her eyes, throwing her head back, and she felt his loins lifting to fully impale her with his erect cock. As the vehicle lurched his cock moved within her. She thought that she heard him moan slightly. She again looked into the man's eyes. When her love cradle ground against his loins, she squirmed against him, using his cock to satiate her own cruelly-awakened lust rather than trying to give pleasure. Shamelessly, she no longer gave a thought to the others in the wagon. She luxuriated in her impalement. Every jolt of the wagon bought more pleasure. The man's head was now buried between her soft breasts.

The road was evidently becoming more uneven and broken, for the wagon seemed to yaw this way and that. Every now and then there would be a severe jolt, which lifted her violently upon his shaft. His breathing was becoming heavy, fast and ragged. She rode in this way for long miles, easing from him when he seemed on the verge of release, and eventually sinking back onto his cock with a slow, delicious embrace of her cunt flesh. It was a wickedly pleasant way to pass a miserable journey. More significantly, though, she realised that this was a passage of rite for her. For the first time, she wilfully surrendered to her own irresistible sexual needs, those omnipresent gnawing demands they had engendered within her belly, hitherto acknowledged but denied except when she was given no other option but to yield. Like the olive-skinned slut, she was a bennu girl, a helpless and shameless slave to her awakened sexuality.

Presently, the male slave was grunting and bucking up, and she found herself pumping up and down upon his hot, granite-like cock until she felt his pulsating orgasm. Her own climax was muted, drawn-out, but intensely-satisfying, evocative of slowly simmering milk rising and frothing in a pan. When it was over, she remained upon the fellow, leaning against him. His cock became soft and flaccid within her sodden but temporarily satiated flesh. He would provide a comfortable seat for as long as she wished it. As it transpired, the coach rumbled onward for another hour or more and Lana rode with her legs straddled across the man. After a while, to her surprise, she felt his cock hardening inside her again.

The River Port

Lana heard the sound of human activity outside again and she looked at the fellow whose cock was buried inside her. It seemed from the general hubbub that they were in a town or village, with the shouts and calls of vendors, a persistent cry of wild birds, a buzz of conversation, and the noises of industry. Also, the wagon was moving slowly, and it frequently came to a stop for a short time before lurching forward again. The surface beneath the wheels seemed to be more utilitarian, too, perhaps cobbles or stone stocks, and the metal rims crunched noisily. Lana's hands were on the man's shoulders, and her legs straddled his thighs, knees perched on the bench on either side of him. He stared back at her mutely. They hadn't spoken during the entire journey. His cock was hard again now. How she relished it inside her as it moved deliciously as the wagon made its lumbering, yawing way. Yet even as she rode the male slave in such a wanton, even as she thoroughly revelled in the satiation of her lust, Lana reproached herself bitterly. 'So this is what I have become!' she thought to herself. 'Am I really just a slut who allows her cunt to dominate her actions?' Moreover, she also recognized the way they had coarsened her language, the verbal currency of her abject slavery, and she now habitually thought of her anatomy in the same crude terms her owners used when speaking to her.

The wagon had halted again. This time, though, the canvas was being loosened, and it

began to slump overhead as the tension released. Lana smiled to the male slave and gently rubbed the palm of her hand over the stubble of his face before raising herself to disengage from his cock. She twisted aside to sit on the bench, aware of the sticky slick of spent sperm on her inner thigh. The girl on the other side of the wagon, the olive-skinned girl, smiled across at her, but Lana looked away, biting her lip. She had moved in the nick of time, for the rear flap of canvas was flung aside and bright day-light flooded into the wagon interior. Lana blinked as she gazed out, and her hand surreptitiously wiped away the slime from her thigh.

Jiffa, the large black steward, stood there on the cobbled area with his hand on the bone handle of his cane, speaking to a couple of rough looking men. As they spoke animatedly, the men occasionally looked up at the slaves in the wagon. The air was cooler here, and Lana realized that they were in some sort of port, beside a wide river estuary. Huge grey birds wheeled in the blue sky; she realized that it was the outlandish cry of these sea gulls she had heard. Beyond the cobbles she could see the outline of boats, lined up on a wharf, beneath structures of wooden cranes and davits. Eventually, one of the men leapt onto the tailgate of the wagon and approached the blonde male slave who sat on the opposite bench beside Lana. He roughly pulled the manacled man to his feet and thrust him towards the edge of the wagon bed, the chain on his ankle dragging along the heavy central restraining bar. Similarly, without a word, the man turned and grabbed the other male slave, whose cock was still fully erect and thrusting when he stood. The fellow laughed and glanced knowingly at Lana before sharply slapping the man's tumescent member and pushing him away. Lana felt the heat of a blush on her face and she looked away, preferring not to watch as the male slaves were unchained and manhandled from the wagon.

Then, after some time, and after more discourse from Jiffa, the women were ordered to go to the end of the wagon, one at a time. They dealt firstly with the women on the opposite bench, each of whom, in turn, presented her left ankle so that the chain could be unlocked before leaping from the wagon tail into the waiting arms of a man who stood on the cobbles of the dock. Lana noted that the rough fellow took the opportunity to handle the women freely as he caught and steadied them. Presently it was her own turn and she stepped forward, offered her left foot, and waited stoically as the man closed his calloused hand around her ankle and unlocked the chain. Then, when she jumped from wagon bed, he clasped his arms around her and pressed her body to his coarse work clothes, reaching to sharply smack her bottom as he released her. She gave a small, indignant yelp, her eyes blazing angrily, and the man laughed. Jiffa was also smiling broadly.

The desirable naked slave women who were marched through the wharves of the teeming river port were the objects of great interest to the dockers who laboured there. It was little wonder. Lana saw that the port was obviously devoted to the stuff of everyday commerce, with stacks of crates, sacks of grain, bales of cloth, and massive barrels stacked high on the dockside. The herded women attracted a chorus of calls and whistles, and it was all too evident that the sight of a bevy of naked slave girls wasn't an everyday occurrence there. Lana fearfully sought to remain in the centre of the huddle of girls, trying to keep away from the rudely grasping hands, but even then her flesh was pinched on more than one occasion. It all had the whiff of danger amidst the dank dock smells, but Lana reasoned that as Jiffa had chosen to have only the support of a single attendant, he obviously regarded himself and his charges as reasonably safe. Neither of the men seemed to be armed. The huge black steward strode on ahead, in the manner of a man who knows he will receive due deference. The girls scurried along behind, unfettered and without any other direction. Jiffa's subordinate brought up the rear: a pale-faced, bare-chested youth who wore baggy white pantaloons gathered at the ankle in the high gaiters of buff calf-skinned boots. Lana was certain that the girls' rude handling from the rough workmen could be immediately stopped with a single terse command from Jiffa but he obviously chose not to do that. She also saw, though, that the most of the other women did not object too strenuously,

indeed most of them responded with laughs and giggles. The Oriental woman, though, seemed mortified to be so displayed and abused, and she cringed beside Lana, shielding her nudity as best she may.

It was a short-lived ordeal however, for Jiffa soon led them to a secure compound where fierce-looking guards stood at the large gate. The surrounding buildings were of better stuff than the usual dock-side warehouses, and a couple of smart carriages were parked under an open lean-to. It was quiet there, in what seemed to be a private wharf, and a large and impressively ornate boat bobbed gently at anchor, with two plainer but equally large barges moored immediately behind. An awning was erected to the stern of the boat, and Lana could see a couple of slaves there, and the many highly-burnished copper fittings and deck bollards were shining in the sun.

Jiffa gestured with his hand, pale pink palm uppermost, urging the women to go to the first barge. Diffidently, Lana allowed herself to be ushered up the gangway with its decorative chains. When she stepped onto the boat the polished wooden planks of the deck were warm on her dirty bare feet. Jiffa led them to the raised sub-deck where the striped awning cast a light shade over four girls, who were clothed in manner of speaking and yet fully-revealed, and who fussed over a man who reclined on a couch that was lavishly upholstered in gold and maroon textiles.

Jiffa said. "I have the new cargo."

The man looked up indolently, shielding his eyes against the sun as he looked up at Lana, his gaze sweeping appraisingly over her body. "Excellent, Jiffa," he said.

The black steward bowed deeply and then turned and led the slaves, the consignment, to a companion-way. A large shallow bowl of water was placed there, and he made each woman step into to it and wash the dust from her feet. Then, when satisfied their feet were clean, he took them down to a wide, lavishly appointed cabin that seemed to stretch for half of the length of the boat. Lana gasped inwardly at the unexpected opulence. Jiffa ushered them to an area that was strewn with padded mattresses and silk cushions.

They travelled for many more hours, it seemed, but the gentle rocking of the boat lulled Lana to sleep.

Chapter Seventeen

Lana's New Owner

Jiffa smiled broadly, obviously pleased that his news had been received with the desired impact. "Homer Homere!" he repeated quietly.

'Homer Homere!' the line of waiting girls had gasped in unison. It was the first time they had been permitted to know the name of their new owner. Even Lana, still largely ignorant to the ways of that time and place, had heard of the fabled and fabulously rich merchant. The ten newly-acquired women stood ready for inspection by their new owner and master, standing one behind the other in a training room of the slave quarters of a great merchant palace. Among them, Lana waited with a mixture of excited interest and awful fear, eager to see the man who now held sway over her life, and yet terribly afraid of the implications. In preparation for this auspicious occasion, the newly-arrived slaves had been bathed, massaged and groomed in baths more opulent than any Lana had ever seen before. The preparations had been thorough too, with deeply-cleansing enemas, manicures and cosmetics, and each woman's pudenda was freshly shaved and oiled. Those who had worn steel body furniture, like Lana's cunt rings, had now been re-fitted with gleaming gold rings. Jiffa had briefly inspected each woman and positioned her carefully in the line, each time repeating the instruction: "Look at the picture on the wall!"

Lana realized that they had been positioned in order of height, with a petite Oriental woman at the front and a tall, statuesque blonde girl at the rear. She kept her eyes fixed high on the mural that was painted on the wall, fully thirty feet high. The dominant centre-piece of the huge work of art was a familiar scene: it was a fearsome picture of a zul dragon raping a writhing bennu girl-bird. Lana found herself comparing the detail of the mural with the tattoo on the back of the olive-skinned girl who stood directly in front of her. On the girl's back, she saw the two small ridges of scar tissue, little more than an inch and a half in length, exactly delineating the lips of the bennu bird's ravaged vagina, showing the impaled labia in relief, as if clinging to the giant scaled phallus. Eve too, had sported those same shameful marks, and Lana knew they had been ritually inflicted by a 4 meter long Zul whip, wielded by an expert Whip Master. Lana had hitherto escaped such terrible treatment, and she shuddered at the very thought, returning her attention to the mural.

Jiffa walked back and forth along the line. "Keep looking at the beautiful picture," he ordered. "Identify yourself there... imagine yourself in one of the scenes. The Master will ask you to identify the scene you choose and explain why."

Then, evidently satisfied, Jiffa retired to a corner of the room where he stood chatting and laughing with the three junior assistants who had overseen the slaves' preparation.

Lana was mulling over his words... identify yourself with a scene! She bit her lip. The graphic rape of the bennu girl was surrounded by other scenes of ravishment and submission. The mural depicted an orgy of wild sex, with helpless, vulnerable slave girls and rampantly-phallic males explicitly depicted in all manner of sexual activity and debauchery, celebrating the victory of the fiercely virile Zul dragon and the abject surrender of the delicate bennu bird. Lana realized why the girls had been commanded to keep their eyes on that mural, for she was already feeling a surge of heat in her loins as her eyes swept across the erotic scenes and as she momentarily imagined herself in each. She eventually found a picture of a girl fleeing from two muscled warriors with massively erect cocks, and about to be captured by another who was approaching from the opposite direction. If asked, that is the scene she would choose, although she couldn't immediately think of any accompanying explanation for her choice.

Lana had long recognised the subtleties the slavers used in training a pleasure slave, yet

she was helpless to resist them. Here was yet another example. She also knew that the trainers' incessant mind programming techniques were aided by the chemicals regularly injected into her, and the unknown supplements that laced her food. Besides the hormonal charge they gave, the cocktail of drugs wrought physical changes too, and her nipples, breasts and clitoris had become hyper-sensitive. The cunning deployment of body jewellery that teased her clitoris also played a large part in her debasement. So Lana, like every other woman, was helpless to resist such relentless conditioning, and her body was now almost constantly hungry for sex. She mused that the choice of scene was subliminal, showing her vain and useless flight, and the inevitability of capture and ravishment.

Lana's reverie was suddenly interrupted by the bass sound of a gong reverberating round the highly-decorated halls. A new air of urgent activity surged through the slave quarters, and the stewards' cheerful demeanour changed instantly. Jiffa turned and strode towards the line of naked women, drawing his cane from the scabbard at his waist.

"Stand straight, breathe in and push your tits out," he said quietly, walking along the line. The cane reached to tap the bottom of the olive-skinned woman directly in front of Lana, causing the buttocks to clench, and the rod then stroked against Lana's lower belly. "Tighten your arses and bellies, and stand to attention. Keep looking at the picture on the wall! Prepare to be inspected by Homer Homere, your Lord and Master."

Lana, stood ramrod straight, arms by her sides, with fingers stretched down her thighs, her tits out-thrust, belly sucked in and buttocks tight. She saw the olive-skinned girl immediately in front of her similarly standing to attention. Out of the corner of her eye, Lana saw Jiffa stride to meet the man who had entered the training room. The Chief Steward and his three junior stewards all bowed obsequiously, and Homere smiled and patted Jiffa on the shoulder, indicating that he should straighten. Homere was followed by his retinue, waiting a pace or so behind: four girls, all of them clothed in some provocative way, a drape of transparent silk or an open slip of gauze, marking them as something above the ordinary slave girl but amply revealing their perfect bodies and declaring their own slave status. The girls followed Homere as he walked over to a stool that was placed immediately in front of the Oriental woman, four places ahead of Lana in the line. Lana looked straight ahead and saw that the beautiful girls surrounded Homere, standing prettily posed under the huge mural and somehow adding to the lascivious tableaux depicted there. One of the girls had a pad and pencil, poised ready for notes as Homere turned to Jiffa and asked a few terse questions. Lana's grasp of the language was progressing apace, but they spoke quickly in a strange dialect and she couldn't understand everything they said.

Then Homere nodded at Jiffa and then looked up at the tiny Oriental woman who stood quaking immediately in front of him.

"Heads up! Keep looking at the pictures. Remember to identify yourselves there," Jiffa called, and Lana saw the retinue girls Homer glance at each other and exchange knowing smiles.

Lana could smell the aroma of female arousal and she knew that her cunt was becoming hot and moist. She again focused on the erotic images of the mural, anxious to have some story ready.

After a long pause, Homere beckoned to the small bird-like woman. She stepped forward diffidently and meekly cooperated as Jiffa positioned her to his satisfaction, with legs spread and her hands behind her head. Lana noted that Jiffa's ornamental but still highly-function cane was still held in his hand, and he was using it to tap the woman until he achieved the required pose as she stood between the merchant's knees. Lana continued to stare doggedly at the wall mural, so she could not see what he was doing. She heard the Oriental girl weeping softly, occasionally gasping, and once giving a small squeal. After some minutes, Homere spoke, a short litany, and the girl with the pad made quick note.

"A virgin," Homere said. "Interesting, but it's of no great importance to me. Have her

immediately broken and trained.”

Jiffa bowed slightly, and led the weeping woman away, his large black hand stroking her bottom soothingly. Lana knew that the Oriental woman had not taken well to her slavery. Snatched from her life as a free woman, delivered to slavers, sold on a public block, and now being taken away to start her training... Lana assumed, from her own experiences, that the hymen of the seemingly frail creature would be simply bludgeoned and broken by the large cock of a guard, down in the dreadful dungeons. Then, maybe, the skin on her back would be tattooed with the zul dragon and the bennu girl-bird. One of the attendant stewards took the woman from Jiffa, rapping his cane across her thighs to silence her as he led her from the room.

The next two women standing in line in front of Lana were similarly brought forward in turn and examined. Each time, a short statement was dictated by Homere and noted down by the girl who obviously acted as his secretary. Then the olive-skinned girl was beckoned forward. This time Lana had a better view of what was happening. First, the girl was made to kneel between Homere's thighs, and he examined her hair and face. Then she was ordered to stand in the now-familiar display position with legs widely spread and hands behind her head. Homere's hands assessed the girl in a practiced way, thoroughly and candidly, allowing no modesty. The girl was next made to turn, and she looked Lana fully in the eyes, her full breasts rising and falling as she breathed heavily, her lips lasciviously loose. It seemed that Homere's fingers were trailing over the image scribed into the skin of the girl's back, and he made a brief comment which his secretary duly noted. His hand then slipped between the girl's thighs and cupped her sex lips, the forefinger stretching and probing for her clitoris. The girl closed her eyes. Her hips moved slightly. She was made to bend, her full breasts hanging pendent beneath her, and her body gave a small jerk.

Lana watched transfixed. She felt her heart pounding, and she knew that her vagina was sodden with the warm juices of arousal. The girl was then told to straighten, and Homere dictated his report as he washed his hands. Then one of the junior stewards led the olive-skinned beauty away.

Then it was Lana's turn.

She stepped forward, as if in a trance and knelt between the knees of the great Homer Homere. Jiffa adjusted her position, tapping her ankles with the tip of his cane until she had widened them sufficiently. He placed her hands behind her head, and she obediently interlaced her fingers.

“Keep your head held high! Look at the picture.”

Lana held herself immobile, with her eyes closed as she felt the tips of his unexpectedly soft and cool fingers tracing her high cheek bones and stroking over her nose. He then brushed his fingertips across her mouth, slightly distending her lower lip.

“Open!” he said, in English.

“English! He spoke English...” she thought in amazement as she obediently opened her mouth.

Homere ran the pad of his forefinger over the sharp edges of the teeth of her lower jaw. He held her chin, tilting her head slightly to look into her mouth.

“Put out your tongue!”

His English was coloured with a heavy accent.

“Put out your tongue!” he repeated, and Lana gave a small squeal as Jiffa's cane rapped sharply across her back.

Obediently, she put out her tongue and Homere tickled its surface, making the tip curl involuntarily. Then he pushed his finger fully into her mouth, reaching to the very back of her throat; she willed herself to relax and successfully fought off her gagging reflex before sucking hard on the digit. She heard Homere chuckle slightly as he withdrew his finger.

“Stand. Display.”

Lana rose as gracefully as she could and Jiffa adjusted her position, tapping her ankles with the tip of his cane until she had widened them sufficiently. He placed her hands behind her head, and she obediently interlaced her fingers.

“Keep your head held high! Look at the picture.”

She felt Homere’s cool hands on her breasts, gently pressing to test the tone of the soft flesh, cupping and lifting the orbs, as if weighing them expertly, lifting them high and tracing the small finger of each hand along flesh beneath, as if checking for a tell-tale scar there.

“You understand English, quite obviously,” he said as he continued to examine her breasts, squeezing her hard nipples and flicking at the rings that pierced them.

Lana gave a surprised start. “Y- Yes...” she stammered.

His hands released her breasts, and he then cupped them again and let them fall, repeating this three times as if judging the bounce. “Yes, Master,” he corrected softly.

“Yes, Master,” she said, gazing doggedly ahead at the mural.

Homere’s hands were now tailing over her belly, again pressing to test the resilience of the flesh there. ‘Bend your knees slightly!’ he ordered, as his fingers traced down to the small, fine chains that linked her cunt lips to the ring that pierced the flesh above her clitoris. “You are well educated?”

“Yes, Master. I had just finished university when....” She allowed the sentence to trail away.

“A university,” he said, apparently in approval.

She breathed heavily as he probed the lips of her sex, the tip of his finger tickling gently around the flesh surrounding her clitoris before tracing down and stroking the length of her pussy, from apex to anus. She knew that her cunt was sodden with flowing juices.

“Your age?”

“Twenty-four, Master.”

His fingers were still in and around her cunt, driving her almost mad with unwelcome but irresistible desire.

“Which girl in the painting is you?” he asked, driving two fingers up her cunt and pressing at the front wall of the ridged channel of hot wet flesh.

“I- I think the girl trying to flee from her rape, Master,” she said, her breath coming in small heaves as she felt the small finger of the invading hand probe at her anus as the two forefingers friggd her cunt.

“Still trying to flee?” he said, in a slightly mocking tone.

Lana’s hips squirmed unashamedly. Then he withdrew his fingers from her cunt and she let out a long, low sigh.

“Turn around!”

She obeyed, glad for the slight respite, and found she was gazing in a tortured angst at the girl who stood waiting her turn in the line. His hands were on Lana’s back now, and she knew that he was examining her vivid tattoo.

“Whose work is this?” Homere asked, his fingers lingering on her lower shoulder.

“I don’t know Master,” she answered. She paused, wondering what else to say. Many times, she had been complimented on the magnificence of the pornographic image indelibly inscribed on her skin, and it usually elicited admiration. “It was put on me in another time and place, while I slept.”

“Another time and place...” Homere said with a chuckle. Then, presumably speaking to Jiffa, reverting to the melodic language of that place, he said, “She was obviously marked as suitable for acquisition. I can see why.”

Inwardly, Lana found herself blushing inwardly, not at the frank examination but because

she took his words as a compliment. Outwardly, she knew her body was already flushed and mottled. Fires of arousal were raging in her belly, and her gaze was glazed as she looked at the worried-looking girl who waited, next in line. The fingers probed in the divide of her buttocks.

“Bend forward!” he commanded in his harshly-accented English.

She inhaled deeply and obeyed Homere’s terse order, bending at the waist, hands on knees, steeling herself as the finger inevitably pressed into her anus. Even as the digit slid inside her, she reflected that it would have been unthinkable only weeks before for her to have stood placid, accepting such treatment. Things can change quickly. How easily can any woman be conditioned to accept all manner of degrading treatment?

“Would you like to work for me?” she heard Homere ask as the finger wriggled in her anus.

The question took her by surprise. What other choice did she have? “Whatever Master prefers,” she heard herself say as she tried not to clench her muscles against the finger that reamed her anus.

Homere laughed. “A good answer,” he said, and he withdrew his finger, causing Lana to give a little gasp at the pleasurable friction. “I mean to ask if you would like to become part of my personal entourage. I need a secretary who is able to speak and write good English. You can do that?”

“Yes, Master,” she said, remaining bent at the waist, her breasts hanging beneath her. “I could do that.”

“You would still be a slave, of course.”

“Yes, Master, of course,” she said, as the palm of his hand cradled her cunt lips and squeezed them together.

“Whoever marked her was very perceptive,” she heard Homere tell Jiffa as his free hand again traced over her tattoo. “She is a natural slave. A bennu girl.”

A natural slave! Worse, a bennu girl, a helpless slut, the lowest of the low, shunned and derided by polite society. Lana could no longer deny it: she was an abject slave to her own cruelly awakened, wanton sexual needs, ever ready to be aroused and hungry to be used...

“Yes, sir,” she heard Jiffa agree. “I thought she would be suitable.”

The hand released her cunt and he tapped her on her back. “Stand straight,” he ordered in English. “Turn round and look at me.”

Lana straightened, sucked in her belly, thrust out her breasts, and turned to face her Master. She gazed like a rabbit at Homere as he dictated a short commentary to the secretary. Homere kept his eyes on Lana’s face as his remarks frankly outlined the virtues and shortcomings of her body and her physical responses. Finally, though, he stated that she would be transferred to his personal entourage. Lana glanced at the retinue of girls who stood behind Homere, and she could not fathom from their fixed smiles whether they were pleased to welcome her or not.

“Arrange for her to visit the Whip Master,” Homere concluded, and the secretary seemed to smile knowingly as she duly noted the command.

“Come,” Jiffa said gently, his hand on her upper forearm.

“Thank you, Master,” she heard herself say to Homere, calling over her shoulder as she was led away as if in a dream.

Of all the likely outcomes, this was the least expected and, she thought, maybe the best available. It seemed scarcely believable. Homer Homere was one of the great men of the era and she was now part of his personal entourage. Jiffa handed her over to one of the junior stewards, who took her down a corridor, past guards who stood like tightly coiled springs, ready to strike at a sign of danger, and into the inner sanctum of the merchant palace. The steward seemed eager to rap her buttocks with his cane at every opportunity, perhaps anxious to impress upon her that

her new status as a retinue girl didn't elevate her above the constant threat of corporal punishment.

He delivered her to stern looking woman who immediately closed the door on the steward, shutting him out.

Chapter Eighteen

Initiation - Lana Meets the Whip Master and gets her stripes

Homere Homer's Whip Master always worked in a dimly lit cavern of a room, deep in the bowels of the house. Lana huddled her body closely against one of his whipping posts, her legs claspings either side of the wooden shaft that had been worn smooth by the thighs of countless writhing slaves. Her wrists were fastened high to a hook on the post, making her strain on the very tips of her toes. She had never felt so vulnerable.

The Whip Master, some distance behind her, whirled his whip with a frightening crack and sent the long, braided leather skimming with ineffable skill, scarcely touching Lana but ensuring that the tip gently caressed her bare skin. He allowed the leather to drape on her shoulder. She shuddered and suppressing a scream of terror and her heart pounded against her ribs. When the whip next moved, its thin end wrapping around her neck and tightening, she gave a sharp yelp, not of pain, for there had been none, but of surprise and fear. The Whip Master was coldly efficient and, in his hands, the dreaded zul whip, fully 4 metres long, seemed like a dangerous but controlled serpent. This type of whip was named for the Zul dragon and only ever used on slave women. The braided leather still draped loosely over her shoulder, although the end was now tightly wound around her neck. It was difficult to believe that anyone could actually wield the whip with such skill. She glanced down and saw the shining, oiled black slender leather tail, its strands woven together in delicate diamond-patterned braiding, gleaming oiled leather against her pale skin.

"This is a lesson for you, Lana." She heard Homere speak from somewhere in the depths of the room, and his thin voice echoed eerily. "You need to know that I am not kind with girls who do not obey my instructions at all times. I could, within the moment, order the Whip Master to break your neck with a flick of his wrist. It is one method of executing recalcitrant slaves. Nobody would miss you. We would simply dispose of your body and replace you with another, more willing girl."

Lana heard the Whip Master speak for the first time since she had been entered that awful dungeon: "How many, sir, and what intensity?"

She saw the whip stir and move again, as if it was alive, like a long slender snake, graceful, beautiful, and yet utterly deadly as it unwrapped itself from her neck and seemed to melt away from her.

"Six light lashes," Homere said. "Apply the Kiss of the Zul. Otherwise, I don't want her marked elsewhere."

The Kiss of the Zul! Lana almost gagged in fear. She had been repeatedly told that this was a ritual all bennu girls must face. Soon, she knew, strange and almost obscene little scars would complete the scene tattooed on her back. She could smell the perfumed scent of the oil they used for the lamps. Her whole body seemed to tingle in the slightly chill air. She suddenly realized that she was inexplicably aroused. There was a sharp retort and a flash of fire seared across her buttocks. "One... Two." Almost before the words were spoken, a new streak of agony was laid across the first one. She gasped rather than screamed as she danced on her toes at the post, shocked as much by the incredible speed of the two strokes as by the exquisite pain they caused.

The whip cracked loudly again and the sound was immediately followed by a new strike of lightning-like agony at the top of her thighs, perfectly tracing the creases between buttocks and thighs. She screamed, and it echoed with an unearthly wail in that cavernous room. "Three!"

There was a slight delay, a long deliberate pause, and Lana writhed with awful

anticipation. The whip cracked again. She screeched and tensed her buttocks, slamming her body against the post, caressing the wood with the softness of her breasts and belly. The expected pain didn't arrive, however, and she realized it had been a mere feint of the whip and yet, even as she thought this, only seconds later, a bloom of fire streaked silently across her lower thighs. She heard herself scream again. "Four!"

Then in quick fire succession the final two strokes were laid diagonally across the bow of her back, first to the left, and then to the right, and each time the biting tip curled to lick at the soft underbelly of a breast. "Five. Siiiiixxxxxx..." The Kiss of the Zul! These last two strikes, vicious and horrifically painful, fell in such rapid succession that one scream, albeit long, wailing, and going on and on, served for the pair of them. Her back was on fire. She imagined that she could feel blood seeping from open wounds. Then she hung against the post, sweating and panting, her breasts heaving. Strangely, there was some relief that the ordeal had come and gone. These last strokes, she knew from her instruction, were the Zul stripes ritually applied to all bennu girls at some time in their slavery. Every woman who wore the vivid tattoo on her back was destined to receive them. It was the physical manifestation of the rape of the Bennu girl-bird by the rampant Zul dragon, symbolic of the awakening of her slave lust. Lana had seen the curiously raised scars on the back of Eve and other girls. As she hung there, her breathing coming in strangled sobs, she knew that two small but vivid stripes would now be emblazoned on her, and at their centre would be the rampaging penis of the zul dragon as it shafted the helpless girl-bird. When healed, two small short ridges of scarred flesh would remain, exactly delineating the plundered sex lips of the girl-bird. She had been told that only an expert Whip Master would be entrusted to work with such accuracy, for it took great skill to break the skin in only the small target area.

Chapter Nineteen

New Sexual Awakening

“Relax, little bennu,” Jiffa murmured as he rubbed a sharply astringent ointment into the newly-developing scar tissue on Lana’s back. “I’ll satisfy that hungry pussy soon enough.”

Lana moaned and lay supine under his skilled fingers. The scars on her back were healing slowly, mainly because of Jiffa’s careful attention to the two welts. It quickly became apparent to Lana that her affable slave steward was more concerned in enhancing the aesthetics of the eventual scars rather than in easing her pain. By applying various irritants to the wounds, he encouraged the two small ridges to become suitably prominent; also, using differently coloured unguents, he ensured that the hue and tones of the scars were appropriate. He frequently explained, with broad smiles, how the pain was an essential part of her rite of passage to become a fully-fledged bennu girl, as if expecting gratitude.

“Yes, Master,” Lana had learned to say, biting on her lip against the pain and the sexual arousal which seemed to arrive in equal measure.

To reinforce his message, Jiffa comprehensively fucked Lana after each treatment session. This had totally surprised Lana on the first occasion, for she had assumed the giant black steward to be a eunuch. This was far from the truth. His cock was large and virile, and it bore the familiar image of the zul. Jiffa was very skilled at arousing a woman to throes of impossible passion too, and he invariably left Lana gasping and utterly exhausted.

So the daily scar-care ritual was attended with rising sexual heat and delicious anticipation as Lana squirmed beneath Jiffa’s painful ministrations. She understood that this was all part of the conditioning to turn her into a helplessly sluttish bennu, but she was beyond caring. There was no way for her to resist, anyway. Lana was utterly helpless in their hands. They dictated what she ate and drank, and relentlessly introduced their cocktails of mind- and body-altering drugs into her body. She was beyond recall: they had made her a slave to her own lust. Now, whenever Jiffa or anyone else paid Lana even the slightest attention, her sexual heat ignited into flames that rendered her utterly wanton and shamelessly panting.

“My God!” Lana panted, grinding back onto Jiffa’s cock, trying to get the fullest measure, whilst rubbing her engorged clitoris with her fingers, pressing the flesh around the tiny gold ring there, and feeling her entire belly turn to liquid fire.

“Steady, bennu, steady,” Jiffa said, his fingers still tracing the scars on her back. “Don’t dare to come unless I give you permission.”

Lana groaned and reluctantly removed her fingers from the throbbing bud. Utter arousal and absolute denial was a frequent tactic of his, raising her to the heights of passion and then abruptly leaving her unsatisfied. If an orgasm ever engulfed her on these occasions, she was whipped unmercifully on her arse and thighs, so she had learned to reluctantly control her desires. Often, Jiffa would leave her desperately screaming inwardly for satiation, usually with her wrists fastened behind her to prevent masturbation. When in this condition, Lana had learned to beg shamelessly to any passing guard or attendant, and sometimes they would give her rough relief, but more often not.

She abandoned herself to the erstwhile pleasure, taking what she could from her fucking. This time, though, was to be somewhat different for Lana, because as Jiffa languidly fucked her from behind, a cool and haughty female voice interrupted her moans of pleasure.

There’s usually a wife somewhere

“So, this is the new slut I’ve been hearing about.”

Lana tried to desist, but her hips seemed to grind of their own volition, and her pussy flesh clamped and sucked at the cock that deliciously impaled her.

“Yes, Lady Morgana,” she heard Jiffa reply, although he did not pause in his strokes. “This is Lana, the new bennu girl.”

Morgana, Homere’s wife, and lady of the house! All of the slaves seemed to fear her, and Lana hadn’t heard anything good about the woman.

“I have no wish to interrupt your pleasure, Jiffa,” Morgana said with the hint of a sneer. “How does she perform?”

“She’s splendid,” Jiffa replied, easing his hips forward and burying his cock to the hilt in Lana’s cunt, making her gasp and groan. “And this is not for my pleasure, Lady, but for the girl’s instruction. I’ve had worse jobs, of course.”

Lana buried her face in the pillow in shame as she heard Morgana’s throaty chuckle. “I hear that my husband had the bennu scars whipped onto her back. Are they healed yet?”

“Almost, Lady...they are coming along nicely. Lana has a beautiful zul tattoo.” Jiffa began to piston his cock back and forth with steady strokes, his cock almost slipping from her cunt and then easing back again until his balls rested against her thighs.

As Lana grunted and rotated her buttocks to meet each thrust, she felt the woman’s cool fingers on her back. The touch was feather-light as it brushed over the scars.

“Excellent,” Morgana said. “When you’ve finished with the slut, wash away her sweat and filth and send her to my chambers.”

“Yes, Lady Lana,” Jiffa replied, suddenly beginning to increase the tempo of his strokes.

Lana dared a glance as Lady Morgana swept from the room. She saw a beautiful, haughty woman in a long blue diaphanous gown. Then Lana was lost in her own pleasures again. Jiffa was hammering his cock into her now, and his large hand had reached round to grasp her right breast.

“Master?” Lana gasped desperately, humping to meet his rhythm as she felt the tide inexorably rising inside her. “May I come?”

“You may, bennu girl,” Jiffa said, squeezing her breast in his huge hand.

Within moments Lana’s shattering orgasm overwhelmed her. She could not have prevented it had she tried.

Chapter Twenty

SHAPESHIFTER – A Jealous Wife

“No, no, that won’t do,” one of the stewards said as a maid stepped back to reveal Lana clad in an open pink cape trimmed with dyed fur. “Not pink.”

Lana endured the attention. She had been draped in an array of green coloured ribbons of varying hues and then, when that was rejected, they had stripped her and buckled a curious arrangement of white leather straps about her torso. Now, the pink seemed to be unacceptable too.

All of the girls in Homere’s personal retinue wore some garment when on duty, although it was invariably intended to provocatively display the flesh rather than conceal it. On this occasion, though, the attendants had dressed her in the finest and most alluring costumes they could find. They eventually settled for a wafting drape of sheer black gauze that billowed aside with her every movement. The attendants brushed her hair until it shone and applied the best cosmetics and painted her nails, obviously anxious to present the slave to best effect. Clearly, Lady Morgana was not a woman to be trifled with. Only when they were really satisfied that she looked her ravishing best did they lead her through the palace to the Lady’s luxurious chambers.

There, in a large and beautifully appointed lounge, Morgana sat in splendour on a chair that could only be described as a throne. Lana blanched before the woman’s gaze and quickly looked down to the floor, but not before she had quickly assessed her looks: she was darkly beautiful, with long flowing chestnut hair and a long leg was revealed to the hip by the fall of her blue gown.

“Look up, little bennu slut,” Morgana said, and there was a clear hint of amusement in her voice. “So, you are the beauty who has enchanted your way into my husband’s retinue.” Lana looked up. She saw that the handsome scar-faced rogue who she had fucked in the wagon was standing beside the impressive chair, stark naked, his cock impressively to attention. “Come closer, girl,” Morgana said, beckoning with a long forefinger finger, and Lana saw that the hand held a chain leash that looped to a large ring that pierced the base the man’s cock. “Turn around. What do they call you?”

Lana inhaled deeply and turned. Only a couple of hours before, this haughty woman had seen her naked and rutting with Jiffa, the giant steward, but this didn’t seem to mitigate the indignity of this appraisal. “They call me Lana, Mistress,” she said.

“Strip off that nonsense of a gown. I wish to examine your tattoo.” Lana slipped the gauze from her shoulders and it slid in a pool of soft fabric about her feet. She stood, naked, her back turned to the Lady, looking into the body of the room, noticing for the first time the servants who stood silently beside walls. “Place your hands on top of your head.” Morgana had left her throne and descended to stand directly behind Lana. Lana felt the fingers tracing down her spine, and then she flinched a little when they lingered on the soreness of her scars. “Who applied this tattoo?”

“I don’t know, Mistress. It was done while I was... unaware.”

“Perhaps the same man who pierced your flesh?”

“No, mistress.”

The fingers continued to stroke against the scars.

“And has your nymphomania been fully released, Lana?”

Lana suppressed a gasp. Nymphomania! She bit her lip and looked down. It was the first time that she had heard the word applied to her in that way. She immediately realised, though, that it was correct. They had somehow turned her into an insatiable nymph. The fingers

remained on the scars, seeming to trace down between the raised welts. And simultaneously the forefinger and thumb of the woman's other hand delved between Lana's buttocks and the long nail scratched a little at the ring of muscle hidden there. Lana gave a start but remained placid.

"Answer, girl," Morgana said sharply, pinching at Lana's anus. "Has your nymphomania been fully released?"

"Yes, Mistress," Lana said quietly, her breasts rising and falling.

"Fully?"

"I'm not sure whether it's fully released or not, Mistress."

Morgana chuckled. "As it should be," she said, stroking the puckered entrance of Lana's anus. "We shall test it before you leave here, Lana. What do you say to that, Magnus?"

"As you wish, ma'am," the male slave replied.

Lana glanced quickly over her shoulder. She saw that the male slave was standing immediately behind her and to the left of Morgana, led by the cock leash.

"I think a figging would be in order, Magnus," Morgana said, clapping her hands to a servant beside a wall.

"Yes, indeed, ma'am," the male slave said as the servant ran to stand before Morgana, her eyes questioning.

"Bring me a hand of ginger, a small paring knife, and my special capsules," Morgana instructed the servant. The servant sped away, and Morgana's long nails continued to scrape lightly at the pucker of Lana's anus. "Have you ever been figged, Lana?" she asked, whispering in her ear, her full lips brushing the lobe.

Lana shuddered as the woman's breath warmed her ear. "I don't know, mistress."

"Oh, I think you'd know if you've been figged," Morgana said with a low chuckle. "Once figged, then it's never forgotten. You're not an anal virgin?"

"No, mistress."

"That's a pity," Morgana said, as the serving girl sprinted back, clutching a large hand of ginger root. "I so enjoy seeing the anal virgins squirm when we do this."

Lana quaked at the woman's ominous words. Morgana came to stand in front of her, holding the large hand of ginger root and two glass phalluses. The male slave, Magnus, his pierced cock still impressively erect, followed and stood quietly beside his mistress, his eyes very obviously feasting on Lana's nudity. Morgana passed the ginger root and the paring knife to Magnus.

"Start to prepare the ginger, Magnus," she ordered, glancing down at the two glass dildos. Then, to Lana, she said, "Go to my chair, Lana, and stand on the seat."

Lana's heart missed a beat as she saw the male slave begin to pare the peel from a finger of ginger root, but she obediently turned and hurried to climb onto the polished wooden seat of Morgana's throne. As her bare feet settled on the wood, Lana found herself wondering why Morgana didn't have a plush upholstered chair, rather than this heavy and plainly functional antique piece with its wide seat, high back and thick, carved arms. Standing atop the throne, she looked down as Morgana led Magnus onto the small raised dais.

"Squat down, Lana," Morgana said. Lana quaked slightly, but she obeyed, bending her knees and holding the arms of the throne to balance herself. Morgana was dissatisfied, however. "Spread your feet. Lower yourself further," she said. And as Morgana spoke she pressed down on Lana's shoulders with both hands. The male slave shifted uneasily as the chain leash on his cock ring tightened, but he continued to prepare the ginger root with the paring knife. Lana inched her feet further apart as the hands pressed downwards, and she lowered her bottom between her haunches until the leaves of her sex brushed against the surface of the seat, sending little shudders through her belly. Morgana's hand then went to Lana's waist and they pressed down again, insistently. Lana grunted as she forced her bottom down until her cunt suckered

onto the polished wood.

Remaining in that splayed, frog-like position, Lana watched wide-eyed as Morgana held up one of the glass dildos. At the end of this dildo there was a large bulbous black-purple ball, half exposed and half-contained by the glass, like the bell-end of a cock. At the other end, Morgana's fingers pressed up against a plunger inside the glass shaft. Morgana positioned the bulbous tip against Lana's cunt, and it felt soft and pliant although strangely cool against the puffy lips. "Spread yourself for me, my darling," Morgana said. Lana gasped a little but she did as she was told, reaching down with both hands and spreading her nether lips, wobbling a little as she sought to maintain her balance. Morgana stroked inside Lana's wet cunt with her fingers and then carefully slid the glass dildo into the hot flesh. Lana squirmed as the cold, hard object was pushed up inside her, and her pussy closed around it. Moreover, her moist sheath was silkily coated with a clinging iciness where the bulbous, pliant end had stroked against her as it was pushed up. Then she was aware that this glans, the black-purple bauble, whatever it was, was pressing up against the very mouth of her womb, sealing it with a strangely intense cold sensation, as if a cube of ice had been embedded there. Lana could feel that the bauble remained in place when Morgana withdrew the glass dildo. She knew that it was now seated high inside her vagina, presumably injected there by the phallic tool, spreading icy-cold tendrils across her belly and into her womb.

Morgana placed the empty glass dildo beside the other on the seat of the chair and then glanced over her shoulder to Magnus. "How is the ginger root advancing?"

"It's going well, ma'am," Magnus replied, holding up a single hooked finger of peeled ginger, some five inches long and the width of a man's thumb.

Morgana licked her lips and nodded. "Let Lana take a suck at the ginger root," she said.

Magnus nodded and stepped forward to press the end of the rhizome against Lana's lips. The sharp familiar aroma assailed her nostrils and the pungent taste made her grimace. Nevertheless, she sucked on the root as Magnus held its handle-shaped end.

"There," Morgana said with some satisfaction. "Isn't that nice? Fresh ginger is wonderful, don't you think? This strain is particularly strong, I think you'll find."

Magnus smiled a little and then pulled the root clear of Lana's mouth. He then began to pare a small indentation around one end of the finger.

"Turn around, dear," Morgana ordered, taking up the other glass dildo. Lana made to obey. "No, remain squatting low, you stupid girl. Now, spread the cheeks of your bottom for me..." Lana closed her eyes against the shame, but she reached to clasp the fleshy globes of her bottom and pulled them apart. She tried to make herself relax as the strange glass dildo pressed against her anus, and then as it pushed inside her anal canal. The icy trail lined her anal canal when the dildo was removed, matching the curious gelidity in her vagina, and she could feel the chill spreading through the tender wall of flesh that separated the two baubles. She squirmed a little, wriggling her arse as she continued to hold the buttocks apart with her hands.

"Ah," Morgana said, tickling Lana's pulsing anus, "you can feel the balls dissolving already."

Dissolving? Lana groaned inwardly as the iciness seemed to suffuse her entire innards. "Yes, mistress, I think so," she said.

"Excellent. Soon they will dissolve entirely and, well, you shall see. Keep your bottom spread, my darling."

"Yes, mistress."

The fingers were on Lana's back again, tracing the outline of the lascivious images there. Lana imagined feeling the scaled cock of the zul dragon ravaging her. The cold grip of the balls dissolving inside her seemed to intensify with each passing second.

"The ginger root is ready, ma'am," Lana heard Magnus say.

“Excellent, Magnus. Hand it to me.”

When Morgana reached round to again present the ginger in front of Lana’s mouth, Lana obediently sucked it. The prepared root was about 5 inches long, she thought, and perhaps an inch in diameter. Its juices tasted pleasant enough, if rather sharp and hot. Also, the pungent aroma made Lana’s eyes water a little. She continued to suck the plug until Morgana withdrew it.

“Good,” Morgana said. “The saliva will act as a lubricant.” Then Lana felt the plug pressed against her anus, and even at that stage the juices were beginning to burn the tender ring of flesh. She gave a small whimper but retained her squatting position, holding her buttocks apart. Lana heard Morgana’s throaty chuckle as she continued to press the finger of ginger against the tight swirl of muscle. Morgana took her time, maintaining a steady pressure until Lana felt her anus finally open and accept the ginger root butt plug. Then it slid right in up to the indented ring that Magnus had so carefully carved, and Lana’s sphincter closed around it.

“There,” Morgana said, rising to her feet. “You can release your buttocks now, Lana.”

Lana gave a small start when a sliver of ginger was pressed against her clitoris and threaded under the fine chains there. She moaned as a burning sensation immediately began to wreak its effect on the small engorged bud. Lana closed her eyes, partly against the humiliation, and partly against the heated sensation that was already beginning to build in her anus. Also, the baubles that had been previously inserted were beginning to wreak havoc, seeming to send out icy tendrils to swarm over her belly. The contrast of the frosty sensation against the intensifying heat of the ginger seemed to emphasise the polar effects.

“I love ginger root,” Morgana said. “It takes a little while for the effects to fully occur, of course.” She clapped her hands for a servant. “Bring me a bowl of water and soap to wash my hands. I wouldn’t want to touch my eyes with ginger juice on my fingers.”

Lana continued to squat low and she pressed her forehead against the high back of Morgana’s throne. The sensations inside her were undeniably building but they were tolerable, and even pleasant, but the heat on her clitoris was almost unbearable. She heard the trickle of water as Morgana washed her hands. Lana felt the icy baubles move inside her turning in her juices, and the heat from the ginger root was beginning to spread upwards like a slow-burning fire. She gripped the arms of the chair and rubbed her sex lips against the polished wood as the sensations of icy cold and intense heat began to compete inside her cunt and anus.

“Oh, my God,” she murmured, lapsing into English.

Morgana spoke in low, velvety tones that seemed to caress Lana’s ears. “Climb off the chair, Lana, and bend over with your palms on the seat, raising your bottom high.” Lana complied, feeling the baubles move again. An icy shiver snaked through her entire body, and it seemed that a small silken cord made of hot and cold braided strands was attached to her clitoris. Also, the wall of flesh between her vaginal and anal canals seemed to have breached, burned through, although she knew it could not be the case. The sensation was made worse when Morgana pinched Lana’s buttocks together. The primary combined effects of the icy baubles and the warm ginger overloaded Lana’s senses so that her very existence seemed to be concentrated entirely in her cunt and anus. At that moment she realised that she had never, ever felt so aroused. She began breathing so rapidly that her head began to spin.

Then the first slash of the cane rapped across her buttocks, searing a line of fire across her soft flesh. She moaned and wriggled her arse, but didn’t scream. The baubles were swelling, making the flesh feel heavy, as if it was sagging against the ginger butt plug that was firmly embedded in her anus. When the cane landed, as she clenched her arse, filaments of pure lust began to spread through her loins in a heady network of pleasure and pain, connecting her anus to her vagina and thence to clitoris. This finely honed nerve system seemed to contract, tug and pulse through her sex with each separate heart beat. The cane landed again and again, and Lana

knew she was screaming now. She could hear herself, somewhere in the swirling miasma of exquisite heat and cold that flooded her senses. And she also heard herself shouting, in English, beside herself in an orgy of pain and ecstasy. "I hate you, you bastards. I need to come. Please let me come!" She repeated that over and over again, each time the cane struck. She vaguely tried not to clench her buttocks against the cane strokes, but it was useless, and then it was beyond any thought to resist. She raised herself onto the very tips of her toes, pressing her thighs together and presenting her bottom for the beating. Her bottom, although tightly plugged, felt as though it was being held open while a soft flame licked up inside her, while an icy balled fist seemed to twist inside her cunt.

Then the caning stopped and Lana felt a hand on her cunt lips. It was a male hand, she knew, strong and hard, and not the cool elegance of Morgana's long fingers. He opened out the outer leaves of her sex, using the rings that pierced them to pull the sticky flesh apart and yet moving with surprising gentleness against the turmoil that raged inside her. Lana let out a long, deep-throated sigh as he peeled her sex lips back, and as the network of pulsing filaments tightened against her exposed inner flesh. His fingers pushed into her, and she could feel that he was probing for the icy bauble there, pressing it hard against the mouth of her womb. "Please," she heard herself beg. His fingers slid from her cunt and went to the flesh around her throbbing nubbin, where it pulsed under the sliver of hot ginger. His fingers closed around the tiny clitoral ring and shook it quickly, transmitting delicious vibrations to the very centre of the nubbin. He flicked it, tapping at the very tip of the engorged pip. Suddenly, the bauble inside her vagina burst, sending a shower of icy shrapnel through her body and making her screech. Almost simultaneously, the bauble in her anus exploded in a shimmer of pure freezing pleasure.

"Ah," Morgana said knowingly, reaching to caress Lana's quivering breasts.

Lana was unable to resist the icy waves that persistently crashed inside her, beating against the raging heat of the ginger root, receding, and washing back again. She gasped at the exquisite pleasure. Then she felt Magnus slide his cock into her cunt. She yelled and wailed in banshee-like shrieks as he fucked her. She writhed and bucked her arse against the invading cock, as if trying to suck him in whole, desperate to assuage the fierce fires and tempests that raged inside her. Then everything went black as she fainted from sheer pleasure...

Chapter Twenty-One

Lana the Secretary

“Be careful to be very good,” Jiffa said as he arranged Lana on her knees. “Homere is not a patient man and he demands excellence from his girls.”

A day had passed since her ordeal at the hands of Morgana and Magnus, the Lady’s male slave. Afterwards, Jiffa had applied the usual unguents and care, and she was reasonably recovered. The effects of the ginger butt plug and the icy-cold baubles had been short-lived, just a vivid memory now, and she was really none the worse for wear, although her buttocks and thighs were still sore.

Unexpectedly, Jiffa led her on a leash to Homere’s opulent office suite. Jiffa had dressed her in a strange red corset arrangement that tightly cinched her waist and prominently lifted her bare breasts, and left her sex completely exposed. Her wrists were fastened behind her back. Lana trembled slightly as she knelt in the centre of the room, some distance from the large desk.

“You must do everything Homere instructs, instantly and perfectly,” Jiffa said, stroking her hair and arranging it over her shoulder. “Is that clear?”

“Yes, Master.”

After a moment’s hesitation, as if making a final check that everything about her was in order, Jiffa nodded and immediately left the suite. Lana was left to kneel there alone for long minutes. She looked around her with some wonder, taking in the surroundings. The large polished desk and ornate chair seemed familiar, and not other-worldly at all. However, the style of rest of the suite seemed exotically barbaric, with its low cushions and wall lanterns.

It was some time before Homere entered. When he eventually wandered in, he was alone, and he looked slightly weary, running a hand through his thinning hair. He seemed vaguely surprised to see Lana kneeling there.

“Oh, you’re my new bennu girl,” Homere said. “Of course...”

Without paying her any more attention, Homere went to briefly stand beside the chair and sort through a small pile of papers that had been placed on his desk. At one point, he took up a pen and made a quick note on one of the documents. Lana saw that he used a tortoiseshell fountain pen, familiar from the other time, and it seemed vaguely incongruous there. She deducted, with some excitement, that Homere was apparently a man who had the means to traverse time and space.

“Stand up, bennu,” he said, speaking very suddenly and startling her, even though his voice was soft and quiet.

Lana rose tentatively from her knees, and she felt his pale grey gaze on her body. She quaked a little, and the gold rings infibulating her nipples rose and fell. Homere walked from behind the desk and approached her, moving behind and staying there for some moments. She shuddered when she felt his fingers on the two raised scar marks on her back.

“You met my wife, I hear,” he said, suddenly switching to English and moving to stand in front of her. He spoke English reasonably well but with a heavy foreign accent.

“Yes, Master,” she said, looking down to the floor.

“Your name again?”

“They call me Lana, Master.”

“Lana, yes, of course...” He seemed to be quite distant and preoccupied with other things. Quite clearly, Homere had many things on his mind, things that were much more important than a mere slave girl. “Now, Lana, I need someone to help me in my work. Do you think you can do that?”

Lana hesitated. For some moments she searched for words, her mouth opening and closing soundlessly, and then she said, "I'm not sure, Master. It depends what—"

Homere silenced her with a wave of his hand. "You have an MBA degree and had held several jobs over the past five years. You worked for a major merchant bank in the City of London, and then you worked for a major broker."

Lana listened. She was utterly astonished that he should know of her time and place in another world (another place that was a lifetime away now). "Yes, Master," was all that she could say.

"I need a Personal Assistant who can speak and write perfect English. The work should not be beyond you. If you don't measure up, however, I'll get someone else and you'll be shipped off to some whorehouse."

Lana looked down, not doubting the serious intent of his threat. "I'll do whatever I can, Master."

"This isn't a fantasy, Lana. I have real work to do and it must be done correctly. I shoulder a lot of responsibility and many of my dealings are very confidential and commercially sensitive. Sometimes, some might say, the legality of some of my dealings is somewhat questionable. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Master, I understand," she said, although she didn't understand at all.

"I wonder if you do," Homere mused, reaching to toy with the ring that pierced her right nipple, flicking it back and forth. "Still, provided you give me your best efforts and unswerving loyalty, you'll remain with me."

"Thank you, Master. I'll do my very best."

"I demand excellence."

"Yes, Master."

Homere began to explain to Lana her new administrative duties, which mainly seemed to entail some kind of secretarial service. He was not specific about the nature or the frequency of such occasions. Lana was not fazed by the proposed work: the role seemed to be considerably below the level of her previous jobs in another time. However, all the time he was talking, Lana was acutely aware that there was another dimension to her duties there. Eventually, Homere addressed this directly: "There's one more thing I need to make clear to you. Your status as one of my personal assistants does not alter the fact that you are a slave. As an abject bennu girl, you will have other responsibilities... and, indeed, other needs." Lana looked up and saw that Homere was looking directly, disconcertingly, into her eyes. "You are subject to the whip, like any other slave."

"Yes, Master."

Homere returned her smile and then said, not unkindly, "Very well, kneel again and suck my cock. Later, after I've shown you some of my work procedures, I will fuck you. Is that clear?"

"Perfectly clear, Master."

Lana immediately folded to her knees at Homere's feet. She undid his tunic and took out his flaccid cock, leaning over and taking it into her mouth. Lana had learned much about the art of fellatio since going to that time and place, and she swirled her tongue around the limp member and sucked. The cock grew and hardened rapidly under her eager efforts, and she made sure to take it into her throat. Lana worked swiftly and efficiently, because it somehow seemed appropriate.. Within a few minutes a gush of cum erupted into her throat and she swallowed hungrily. Homere seemed to be coolly detached throughout her service, and she eventually felt him say, "Good. Let's get to work."

Chapter Twenty-Two

Evening duties

“Goodnight, Master,” Lana said with a smile, leaving Homere’s office and closing the heavy panelled oak door behind her.

Homere’s bodyguard stood in the corridor immediately beyond the door. Jack they called him. He had apparently been with Homere for years.

‘Goodnight sir,’ she said, walking past.

‘Girl,’ called.

Lana paused in surprise and turned to look at the man. He was small but wiry, and tightly drawn, like a coiled spring. His gimlet eyes seemed to pierce right through her. Lana smiled, she hoped prettily, and consciously corrected her deportment. “Yes sir?”

“Your name?”

“They call me Lana, sir.”

His eyes glanced up and down the corridor before returning to sweep up and down her body again. Lana smiled and nodded and she stoically surrendered to his candid appraisal. Her single garment, diaphanous to the point of being fully transparent, concealed nothing anyway. She knew that he already knew her name, of course. Bodyguards are paid to know such things. Lana remained still, her hip turned provocatively, even when he looked away as he constantly glanced this way and that along the corridor with its large sombre paintings and gilded lamps. She smiled again when he returned his attention to her.

“What time will you be you finished with your work for Homere?” Jack asked.

“I’m finished now sir,” she said.

“Do you have any evening duties?”

Lana blushed a little and looked down. “No sir, not this evening.”

“Carry on, Lana.”

She blinked a little but nodded quickly. He was dismissing her. Quickly, she turned and hurried back to the work-room she shared with the other girls in Homere’s entourage. How strange, she thought. For a few moments she had been convinced that he was interested in her, as a woman, rather than coldly viewing her as a potential security threat.

Lana returned to her work station. She enjoyed working in the small, tight, collaborative team of slaves who shared the large room that was just a few doors along the corridor from the Master’s suite. The other girls in Homere’s coterie, his inner-office and his personal retinue, had all gone back to the slave quarters. All things English were left entirely to Lana, whereas the other women each had a speciality that Homere valued. Thelda, was a beautiful tawny girl who handled the accounts; Anna was responsible for provisioning the Merchant’s extensive household; Rosa looked after the purchasing of stocks; Magda advised on all legal matters; and Katia, as well as offering a range of Eastern European language skills, was an expert in marketing. There was a lot of overlap in the girls’ duties, of course, not least in providing the more intimate services required of them all. Magda, in particular, had warned her about Jack’s virile eye.

Lana was alone in the room now. Heavy green brocade curtains were drawn shut, and a big crystal candle chandelier bathed soft light upon green walls. Indeed, the whole building was almost deserted except for the omnipresent security guards. There was never a guard in this cavernous room with its high ornate ceilings. Everyone in the team had already left for the evening, and she knew that most of them would be preparing for heavy nights. Lana had largely avoided this. Her job involved long and irregular working hours, and none of the other girls

seemed to have to wait on the whim of Homere, as did she. She was free to go now, however.. Her desk was clear. She went to the door and walked along the corridor. Jack was no longer there, and another man stood outside Homere's office door. She finally stepped through a strange, tall steel turnstile arrangement of the gate and made for the stairs.

Looking down to the hall below, she saw Mason, a brawny, shaven-headed young man in a dark blue tunic. He was pacing the tiled floor and, as always, he halted in the exact centre of the walkway, turned, placed his hands behind his back, and looked up to eye Lana candidly as she descended the stairs. As usual, she found Mason's frank gaze unnerving. She irritably tossed her head. Mason smiled slightly, arrogant, assured, his tongue poking at the side of his cheek as he watched her step down towards him. He did not move his position when she reached the foot of the stairs, and she had to step to the side to pass him. He didn't speak, but looked at her from the corners of his eyes as she passed, his tongue-in-cheek grin still fixed.

Straight ahead, a large gleaming stainless steel shutter blocked the whole corridor. It always looked so out of place in the elegant, stately building. Self-consciously aware that the squat guard was undoubtedly eying her swaying bottom, scarcely concealed by the transparent gown, Lana padded towards the shutter, her bare feet cool on the marble floor.

"Lana!" The call was authoritative and it made her stop immediately. She turned, and saw Jack standing beside Mason. "Come here."

Lana swallowed hard and walked back towards the pair. The burly Mason still had his fixed smile, with his tongue poking hard at the side of his cheek.

Jack grasped Lana's left arm and turned her, and his comrade reached to grip her right elbow. They seemed to operate as a duo, well-rehearsed and practised, and yet there was no need for them to hold her. She would have gone with them anyway. What choice did she have? They pulled her down a flight of steps to the Guards' Mess. There were half dozen men there, lounging, obviously passing the time until their next shift of duty.

"Strip," Jack said casually, releasing her arm.

She swallowed hard and pulled the diaphanous dress over her head, placing it on a nearby table, and standing naked before them. Her nipples had become hard and she knew that her cunt was already wet. She glanced around her. The light was dim, down there, coming from high windows that afforded no outside view. There was a smell of tobacco smoke. A couple of couches, and a table and chairs comprised the only furniture. . "This is Homere's new secretary," Jack said, stroking Lana's arse. "We've got her for the whole evening. I get to fuck her first, and then Mason... make your own minds up for the rest. She's a bennu girl" – he turned Lana to display her tattoo – "so there'll be plenty for everyone, and then some more besides. I'm not averse to someone fucking her throat while I take her cunt."

"Nor me, I'm happy that she should suck someone's cock while I take her arse," Mason said. "Her arse in mine, though."

Lana listened as they crudely discussed their immediate fucking schedule. One of the men was already dragging the chairs and table aside, and he positioned one of the high-back chairs in the centre of the room.

"Lay your belly over the seat," Mason said, pointing to the chair.

Lana found treacherous bennu warmth pooling in the pit of her sex. She trembled slightly as she lowered her body across the meagrely padded seat, positioning herself sideways on to the chair back, her breasts hanging free on one side, and the edge digging into the crease of her thighs. A booted foot kicked her ankles apart. One of the men was unfastening his pants, and flopping out his uncircumcised cock. He held it to her lips and her tongue flicked out to lick the velvet-like skin at the end. As she opened her lips to take the cock into her mouth, she felt fingers entwining in her hair, pulling her head forward. Simultaneously, Lana felt the cool head of a cock, nuzzling between her thighs, wriggling somewhat to part the rings that pierced her

cunt lips. She moaned, and the heat welled up irresistibly in her belly. The bennu bird was fluttering its wings! It threatened to be a long evening, and Lana went about her work with a relish as the cock plunged into her pussy.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Lana fucked by Homere

The next day, Lana was busy in the room next to Homere's office. It was getting dark and the fading light cast a pinkish blue hue onto the papers she was studying. Homere's affairs were indeed extensive and they encompassed distinctly nefarious and, sometimes, downright illegal deals. It was very easy to see how the merchant's fabulous wealth had been accrued. She was vaguely surprised that the fabulously wealthy and might personage should allow her to see the extent of his criminality, but then, she realised, she was merely a slave, a minion. Indeed, Homere seemed to deem it important that Lana, along with the other girls in his slave entourage, should know all that was needed in their particular area of responsibility. Any matter that included the English language fell to Lana, and woe betide her if she neglected anything in her purview, whether that be arranging the sale of weapons to some dubious regime, or if it was organising the procurement and transport of women for trafficking. Both of these sectors were of significant interest to Homere. It seemed that he supplied weapons to anyone with the money to pay, regardless of the cause, and he must have been responsible for consigning countless women into sexual bondage. Lana administered all of these deals, calmly and efficiently, without comment or protest. How could she do otherwise? The canes of the overseers were as keen on her buttocks as on those of the lowest menial slave. So she had learned to abstract herself from the actual commodities involved in any transactions, and merely deal in the detail of finance and logistics. She was conscientious, and was usually the last girl to leave the work area for her plain, and frankly uninviting slave cell. Homere, as usual, was working late into the night in his office, which was directly adjacent to the room used by the entourage.

Lana double-checked the documents, anxious not to make a mistake and incur another beating. Satisfied with her work, she rose and quickly checked her appearance in the full-length mirror beside the door, turning to see a rear view. They had made her wear a simple yellow wrap-over tunic that affected a deeply plunging neckline and the garment was so short that the under-swell of her bare buttocks were visible as she moved. She shrugged and then collected up the small sheaf of papers and went to Homere's office. She didn't knock or beg admission to enter, but merely went to stand quietly beside the desk where her owner was working. She waited patiently for a few minutes, taking in every detail about him. He wore a dark blue robe, tied at the waist by a thick braided silken cord. Homere was working silently, making notes on the pages of a bound document using green ink. Eventually, he paused, placed his pen atop the document, and looked up at Lana.

"Yes?"

Lana placed a pile of documents neatly on the tooled green leather surface of the desktop. "This is the paperwork for the consignment from Serbia, Master," she said.

"Serbia? What kind of consignment?"

Lana hesitated, searching for a euphemism. She couldn't think of anything suitable and finally said, "The girls for—"

"Yes, yes," Homere said with a hint of irritation at her reticence. He took the papers and briefly glanced through them. "Is there anything I need to know about?"

"It's all pretty straightforward, Master," she said.

"More girls for the bennu," Homere said, glancing over the top of his gold-rimmed half-frame spectacles. After a couple of seconds apparently appraising her, he said. "And you, Lana, how are you progressing under the Zul dragon? Has the bennu bird-girl been properly awakened?"

Lana blushed and looked down. How was she supposed to answer such a question? "I'm doing the best I can, Master," she said hesitantly.

"Indeed? Remove your gown."

Lana was taken aback. Homere had scarcely spared her a glance since supervising the placement of the bennu scars on her back. Usually, he accepted her work and augustly dismissed her from his presence. Swallowing, her heart pounding, Lana slipped the tunic from her shoulders, turning to allow the silk garment to fall and pool on the tiled floor. She inhaled, sucking in her belly and thrusting out her breasts, glancing down at the gold rings that pierced her nipples. The tattooed lyre-like tail fronds of the mythical bird curled round her waist and seemed to brush the shaven mound of her sex. He gave a small twirl of a raised index finger and she turned, obeying the silent command.

Lana remained immobile, like a statue, aware that he was inspecting her back. Then his fingers were on her skin, lingering on the recently healed scars that delineated the cunt of the bennu girl in the image. "Delightful," she heard him murmur.

"Thank you, Master," Lana said, instinctively, and she then immediately regretted it, knowing the remark had not been a compliment to her, but to the anonymous tattooist and the Whip Master.

Homere appeared not to have noticed, or he took no offence. Lana swallowed in relief. Slaves had been beaten for lesser vanities. His hands were on her flank, on the elegant and beautiful tail of the bird, and he traced it round, moving to stand in front of her, his fingers following the tail to the very apex of her shaven sex, with the tiny golden ring and the small chains that disappeared into the slit of her vulva. Then Homere took her wrists and raised her hands, placing them atop her head, and he stood for a long, full minute, inspecting the rings on her turgid, pink nipples. Inspected by her owner, she stood helplessly compliant, breathing heavily, her whole body seemingly suffused with a blush as she felt his right hand trail down her flank again, reaching between her thighs and touching the larger rings that pierced her nether lips. She saw him smile slightly as he slipped his finger fleetingly into her moist cunt. That gesture, she knew, transcended mere inspection. It was a proprietarily indication of ownership. As if transfixed by his eyes, she felt his left hand on her shoulder, pressing downwards. She silently sank to kneel at his feet. He undid the waist-cord of his robe and threw the garment widely open to reveal his already rampantly erect cock, holding it in front of her eyes. Without instruction, she leaned forward and took its bulbous glans into her mouth. He ran the fingers of his hand through her blonde hair, tightened his grip, holding her head.

"So you don't approve of the work that I do," she heard him say as her head moved back and forth on his cock.

Lana, his cock distending her mouth, looked up at him quizzically with wide, wondering eyes. 'How strange that he should ask me such a question,' she thought. She attempted to answer but merely produced low variable humming sounds against the tumescent flesh. He shuddered and stiffened at this. He seemed not need an answer, however, so she returned her attention to sucking his cock, taking him as deeply as she could, making small slurping noises as his salty per-cum mixed with her own saliva. Suddenly, though, he hoisted her hair, pulling her head from his cock, the pain tingling at her scalp. She rose from her knees, and he manoeuvred her to lay her across his desk, her back on the green, tooled leather surface and her head resting the sheaf of papers he had been working on. Homere lifted her legs high and suddenly, unexpectedly, slapped her arse. She gave a small, whimpering cry at the rough treatment. Then he pressed her knees widely apart, keeping her legs high, and although her eyes were closed she assumed that he was looking down at her lewdly displayed flesh with the rings and chains. Her long hair was fanned about her on the papers on his desk. She realised that her hands here still clasped atop her head, and she kept them thus, even though her skill was resting against

something uncomfortably. When she moved her head from the object she heard the fountain pen drop on the floor. Homere didn't seem to notice, and he pushed her thighs even further apart and began to slap the soft flesh there. She gasped and writhed as he stroked her engorged bud of her clitoris.

"You are very easily aroused, bennu girl," he murmured, and then he leaned forward and took her left nipple into his mouth, gold ring and all, and sucked it deeply. And she heard her own helpless, full-throated moan as his hand moved to her other breast. Even as his cock slipped into the folds of cunt, she was gasping and moaning, and an irresistible orgasm was already rumbling through her senses. He fucked her hard atop the desk, keeping her legs high and wide, with ankles pinned under his armpits. She heard herself yelling and screeching loudly, and she writhed under him. He reached his own climax in short order, hammering against her. Then, without any pretence at gentleness, he pulled himself from her and stood up. "Yes, the bennu bird was truly awakened," he said, adjusting his clothing and then stooping to collect up the yellow silk Lana had worn.

"Yes, Master," she said, still lying atop the desk, utterly languid.

"And my work..." he began, allowing the sentence to hang there..

Lana rose and eased herself from the desk, bunching the garment in her right hand. "Yes, Master?"

"It's of no concern to me whether you approve of it or otherwise."

"No, Master, of course," she said, walking naked to the door.

"Oh, and Lana," he said. She paused and turned, seeing that Homere said was fastidiously inspecting the pen he had retrieved from the floor. After a moment's thought, he said, "You must rest. I have plans for you tomorrow."

"Yes, Master."

"Be beautiful. Jiffa will take great trouble over your appearance."

"Yes, sir," she said, frowning but not asking further questions.

Lana left the office, closing the heavy panelled oak door behind her. She gave a start. One of Homere's bodyguards stood in the corridor immediately beyond the door. Then she realised that she should have known that he would be stationed there. Homere was always closely-guarded. The man merely glanced at her nudity without surprise and he then quickly looked away, nervy, like a coiled spring, his eyes forever darting this way and that, casting quick glances along the red carpeted corridor with its large sombre oil paintings and gilded lamps. Lana hurried past, clutching the tunic.

Chapter Twenty-Four

Lana is gifted to a business associate

After Jiffa had subjected Lana's helpless body to several cold douches and a hated enema, after he had bathed her thoroughly, when she felt thoroughly clean both inside and out and her hair had been piled in an artful style of tumbling stray ringlets, when he had perfumed and painted her to perfection, to her surprise and pleasure he dressed brought garments of a style that she had not worn for such a long time that they seemed alien and unfamiliar. For the first time since, well, since she could not remember when, he dressed her in conventional lingerie, with a pristine white lace bra and matching sheer shorts. And he carefully smoothed fine denier stockings onto her legs: hold-ups with lacy bands that hugged her thighs. Her body gave a small tremor of sensuous excitement when the steward produced a ruffled blue satin and lace garter with short blue ribbon streamers and slid it up to her right thigh. White satin shoes were fitted to her feet, and she felt the calves of her legs arch and her buttocks tighten as her posture changed to accommodate the high spiked heels.

For the biggest surprise, though, one of Jiffa's assistants, an ebony-skinned girl, produced a beautiful long white gown of shimmering satin, so light that it seemed to flow and ripple as the girl carried it carefully into the room. Lana, amazed, meekly allowed them to dress her in the beautiful gown, simply luxuriating in the lovely slide of satin against her skin and loving the way the gown fell in soft drapes from her hips. The neck of the gown plunged only to the valley of her breasts, demure and pretty, and the surplice bodice was tight and sleek, terminating in a beautifully embroidered and beaded drop waist. When Lana moved experimentally, the draped skirt pulled back against her thighs, and glancing behind she saw that an embroidered white train, some four feet long, draped from her waist and trailed on the tiles. Even as she gazed in surprise at the train, the ebony-skinned slave girl attached a long white gauze veil to her hair.

"It's my bridal gown," Lana murmured in wonder.

In reply, Jiffa merely tapped her lips with the pale pad of his thick black forefinger in admonishment, and the girl then draped the veil over Lana's face, carefully arranging the folds.

The steward and the girl stood back to admire Lana, and they both grinned hugely. Then, there was a general stir in the slave quarters and Lana turned to see Homere, the great merchant himself, her owner, with the other six girls of his private retinue ranged behind him in a formal V formation. The retinue girls carried small posies of flowers clutched at their bared bellies, and they wore white thigh-length sheer net robes, tied at the front beneath their breasts but otherwise open to fully reveal their bodies; they too wore stockings and high-heeled white shoes.

"Excellent," Homere said with a smile, offering his crooked arm to Lana. "You look enchanting, my dear."

"Thank you, sir," she said, blushing slightly beneath the veil as she stepped forward to slide her arm inside his.

"My compliments, Jiffa," Homere said, guiding Lana round towards the door and leading the retinue down the marbled corridor.

They entered an ornately decorated chamber, and Lana was surprised to see Homere's Head Clerk waiting there. This man wore some kind of ceremonial garb. And Darrick waited there too, dashingy dressed in full tribal regalia, standing with the clerk, and he turned to watch as she approached. Homere led the procession forward and halted in front of the clerk. He then stepped aside to leave Lana standing beside Darrick. "Kneel," the clerk ordered her tersely, and Lana folded to her knees. The draped skirt of the gown was decorously arranged around her, and

her high-heeled shoes felt peculiarly alien against her buttocks as she knelt back. The leading girl in Homere's retinue stepped forward to raise Lana's veil, and she briefly fussed with the skirt of the gown, arranging it perfectly on the tiles.

The clerk coughed to clear his throat as the girl drew back to stand with the others behind Lana. "Who gives this woman?" he asked.

"I do," Homere said.

The clerk nodded and consulted his notebook. "Prince Darrick, do you take this woman, Lana, as your chattel and plaything?"

"I do."

"Who has the collar?"

Jiffa, standing next to Darrick, stepped forward and placed a steel collar onto the book. In turn, the clerk then passed the collar to Darrick, who immediately encircled it around Lana's neck and snapped it shut with a sharp metallic click that seemed to be very final.

"You may strip the slave," the clerk said.

Chapter Twenty-Five

Lana and Darrick

When Lana awoke it was with some surprise to her that she should have managed to sleep at all. They had again loaded her, naked, onto another barge, not unlike the one that had delivered her there. The events of the occasion had proven too much, and she had immediately dozed when placed on a mound of silk cushions in the main stateroom of the barge.

She had no notion of how long she had slumbered, but it must have been for a couple of hours or more, but when she awoke Darrick was still dressed in full tribal regalia and relaxing in a chair. He looked across and smiled, but his eyes rested meaningfully upon her legs, which had closed in the huddle of her sleep.

"When you learn to fully embrace your condition, you will instinctively keep yourself open," he said. "Until then, whenever you transgress, even in sleep, then you will be punished. On this one occasion, however..."

She self-consciously adjusted her position, parting her thighs widely. Lana bit her lip and looked down at her nude body. He spoke to her as if talking to a small child, despite the fact that she was four or five years older than him.

There was an equivalent of Jiffa in Darrick's retinue: Umar, prim and fresh in a smart uniform, entered emerged from the front of the barge. "The Head Bargee estimates we will arrive very shortly, Highness," he said.

"Prepare the slave, Umar."

Umar stooped to take hold of Lana's arm, guiding rather than pulling her from the mat. Lana was suddenly aware of the stiffness in her limbs. She meekly followed the huge steward to a door at the rear of the cabin.

"You must wash quickly," Umar said, opening the door and ushering her into a tiny but surprisingly well-appointed bathroom. There was a water jet in the lower ceiling, directly above her head, operated by a foot pump within the wide copper bowl that formed the whole floor area. The water was barely tepid but Lana was glad of the chance to rub her aching legs.

Umar watched her from the open door. He said, "You must hurry. Dry yourself quickly and step onto the mat beside the door."

Lana soon stood outside the small bathroom, back in the cabin again. She saw that Darrick was watching her intently, and obediently spread her feet apart.

"Place your hands behind your neck," Umar said, emptying oil from an elegant jar onto the palms of his hands.

As Lana stood, she realised that her upraised arms nicely presented her breasts with their rings, and she hoped that this was not lost upon the Darrick. Yet there was something that seemed asexual about his look. She stood meekly as the steward began to rub the perfumed oil into her flesh, every inch of it, not neglecting any intimate nook or cranny. Her full breasts, particularly, received special attention, and soon the soft flesh was polished to a gloss. A deep red substance, akin to henna, was applied to the flesh about her nipples, and then to her mouth. Umar produced a silver-backed hairbrush, and brushed Lana's long blonde hair until it shone. Throughout these ministrations, prodded this way and that, Lana stood with her hands clasped tightly behind her neck, the pressure of her entwined fingers making her hands tingle. She tightened her grip further as Darrick rose and strolled across the cabin to inspect her. "Very nice," he said finally, and she felt a small, unaccountable flush of pleasure course through her body. "Bell her."

Lana could hear Umar rummaging inside a locker behind her and, when he returned to stand before her, he held a number of small balls of ornate gold filigree, each perhaps an inch in

diameter. Umar worked with dispassionate efficiency: he held one of the bells between thumb and forefinger and deftly clipped it upon Lana's left nipple ring, and the right nipple was also quickly adorned in the same way. Lana watched as if frozen, transfixed, as the steward knelt clamping little bells to the ring on her sex lips, one on either side, but dangling on a fine chain to mid thigh. The bells felt extraordinarily heavy considering their delicate appearance, almost seeming to prize her sex open, and the metal was cold and solid against the soft inner flesh of her thighs.

'Naked and belled!' Lana thought. The rings that pierced her flesh were bad enough, but many slaves wore those. Bells, though, were different. To be so shamefully adorned was surely worse than mere nudity. She heard a small metallic sound as her breasts stirred slightly and moved with each breath.

"Kneel," Umar ordered quietly, indicating the rug some feet away. It was only when she walked the few short paces the mat that Lana understood the full impact of the balls depending from her sex lips. The spherical objects, one positioned precisely opposite the other, prevented her from fully closing her legs and, moreover, they tinkled merrily with each step, she found, as though small, heavy balls were enclosed in the delicate outer casing, rolling freely with each movement, seeming to tug at her cunt lips, and ringing loudly like small door chimes. It was the same with the bells at her breasts, and the pliant flesh seemed to roll as she moved.

Darrick, she knew, recognised her discomfiture, for he was smiling with some amusement. "You must learn to move elegantly at all times," he said, flicking the bell at her right breast, and then leaving the cabin.

"Kneel," Umar said gently, giving her an avuncular smile.

She knelt on the mat, widening her legs and lowering until the accursed little balls rested on the floor between her thighs. Even as she did so, the barge gave a lurch, apparently bumping against a wharf, and the bells at Lana's breasts chimed with the movement. Darrick swiftly reappeared in the cabin, adjusting a pristine white burnoose on his head, the flowing stuff of his robe brushing against her naked flesh. He was accompanied by Jacinta, who had replaced her trousers and jerkin with a demure and beautiful long gown of darkest blue.

"You must give a good account of yourself," Darrick told Lana, gently brushing her lips with the tips of his fingers. "Comport yourself elegantly and with humility at all times. You belong to me, but this is my father's territory and he is a stern man with his chattels. Come."

When the barge doors were opened, searing heat suddenly wafted across Lana's body. She looked out and gasped. They were not at any conventional canal wharf, but merely a place in the desert amidst rolling dunes. A half mile or so away stood a large, fortress like emplacement, brick red and shimmering like a mirage in the morning heat. The walls seemed to be lined with people, and many others poured from the huge gates of the fortress and were running excitedly towards the barge. Many had already run three quarters of the way to the canal, and she could hear their babble.

Lana was horrified and tried to draw back into the cabin but Umar's flat palm on her back propelled her forward.

"Be brave," Darrick told her, stepping ahead.

Umar brought up the rear, pushing Lana ahead of him, but he kept at a respectful distance behind Darrick. Lana felt the steward's large, soft hand stroking the smooth flesh of Lana's buttocks, presumably to reassure her. She stepped forward hesitantly, her bells chiming with each step as she descended the steps. The stone of the narrow path was hot beneath her bare feet and she found herself padding uneasily from one foot to the other, the bells ringing a merry chime. The throng was upon them now, a ragged and motley crowd (children mostly), and while Darrick greeted them his demeanour was aloof and foppish. Lana squealed as a gap-toothed urchin squeezed her breast, laughing as he drew back from Darrick's threateningly upraised hand

but she then saw the Prince smile affectionately, and he lowered his hand to ruffle the lad's black hair. It seemed that even young boys were to be given the freedom to abuse and handle her!

Riders were galloping from the gates now, riding full tilt, as if their very lives depended on it. They reined their steeds, prancing and rearing, almost amidst the scurrying crowd. One of the beasts, a magnificent black snorting animal, was riderless, but splendidly saddled. The leader lithely slipped from his mount and ran to embrace the Darrick, slapping his back with massive thumps.

"Welcome home, Clever One," he said. "Best to stay here now and indulge in the pleasures of the desert. Speaking of pleasures...."

The man turned his hawk-eyes upon Lana, who blanched before his gaze. He approached and turned her, and she could feel his fingers tracing the contours of the tattoo on her back. "A bennu slave," he said, turning her to face him again. His hand suddenly shot forward to grasp her chin, wrenching her head up so that he looked into her eyes. Then, without preliminary, he clamped his lips against hers in a long, dominant kiss. Lana, to her dismay, felt herself unashamedly melt against the stranger, her naked body pressing forward, one leg slightly raising so that her thigh nestled against his; her arms remained by her sides, however, as he ravished her lips. "Yes, she's definitely been enslaved by the bennu bird. I can smell her heat. I'm seeking a new slave," he said, easing from the kiss and leaving her slightly flushed and breathless as he gazed into her eyes with a piercing blue-black stare. "This one seems ideal for my...needs."

"She's mine, Reuben!" Darrick said sharply, causing the man to release his hold. Laughing, as if to cover his irritation, Darrick added in a lower tone: "She is mine. I will bend her to our ways."

The man's eyes narrowed. He looked first to Darrick and then back at the quaking Lana. "You speak with some passion for saying she's a woman, Clever One. Your father will approve of that, but your mother will be outraged, and as for your Kadin.... Take care to control your emotions. She may be yours but, here, she is for common use. That's the rule as it has always been. You know that."

Darrick rubbed the beast's muzzle with obvious affection and then vaulted into its saddle before stooping to hug its long neck. Then, without a word, he bent to lift Lana across the broad, glossy black steed. Its skin felt surprisingly smooth against her naked flesh as she straddled the broad back, and she had to arrange the bells between her legs, lying before her splayed cunt on the jet black hide, rolling to and fro, chiming with each movement.

Suddenly, the beast was galloping headlong into the desert, away from the fortress-like walled enclosure. Darrick whooped in delight, urging the steed onwards. Lana, her bells ringing merrily, was flung up and down before him. She scrabbled for a handhold, afraid that she would be tossed to the sand. Then the beast was wheeling around in a wide arc, sand flying from its claws, and they were heading pell-mell back towards the waiting crowd. Darrick reined the magnificent animal to a rearing halt, laughing gaily. "He's as proud and spirited as ever," Darrick said. "That's how I prefer my animals - proud, spirited but always obedient and responsive to my touch."

Lana wondered if this message was meant for her. Her body jumped when his hand descended, gently but unexpected, between her open thighs. His fingers were insistent, pushing aside the rings that adorned her lips. The troop of animals began to move forward at a walk, and the men chatted lightly, obviously glad to see their Darrick. And all the time, his hand teased her sex, releasing the juices there, causing her to squirm in anguish, helpless beneath his touch.

"Oh!" she uttered involuntarily as her anus was also penetrated.

The men ignored her. They continued to chat and laugh with each other. Darrick continued to tease the familiar ache in her vagina and she found herself uttering small noises, in spite of herself, and her legs were splayed even wider than necessary. Lana closed her eyes to

the torment and the humiliation. She was glad that she could not understand the babble of the throng that jostled beside them, although they seemed blithely careless to her humiliation. By the time the beast stopped beneath the walls of the fort, she was breathing heavily and her senses were aflame.

“You are nicely warmed,” Darrick said, as if he had done her a kindness. “Be brave and do not disgrace me.”

Chapter Twenty-Six

Displayed in Court

When they entered the fort, Umar took her straight to the palace. He led her through seemingly endless corridors until they came to what appeared to be the main banqueting room. There, he tied her to one of the huge, round columns that supported the roof. Her hands clasped the huge shaft, and her legs were drawn uncomfortably to either side. She was left there, displayed for the people of the court. A crowd gathered around Lana too, and she hung her head as strange hands traced the tableau tattooed on her back. This was the main feature that attracted them, it seemed, and she was aware of the detached, almost cultured discussion that accompanied their appraisal. It was as if they were discussing a lifeless work of art. Sometimes, though, a hand reached between her body and the marble pillar to hefted her breast. One man, coming from behind her, but she was certain it was a male, reached under to slip his fingers into her sodden vagina, moving them back and forth inside her. Another stroked her stretched arms, down past the exposed armpits and over to the flare of her hips. Then her head was painfully wrenched up by a hank of her blonde hair, and a cruel-looking fellow stared into her blue eyes, commenting to his companions in the same strange dialect she had heard Darrick and his father use. Eventually, after the first few minutes, the crowd melted away, and the court got on with its other pleasures. She was left to stand there, her back displayed, for two or maybe three hours. Occasionally, someone stopped to casually inspect her, but for the most part she was left alone, merely another decorative object in the ornately-detailed hall. So there she was, left to stand alone, scarcely able to move a muscle, her belly and breasts pressed against the pillar. The court was at leisure, and a sumptuous meal was being served by naked slaves. For the first time, Lana could crane her neck to openly view her surroundings. It was a very tall room with an arched roof and the walls were covered by geometrically patterned ceramic tiles of pale blue and white. The male slaves caught her attention: each served with his cock stiffly rigid - a requirement, it seemed - and every tumescent member was pierced beneath the head by a slender ring, fully three inches in diameter and secured by a small padlock. Lana could scarcely believe the sight. It was apparent that, ready as these magnificent specimens were, they could never penetrate a woman unless expressly permitted to do so. What kind of people would inflict such pain and humiliation upon a fellow-human being?

Some of the women slaves, although each as naked as she, were unadorned by the cruel body jewellery she was forced to wear, although she noticed that most of them wore various styles of rings at ears, nipples, navel and cunt.

The slaves all submitted to frank handling by their masters as they moved subserviently along the line of tables. More than once, she saw a paddle descend sharply upon shapely buttocks for some minor demeanour or tardiness. In fact, all of the naked buttocks, male and female, seemed to be reddened or even welted by recent beatings. None of the slaves uttered a single word and all went about their duties with their eyes downcast.

Nude female dancers sped into the room, running its length with short, skipping steps, their arms in a stylised stiff pose, and they stooped to a low bow before the Emir. The Khislar Aga uttered an order in curiously shrill falsetto tones, and musicians beside the royal dais began to play. Temporarily forgotten now, Lana bent her head to watch the naked women move to the slow, sensuous adagio. She marvelled at the fluidity of their lithe bodies. Then she noticed that most of the other slave women were all, like her, nicely plump and voluptuous; clearly, dancing girls excepted, such was the taste of these haughty and imperious men.

Even as the dancers performed, there was activity around the pillar that held another

naked woman on the other side of the room. Unlike Lana, this woman was chained with her back against the wide marble pillar, wrists shackled high above her head, and ankles drawn far back on either side, forcing her to widely spread her legs and stand painfully stretched on pointed toes. A brazier, brightly glowing, was wheeled forward by two penis-ringed male slaves. Lana's neck was aching from craning to watch, but she was spell-bound, shocked and yet fascinated, by the scene. She saw the Khisler Aga carefully inspect the end of a long, slender metal wand before plunging it into the glowing coals. A branding! She felt a sudden flush of terror course through her own body. 'I couldn't bear it, not again,' she thought. She already wore one brand scar, deeply etched on her buttocks. Surely they had noted that? However, she had seen plenty of other slaves who bore more than one brand of some sort. She cast her eyes frantically to check the thighs and buttocks of other slaves in the room: some were marked once, others twice, and others not at all.

"You have acquitted yourself well, Lana."

She looked up and saw Darrick smiling at her. He leaned forward to plant a light kiss upon her ear, and she shuddered as his breath wafted against her skin. It was an astonishingly wonderful thing to be spoken to with kindness; had she been permitted to speak, she might even have thanked him. Instead, Lana blushed deeply and lowered her gaze.

His hands were upon her breasts now, and she eased back as far as she could from the pillar to permit his access, then his forefinger traced around the areola of her prominently protuberant nipple. She felt her heart beating in the tiny pulse there, and the accursed, treacherous need began to rise in her loins again. Lana longed for her young master's cock inside her, much as she tried to deny it to herself.

"Life will not be easy for you here. The Emir has commanded that you be treated just like the other slaves. Like me, like everyone here, from the proudest warrior to the most humble slave, you are subject to my father's will."

Darrick's words filled her with apprehension. The tone in his voice was full of regret and foreboding, despite his assurance of an easy life. His hand was now between her legs and caressing the moist folds of her sex. Lana began to breathe heavily and she strained against the tight bonds that held her. The little nodule between her sex lips was beginning to throb and tingle against the manipulation of the finely-tooled clit chains, and she yearned to grind her mound against his palm.

"You must submit to the abject life of a slave, at the command of all free men, and women too. That is the way of things. Had I my way, this would not be so: you would be mine alone and feed from my hand or not at all. When punished, even as the scourge licked your lovely white flesh, you would know that it was I, Darrick, your master, who ordained the exquisite pain."

His fingers curled under the span of flesh between her legs, probing to find her inner lips, and slipping into the hot wet flesh. "Tee Kurios!" she murmured, "Yes Master!"

She hoped that she would not be punished for breaking the imposition of silence. They had not been words, not really: merely an involuntary moan that somehow formed into words. Her inner flesh alternately clasped and released his probing fingers.

"Never fear," Darrick said, "You will attend my bedchamber as often as I deem it expedient without arousing the wrath of my wives or my father, or..." His sentence trailed off as a sudden agonised scream, shrill and piercing, wrenched Lana back to her senses, and Darrick's hand withdrew from her sex. Lana looked over her shoulder and saw that the slave chained on the opposing pillar was writhing madly and vainly in her bonds as the hissing and steaming iron was pressed into the flesh of her thigh. The Khisler Aga maintained the pressure for long seconds, his gloved hand steady and unflinching. Lana's lips formed to speak but her words were stifled by the taste of her own juices as Darrick pressed his fingers into her mouth, probably

to silence her.

“Tonight you shall begin to learn how to serve me, wholly and completely,” he said.

“Really?” a female voice, at once both harsh and imperious said. “How your tastes change.”

“Ah, Salih,” Lana heard Darrick say smoothly. “I was just coming to find you. How are you, my love?”

Lana turned her head, daring a peek at the woman who stood slightly to the side, behind her. She was dark skinned, with high cheek bones and a single small gold ring in her nose with a finely-linked golden chain that looped across her cheek to her ear lobe. She was clothed in a beautiful emerald green shimmering gown. Three other free women stood with her, and their resplendent gowns were similarly styled, but each a different colour.

“I am well,” she said. Then, inclining her head towards the other three women, she added: “We are all well. So this is the new slut. She has a very pretty picture on her back, I’ll grant you that. I presume she’s been fully possessed by the Zul dragon too? These bennu slaves are such insatiable wanton harlots. It seems your kadins can’t compete against their heat. Be careful you don’t get burned again, husband.”

“She is a new slave,” Darrick replied, “nothing more.”

With that he was gone.

Salih reached to stroke Lana’s silky flaxen tresses. “Yet another long haired blonde slut,” she mused, half to herself, but also speaking to the other three clothed women.

“Perhaps we should ask the Khislar Aga to brand her while the brazier is here?” one of the others suggested, giggling slightly, like a young girl.

Salih’s hand rested briefly on Lana’s shoulder and then it was gone. Lana, her head hanging, eyes closed, heard her say, “You’re still new here, Cara. You need to learn that our husband isn’t above whipping and even branding a kadin if we incur his displeasure. No, there is more than one way to deal with this blonde slut.” Then sweetly-perfumed breath wafted across Lana’s nostrils as Salih laid a chain-draped cheek against her own and whispered: “That pretty picture etched on your skin... I shall see it stretched across a frame and hung above my bed, with the others.”

Lana looked back over her shoulder at the sobbing slave on the opposite side of the hall. The poor creature hung limply in her shackles. A fresh mark was livid on her thigh. Nude male slaves, their cocks rigid, wheeled the brazier away, and the grotesque Khislar Aga waddled away towards the dais. ‘These people are barbarians,’ Lana thought. ‘How can I survive in such a place?’

Yet even as this sentiment passed across her mind, another thought swiftly and unashamedly followed: tonight she would serve the young Darrick, her master. She licked her lips and pressed her body hard against the pillar.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

Lana serves Darrick in the Desert

“Hurry along, Lana,” the Khislar Aga ordered as he waddled along behind her, his ornate crimson brocade robe swishing about his feet.

The Chief Eunuch again struck his accursed silver-handled paddle against Lana’s rump as she crawled rapidly along the corridor. It seemed that he required no reason to beat her, and her buttocks were warmed, reddened, and sore. Sometimes, probably by design, the supply leather curled around to lick at her sex lips.

“Move more elegantly,” the eunuch trilled, rapping her with the stiff broad leather again. “Back straight, head level, and quicker, girl.”

She was striving to obey and avoid the spiteful paddle. ‘But how does one crawl elegantly?’ she thought desperately.

And how degrading this was, to be whipped along, naked and on hands and knees, to the bed of her young master. Yet it seemed so natural that it should be so. This was her allotted role in the huge desert palace, and there were plenty more slaves like her. Indeed, the corridor, like every other thoroughfare in the labyrinthine palace, was decorated with naked, bound creatures, some of whom were painfully displayed in the most humiliating postures. The bonded men here seemed to fare worse than the women. She was shocked to see that one fair-haired young fellow had been cruelly impaled upon a large wooden peg that projected from the wall at a height that forced him to stand on the tips of his toes; he was bent forward by the chain that secured his bound wrists high behind him, and obviously in great discomfort, yet his ringed cock still strained forward rigidly despite the wet tears upon his face. That had been another shock - the sight of men, handsome and strong, openly weeping in their torment.

Again the paddle caught her. She hurried past a naked young woman who had been placed upon a plinth in an alcove, seemingly standing upon her hands but, in reality, hung by the cuffs of her widely spread ankles, and the stem of single red damask rose had been inserted into the shaven lips of her vagina. Lana shuddered. What these people could do to such as she!

“Halt,” the Khislar Aga commanded.

He rapped sharply upon a large door and uttered a sharp in the foreign dialect. Immediately the ornately painted door was flung open, and the paddle again struck her. She hurried forward but was again halted inside the door as a fellow clad in black robes ran his hands through her brushed, glossy blonde hair, over her flanks, and even, to her shame, probed into her moist slit. It was a body search, seemingly unnecessary in her naked state, but nevertheless carried out with humiliating thoroughness. The Khislar Aga tutted and fastidiously rearranged her hair with a brush. Then she was urged forward again, and found herself crawling into the presence of Darrick.

The Khislar Aga spoke briefly to Darrick in the strange tongue, and then turned and left. Lana remained upon hands and knees, head carefully aligned with her straight back, hardly daring to look up.

“You may stand,” Darrick said.

Gratefully, Lana scrambled to her feet. He was lying indolently upon a low and elegant couch, his head propped upon an elbow, smiling curiously at her. She stood awkwardly before his gaze. Sunlight streamed into the room through the filigree screen of a window behind him, filtered by the moving leaves of a tree immediately outside. The window had been partly opened, and a refreshingly cool desert breeze caressed her naked flesh.

“Come over here.”

She obeyed, moving to stand in front of the couch, her heart palpitating. Already, the little knot of her clitoris was tightening and swelling.

“Turn around.”

Lana jumped slightly as his cool hands traced across the welts upon the burning flesh of her buttocks. He caressed the reddened flesh for some time, and she was again aware of the dull ache in her vagina.

“You will be paddled often during each day,” he said as if by way of explanation. “It’s the condition of a slave here and my father demands it. You are beaten not only in punishment, but for your instruction and to constantly remind you of your station. For you” - she let out a small sound as the tip of a finger traced along between her swollen, moist sex lips - “it will serve to keep you constantly ready for love, I think.”

It was true: whenever struck by lash, paddle or cane, her treacherous body released its juices in spite of herself. Even in her short time at the palace, she had discovered that constant and routine chastisement did not lessen the release of these strange, undeniable desires. Lana hung her head.

“You may kneel before me,” Darrick said gently, turning her around by the hips. “Because you have my personal patronage, I will take this one opportunity to tell you things that may be useful to you here. It is easier than waiting to find out, as is the case with most new slaves. You may ask me questions, too, this one night. After that, then you will be as abject and compliant as any other, and never dare to transgress out rules. Is that understand?”

“Yes, Master,” Lana said, gingerly settling her sore buttocks back onto her heels.

“Spread your knees widely,” Darrick rapped, quickly dispelling any fleeting thoughts of softness. “And when allowed to speak, you must address all free men as ‘Master’. As for me, you will address me as ‘my Master’ - a subtle difference, you see.”

“I’m sorry, my Master,” Lana said hastily, finding the word remarkably easy to say.

He smiled. “You will do well to learn quickly. Lean back and lay your shoulders to the tiles.”

Lana looked up in surprise but struggled to obey, arching backwards without moving the placement of her knees. Her head touched the ground, framed by a fan of blonde glossy hair. The moving shadows flickered across the high ceiling as she stared up. She was acutely aware that the position cruelly exposed her sex to his dark eyes, barely eighteen inches away. His hand was upon her now, teasing and stroking as he spoke.

“May I speak, my Master?” she asked, squirming under his touch.

“Yes.”

“Oh!” she found herself writhing against his hand, and her breath was already becoming ragged. “The lady who spoke to you in the Hall...”

“My Master,” he corrected, running the pad of his forefinger around her clitoris, eliciting little sighs and whimpers.

It was some seconds before Lana could compose herself under the relentless arousal. Then, finally, as her hips rose to his touch, she asked: “She is your wife, my Master?”

“Salih is the kadin, yes,” he said. “The three women who were with her are my other junior kadins. You are surprised I have a full complement of wives?” Her hips bucked under his expert manipulation and he slipped a finger into her sodden sex. “You may answer.”

“No. I’m not surprised, my Master,” she gasped. “But they seem to resent my presence here, my Master.”

She heard him chuckle. He continued to raise her to ecstasy. “Of course they resent you,” he said. “You are a helplessly sexual bennu girl. No ordinary woman can compete with you in physical lust. They will do everything they can to get you punished.”

“Can they do that, my Master?” she asked, and even in her advanced arousal, she raised

her head in alarm.

"They daren't go against my wishes without my father's backing," he replied, pushing her back so that she again stared at the ornate vaulted ceiling. "Beware, my First Kadin though. She is more powerful than the most senior officials here. She enjoys a specially privileged status and guards it jealousy. The other kadians aren't quite so powerful, but they are infinitely superior in status to yourself, so be wary."

She struggled to lift her body to his hands, feeling herself hooked and lifted by the probing fingers in her vagina. For long moments, no words would come... merely groans of arousal as he worked his magic upon her. His thumb was now pressing against her aching clitoris, eliciting tiny shock waves. Lana found herself straining upwards, and widening the placement of her thighs even further.

"My Master!"

"Sssh..." He paused in his ministrations, peering closely at her slit with a sort of intense curiosity. "Do not orgasm until I permit it," he warned.

"Please..." she gasped, almost undone now.

"Who prepared you for my chamber?"

"The Khisler Aga, my Master," Lana said, shuddering and giving little squeaks.

"It will not usually be so. He will have already appointed a steward, personal to you. There are a number of them here... whole men, who delight in the touch of soft, feminine flesh. Make no mistake, your steward will also be your master when I, or other illustrious free men have no time for you. He will, have whip rights over you, and command you in all things."

"Yes, yes Master!" she suddenly moaned as his fingers slipped into her vagina again and his thumb rubbed across her clitoris.

"You are approaching your first orgasm. Release it now."

In truth, Lana could not have resisted the tide that suddenly burst within her. She moaned and writhed upon his fingers, her belly undulating in the strained position. After some moments, panting and perspiring, she smiled shyly up at him. Then she recalled his words about the steward and the smile faded.

"This steward, my Lord..." she said tentatively.

"Yes?"

"Will he have rights over my body too? Must I serve him fully?"

Darrick's hand traced over her belly and up to the spread orbs of her breasts, which were slightly flattened by their own weight, pulling to one side, as she lay upon her back. "Without express permission that is forbidden and normally punishable by death for both slave and steward. There are times when a steward is allowed to fuck his slave for her instruction, though. And, occasionally, he may be rewarded in this way for exceptional service. Other than that, anything short of penetration is usually allowed."

Suddenly Darrick sharply slapped her breasts, his hand flashing back and forth a number of times and bringing tears to her eyes. He then gripped one of protuberant nipples and tugged her forward. She gasped, for the piercing of the thickly engorged teat was still deliciously tender from the weighted bell worn earlier that day.

"Up, Lana," the Prince commanded. "Do you think that you are here solely for your own pleasure?"

"No, my Master," Lana protested as she pushed herself up, not having harboured such a thought for a single moment.

His gesture was unmistakable, and Lana reached forward to pull his robes aside. Darrick cuffed her roughly about the ear, and she looked up in bewilderment.

"Never use your hands unless commanded," he admonished. "Place them behind your back as if cuffed. Use your teeth."

She groaned inwardly but, the fingers of one hand tightly clasping her other wrist behind her, she knelt forward to grasp the hem of his white robe in her teeth. With some difficulty she managed to get the voluminous cotton garment to slide upwards and when it was about his thighs she rummaged her head under the billowing material. He was naked under the robe, and his cock was standing stiffly erect. Lana ventured a tentative lick along its length, the tip of her tongue delicately encircling the exposed head, and she heard him moan his approval. Dim light filtered through the material and she could smell his musky, male scent. More daring now, she widened her lips and took him into her mouth. He thrust forward and the hard flesh almost touched the back of her throat causing her to gag. "Harder," she heard him command, and obediently worked her head back and forth over the pulsing member. For long minutes, hands firmly clasped behind her, Lana toiled under the robe until the salty taste of him was seeping onto her tongue, and it seemed as though he were about to come. Then she felt her head being jerked away, and she scrambled from the shroud-like folds.

"Undress me completely."

Lana hesitated momentarily, hands still clasped at the small of her back as if shackled there. Then she knelt to grasp the hem in her teeth, and he raised himself to allow her to pull the robe upwards over his body. She crawled back, and pulled it clear of his head, Darrick lay upon the couch, fully revealed,

"Straddle me," he said urgently.

She hurried to sit astride his loins. He made no move to assist her as she moved her hips to position his rampant penis beneath her vagina. Then, when the moist head nestled against her slit, she lowered herself upon the shaft, arching her back, wrists still clasped behind, her full breasts jutting forward. The hungry little mouth of her sex clamped eagerly about the welcome invader, and her moist vagina seemed to suck him into her. With a long sigh, Lana slowly eased herself down until fully impaled. She wriggled her hips and her inner flesh convulsed deliciously. After savouring the moment, she slowly raised herself, and then sank down again. This went on for some time, with the pace and rhythm steadily increasing, until she was riding him wildly, blonde hair flying, with her abandoned cries echoing around the room. He let out a loud growl, surprisingly low in timbre for one so young, as his hot sperm shot into her haven. Then her own crisis called, beating fiercely, undeniable and utterly consuming. Her buttocks, the soreness there temporarily forgotten, beat in frenzy against his thighs as she pummelled up and down on the weapon.

"Master! Oh, my Master! Aagh!"

Even as she spoke, as the climax engulfed her, she was surprised by her own words. It was a reflex, an act of ultimate submission, somehow made more pointed by the fact that she was ravishing her own flesh upon his penis. Presently, spent, she sat astride him with shoulders slumped and breasts heaving, the wrist behind her throbbing from the tightness of her own grip. Head bowed, her blonde hair hung lankly, almost obscuring her face.

"On the wall beside my bed there is a paddle," Darrick said quietly. "Bring it to me. You have not been given permission to move your hands."

"Yes, my Master," she whispered, and hoisted herself upwards, feeling the semi-limp member slip from her wet vagina.

"Hands and knees," he said. "Always hands and knees unless commanded otherwise."

She crawled across the room, the smoothly polished floor tiles cool upon her knees. The black leather paddle was inlaid with fine gold and a crimson tassel ornamented its handle. The very sight of the implement struck fear into her, and she inhaled sharply as she felt knelt up to grasp the supple round handle between her teeth. She smelled the leather as she turned to crawl back to where her master lay. 'Like a pet dog,' she thought bitterly as she moved across the room with the paddle clasped between her teeth. Nevertheless, once beside his couch, she

stretched her neck forward, offering the paddle. He took the scourge from her mouth, and the tips of his fingers caressed the black leather.

“Kiss it lovingly,” the Prince said.

Lana felt a fluttering in her stomach as she dutifully placed her lips against the smooth leather, and kissed it as if kissing a lover.

“Lick it adoringly.”

Her tongue traced over the very edge of paddle, feeling its dimpled surface, tasting the musk upon it. ‘Is it the musk of beaten women?’ she wondered.

“Caress it with your breasts.”

She shuddered slightly but pushed her chest forward and moved her breasts over the leather as he held it aloft, feeling the cool surface nestle between her fleshy orbs. Her twisting body caused the breasts to swing and momentarily clasp the black implement between them. She then slowly and deliberately brushed her nipples across the leather, as if tickling it.

“Good,” Darrick said. “You must learn to treat my paddle like a lover, for this is your Master, not I. Now go to that pillar.”

She glanced fearfully at the wide pillar in the centre of the room. Crawling as before, she knelt beside the large shaft, which was more than two feet in width.

“Stand. Clasp your hands about it. Up on tip-toe. Now raise your left leg and place your thigh as high as you can ... higher... hook your leg around the pillar.”

Lana pressed her perspiring body to the cool marble, her breasts flat against its smooth surface. She tightly clasped the shaft, her raised left leg, thigh above her waist, even, wrapped around its width, as if embracing a huge penis. Then, as she expected, a sharp crack and a searing pain... her buttocks leapt under the paddle, slamming her hips against the marble. He waited while she readjusted her position, rising up on the tip of her toes, left leg high.... The splat caused her to groan, and she embraced the great shaft even tighter, arms straining and her left ankle hooking around the pillar. The next blow, struck upwards, licked at the inside of her raised thigh, curling around the swell of her buttocks and caressing her swollen sex lips. Then another... this time across the top of her straining right thigh.

“No!” Lana cried, a low rattle beginning at the back of her throat.

“Yes,” the Prince laughed, laying a painful smack of leather flat on her buttocks. “Surrender to your Master, Lana.”

‘He means the paddle,’ she thought grimly, gritting her teeth and throwing back her head as a climax rose within her. The next splat of the paddle, catching the underside of her left thigh, wrenched the orgasm from her, seeming to rip a writhing, invisible mass from her vagina, and send shuddering spasms through her body. She heard him laugh again and felt the final smack, which seemed to linger and suck against her flesh. Lana remained at the pillar, left leg raised high, her cheek pressed against the cool marble. Spasm wracked and coursed the length of her body.

“That is a lesson that, despite my kindness and tender feelings toward you, I am not a soft master,” Darrick said. “Kiss my paddle again in thanks.”

Darrick pressed the warmed leather to her lips and she kissed it lovingly. As she lovingly kissed the paddle, her eyes glistening with delight and passion, she saw someone enter the room. He was a young man, blonde and handsome as a God, naked but for a pristine white cloth wrapped around his loins and between his legs. When he saw Lana, he stopped in his tracks and threw up his hands, as if shocked.

“Who is this?” the young man demanded.

Darrick laughed. “Come, Argo, you know very well who she is. This is Lana, my new bennu slave.”

The young man, Argo, simply glared at Lana, and she could sense the hatred in his eyes.

“Well,” he said, “you won’t need her any more today!” With that, Argo pursed his lips, stamped his foot a little, and then turned and marched to the door, flung it open wide and called to the guards. The black-robed fellow entered immediately and stood waiting expectantly.

“This is my personal attendant, Argo,” Darrick said with a sigh, pointing at the blonde young man. “He is a slave, just like you, but he is your master whenever I’m not present.”

“Really?” Argo said.

“Yes, until I deem otherwise, Argo. You may treat her as your own when I’m not around. Treat her well, though. I don’t want her damaging.”

This unexpected turn of events left Lana utterly bewildered and not a little afraid. She was aware of a definite air of dislike emanating from the handsome Argo, that much was apparent even with such brief exposure to his penetrating, flashing eyes and cruel features.

“What would I want with the slut, Darrick? Still, if it pleases you...” He paused and turned to Lana, his eyes sweeping over her kneeling form as she pressed her lips to the leather paddle. Eventually, with a bored wave of his hand, he said, “Get out of my sight!”

“Hands and knees, Lana,” Prince Darrick said with a sigh. “The guard will conduct you back to the Harem.”

Chapter Twenty-Eight

The Harem

All the way back to the Harem, in her tortuously slow journey on hands and knees, with the guard sauntering behind and his strap occasionally stinging her bottom, Lana tried to make some sense of the scene involving Darrick and Argo. The man, a slave, had spoken to Darrick with such disdain and freedom... Moreover, it seemed that Argo was to be Lana's erstwhile master by some kind of peculiar proxy. 'What kind of relationship does Argo share with the prince,' she wondered Lana was exhausted when she finally crawled into the Harem. The guard left her with Akbar, the junior steward, barely more than a callow youth, who showed her a low bed in an open annexe, and then gave her a quick tour of the Harem. The introductory walk took them through various ornate rooms, baths, kitchens, gardens and recreation areas of the large area, which seemed to be almost a village in its own right. The Harem, she noted, had its own peculiar erotic ambience, perfumed with lavender and roses, and exotically ornamented in gold and red for the most part. They passed small knots of women, some dressed in long gowns, others virtually naked like Lana, obviously engaged in various idle activities. There were men there too, mainly garbed in the same apparel of baggy white pantaloons, but with variously coloured tasselled sashes wound about their waists, and they glanced at Lana with some interest as she passed. The women of Darrick's harem, though, stared at her with sullen resentment. In particular, Darrick's wife seemed to eye Lana with ill-concealed contempt bordering on hatred. All of this made Lana quite fearful, coming as it did, on top of the strange episode with Argo.

Akbar eventually took her to a small refectory and stood over her as she ate plain gruel, and to Lana's chagrin at being commanded by one so young, he made her lick the bowl clean. Afterwards, though, he led her to a large bath and left her to bathe alone, mercifully unsupervised. She bathed quickly and then, scarcely refreshed, she went naked to her new bed. Such was Lana's exhaustion after the events of the day that she quickly drifted into a half-sleep, despite the welter of thoughts tumbling through her mind. However, given the lavish hints and explicit instructions she'd received earlier, she wasn't in the least surprised when Argo shook her awake. "I'm your Master in the absence of Prince Darrick," he reminded her as he stood beside the bed and showed her his erect, circumcised penis, pierced at the base with a large ring that hung to nestle against his balls. "Suck my cock."

Lana sighed inwardly but, realising that she had no alternative, she slid from the bed, and knelt in front of Argo. She took his relatively thick cock as fully into her mouth as she could and sucked with long strokes, trying for a quick resolution. As it turned out, Argo was easily pleased, and his orgasm came within a couple of minutes. "That was adequate, but it won't please Darrick," he said offhandedly, as he pulled his cock from her semen-filled mouth. "I'll make sure that you have lots of opportunities to improve. Akbar, get your arse in here!"

Lana groaned as she saw the young assistant steward pad into the room in his bare feet. Akbar dropped his white pantaloons to his ankles and Lana saw that his cock was more impressive than Argo's, even in its flaccid state. Lana was appalled. 'He's a mere boy,' she thought miserably.

"Another time, Master?" she asked hopefully, with some heavy emphasis on the title, in reality chancing to address him as a slave rather than as a real Master. "I'm so tired..."

In response, Argo smacked the palm of his hand against the side of her head. "You serve any time I say," he said. "Now suck Akbar's cock."

With a sigh, Lana closed her eyes and pushed Akbar's limp cock into her mouth, while

rolling the sac of his balls in her hand. The penis quickly grew and became hard as she sucked and she resisted a gagging reflex when taking him into her throat. In reward, the youth sighed in deep contentment and immediately shot a wad of viscous cum which Lana struggled to swallow. It had been quickly and efficiently done, despite Argo's disparaging comments about her skills.

"Charming," a female voice said as Akbar withdrew his cock from Lana's mouth. "I see the slut is already busy. And you," she said, glaring at Argo, "I'm surprised that you have a taste for female flesh."

Lana, wiping the overspill of cum from her chin, looked up to see the Kadin Salih standing some feet away, accompanied by three of the other women of the Harem. They were illuminated by the flickering light of an oil lamp. Still on her knees, Lana looked down at the tiles in embarrassment.

"I have the permission of Lord Darrick," Argo said defensively.

"Yes, yes, I don't doubt it," Salih said impatiently, giving a dismissive wave of her hand to Argo and Akbar. "Be gone, and take the miserable boy with you."

Argo and the young apprentice steward hurried away, adjusting their clothing as they went. One of the women laughed lightly, and Argo glared at her as he passed, but he made not comment.

"Careful, Tania," Salih said in admonishment. "You might not always enjoy my protection, and I hear that Argo can be hateful to vulnerable slave girls."

The woman, Tania, a voluptuous little thing with long blonde hair, visibly quailed at the words. "Yes, Kadin, I do know," she said softly.

"So, welcome to my Harem," Kadin Salih said to Lana. "I want to make sure that you fully understand your status in this place. My husband has his own diversions, but he also likes to toy with sluts who have blonde hair and blue eyes, so you might be a favourite toy for a while. I am the Chief Kadin, senior wife of the prince, and there are three other kadins beneath me. You are as dirt beneath their feet, and you will defer to them at all times. However, in the Harem, I am the power, and you belong to me. There are also a number of concubines, free women, and they rank infinitely above your own miserable station. There are many slaves such as you but as the newcomer you are the lowest among them. Do I make myself clear, Lana?"

Lana trembled and kept her eyes on the tiles at her knees. "Yes, Kadin," she murmured. "I'll try to please..."

"Oh, I'm absolutely certain that you will." Salih shrugged her gown from her shoulders and allowed it to pool at her feet, and she then snapped her fingers. The accompanying women, seeming to act as one, immediately removed their own gowns. "Take her!"

Lana was taken by surprise as the three naked women bore down on her and she found herself struggling as they dragged her to the bed. Resistance was futile but despite Lana's docile acquiescence the women grasped Lana's hair and twisted her breasts as they dragged her lie face down on the bed with her arms twisted behind her.

"Pin her down," she heard Salih say. One of the women straddled Lana's back with her thighs, pinning her down to the bed and almost driving the breath from her body. She could feel the warm flesh of the woman's cunt splitting against her spine. Then, to her horror, Lana learned the true cruel nature of Kadin Salih, who had taken a position between Lana's spread thighs. Salih's hand, cool and taloned with long nails, thrust between Lana's legs. Lana squirmed as a thumb went up her cunt while fingers toyed with the ringed clitoris.

"Now, do you understand your status in my Harem?" Salih asked.

"Yes Kadin," Lana gasped, writhing against the invading digits and feeling the long nails raking her tender flesh.

"I shall expect you to prove it."

One of the other women had taken a station on the bed, sitting with legs splayed widely

on either side of Lana's head. Lana, her body pinned immobile, was barely able to raise her head, but her hair was yanked back and she looked directly into the glistening folds of the cunt, and she could smell the familiar aroma as the woman's hips edged forward. When the shaven cunt was positioned, Lana's head was rammed forward and she found her lips mashing against the woman's labia. Without bidding she began to lap at the warm, sodden flesh with her tongue. Even as she did so, she felt the fingers at her pussy push insistently up into her, formed in a stiff cone and stretching her vaginal mouth and passage as never before. She groaned and writhed, but the fingers were insistent, and the hand at the back of her head kept her lips mashed against the cunt. 'Surely,' she thought desperately as the fingers pressed into her, 'they can't be so cruel? They must know I can't take it.' However, at that very moment, the flesh of her vagina seemed to surrender and Salih's entire hand slipped insider her to the girls slim wrist. Lana grunted loudly and continued to lick at the cunt. Salih's slim wrist as the hand twisted and turned, pressing hard against the spot immediately behind the root of Lana's clitoris. Then Lana felt her vaginal mouth sucking against Salih's wrist as it began to ease back and forth. And gradually, amazingly, Lana's own lust began to overcome her shame and the pain of the humiliating fisting as she was taught her station in the Harem.

Chapter Twenty-Nine

Darrick's court

"Why have you purchased her?" Argo demanded of Darrick. "It was a whim, no doubt!"

Lana, nude but for her collar, had been taken to the prince's quarters and she now stood, somewhat nonplussed as the Prince, her new Master, was berated by the petulant slave.

"I bought her because it pleased me to do so, you dolt," Darrick said, affectionately ruffling the hair of the handsome fellow. "You know that I need to keep a stable of girls to fuck my guests."

"You already have lots of girls to fuck your guests," Argo protested. "More than enough... some of them haven't been fucked for weeks."

"I needed a secretary."

"A secretary! You have three perfectly good secretaries."

"This one speaks English. I might need that sometimes." Then, to Lana's surprise, Darrick leaned over and planted a passionate kiss on the young man's lips.

Suddenly it made sense. She had half-suspected it, anyway. It seemed that Prince Darrick, contrary to all public impression, was homosexual. The nude Argo displayed an impressively erect cock that was pierced at its base with heavy ring, and he melted into Darrick's embrace. Lana caught herself giving a wry smile. Not at the behaviour of her master, but at the prospect of being owned by someone who hadn't any sexual interest in her. Almost as if reading her thoughts, Darrick broke off from the embrace and said, "Well?"

"Master?"

"Argo is a slave, just like you," Darrick said, indicating the pouting young man. "However, he is also your master, just as much as I."

"Yes, Master, I understand that."

Darrick smiled as he coolly assessed her naked form. He pulled Argo closer to him, asking, "Do you like to fuck women, Argo?"

"Sometimes," he said, as if dismissing an irritating thought.

"So you see, there's an immediate use for her. Use her as and when you wish, unless I see fit to decide otherwise."

Darrick stroked the young man's straining cock, idly running the pad of his finger round the base of the large plum-like glans.

"And you will fuck her too, Darrick?"

"Of course, when it pleases me. Don't be so jealous!" Darrick suddenly laughed, as if to break the tension. He said: "Now, Argo, let's redden her white skin."

"That will be awesome." Argo was immediately on his feet, and he rubbed his hands in anticipation.

"Go and find a stout leather paddle, and some grease for her arse," Darrick said as he rose from his couch and grasped Lana's arm to lead her across the chamber to a bare area in one of the furthest corners. There he stopped and looked up; following his gaze, Lana saw that a length of strong chain hung from the high ceiling, its end dangling some four feet above her head. Darrick placed a hand between her legs, her cunt nestling against his palm, he lifted her effortlessly from the ground. "Grasp the chain, and don't let go," he said, and he waited until she had obeyed and wrapped the chain around her small fists, before removing his supporting hand and leaving her dangling there.

Argo returned carrying a stiff leather paddle, a whip with a mop of thin trailing thongs, and a small jar of salve. Tucking the paddle and the whip under one arm, Argo dipped his

fingers into the jar and reached round Lana to smear a glob of the greasy substance between the cheeks of her arse. Hanging on the chain, her arms already beginning to ache, Lana gazed straight into the face of the male slave, despite the fact that it seemed he was to be her erstwhile master. She could feel the cool, moist tip of his erect cock brushing against her mound, and his fingers probed into her anus. His finely-chiselled looks would have been handsome, even god-like, had it not been for the persistently cruel and arrogant set of his lips; his golden blonde hair was curled and shoulder-length; his muscles were taut and his waist was trim; and his cock was coursed with bulging blue veins.

"Let me see you fuck her," Darrick said.

"As you wish," Argo said.

Argo thrust the whip into Darrick's hand and dropped the paddle and the jar onto the tiled floor. Then he reached to grasp Lana's buttocks in the palms of his hands, pulled her towards him and in one movement he effortlessly gloved his cock with her cunt. Lana gasped as he impaled her, and she hung onto the chain with all of her strength.

"Tsk, ts," Darrick muttered. "No foreplay? Is the girl ready for that yet?"

"Ready? Can't you smell the bitch?"

Lana groaned and closed her eyes. The harsh and humiliating treatment had released the insatiable bennu bird in her once again. She raised her legs to wrap them round Argo's back, partly to reduce the tension on her arms but also to get the full measure of him into her cunt, and her thighs clasped Argo so tightly that it made him gasp. Then she let out a screech as Darrick, her Lord and Master, and slapped the paddle hard against her buttocks. Argo yelped at the same time and withdrew one of his hands from beneath her thighs.

"Mind my fingers," he said petulantly.

However, Darrick merely laughed and he slapped the paddle onto Lana's arse again, on her other cheek, making Argo withdraw that hand too, and causing Lana to contract her cunt flesh and wriggle on the cock. Her hands were slipping on the chain, unable to grasp much longer, and the cock had become the pivot that supported her. Still Darrick belaboured her arse with the paddle, sending out waves of hot pain with each stroke. The blows suddenly ceased and Lana, her eyes firmly clenched shut, heard the hiss of a whip. She tensed for the expected streaking pain but none came. Instead, she felt Argo jerk against her, driving his cock to the hilt inside her, and he let out a gasp of pain. Another swish of displaced air, and another groan from Argo... she realised that Darrick was whipping the male slave as he fucked her. It seemed that Argo was well-used to this treatment, for he continued to drive his cock back and forth inside her, keeping pace with the rhythm of the whip. Occasionally, the flailing lashes caught and stung Lana's legs, but she continued to clasp her thighs about Argo's waist, with her ankles hooked together.

When Lana finally let go of the chain, she clasped her fingers intertwined behind Argo's neck and clung on with arms at full length, her head hung back, and her long blonde hair trailed down behind her. The cock pressed up hard against the front wall of her cunt, pressing against the root of her clitoris. He heard herself crying out in pleasure.

"On the floor," she heard Darrick order.

Argo somehow managed to lower both himself and Lana to the floor without disengaging, and he continued to fuck her steadily in a missionary position with her legs still up behind Argo's back. However, rough hands grasped her ankles and thrust them apart, raising them higher, pinning them behind Argo's shoulders and doubling her over. Her pleasure was rising to breaking point and the passion continued unabated when Darrick lowered himself behind Argo. She felt the male slave jerk, and she heard him sigh, and she realised that Darrick's cock had impaled Argo's anus. Then, in a strange and surreal fandango, the three of them began to writhe and thrust in unison on the tiled floor. Each time Darrick thrust into

Argo's anus, Argo drove his cock into Lana's cunt, and then they both withdrew simultaneously, slowly, with great deliberation, until the next violent thrust from Darrick, matched by Argo. And so it went on, progressively more frenzied and rougher, until they wrestled and grunted together. Lana realised that she was a mere incidental in the play of the two male lovers, but she was lost in the heat of the moment, and grinding her hips in wild abandon with every thrust, each of which bore the combined power and strength of the two men. The scent of their rutting pervaded the air, mixing with the heady smell of perfumed lamp oil. Argo ground Lana's breasts into his hands and tortured her nipples as Darrick pulled Argo's head back to ravish his lips with a masculine kiss. Then Argo steadied himself. Lana Argo's body jerk with every thrust from Darrick, and the male slave was no longer matching the strokes but merely remained still, impaled within Lana's sodden cunt. Lana, doubled over with her toes behind her ears, grimaced beneath their weight as Darrick pounded his final thrusts into Argo's arse. Both of them men seemed to tense, and time stood still for a few seconds, and Lana knew that Darrick had shot his load into Argo. Then, without warning, Darrick withdrew and rose to his feet.

"Draw her off," Darrick ordered tersely, seemingly displeased.

For a brief moment, Lana was afraid that this was an order for Argo to desist. 'No!' she wanted to scream. She couldn't bear that, not now. However, her fears diminished as Argo slammed back and forth into her. Lana grunted in a guttural manner as Argo rutted her, and she felt waves of splendour beginning to wash over her body. She knew that her climax was inevitable and imminent, and she glanced wildly up at Darrick, who was faced away from them now.

"Master!" she panted. "I beg permission to come."

"Oh?" Darrick turned, as if surprised to be asked. "Yes, of course, granted,"

Lana reached down to her pussy and tweaked the small ring that pierced her clitoris. The river of pleasure, hitherto checked, immediately broke through, as if forcing itself through the tiny piercings of her clitoral bud and then gushing forth in a hot tide, spreading with pulsing waves, across her belly, and seeping up to lap over her breasts and turgid nipples. She avidly milked the cock within her, and then was vaguely aware of Argo grunting his own release as he spurted his pleasure deep inside her.

Even as Argo roared his release with, pressing down on the calf of each of her legs to gain the maximum depth of her, even as Lana writhed and screamed with pleasure, Darrick suddenly fell upon Argo and grasped him by the throat. It took a few seconds for Lana to understand what was happening. Darrick was like a man possessed, pulling Argo from her by the neck, his strong hands closed around Argo's throat.

"Yes, Argo," Darrick growled, his voice thick with anger, "you prefer her, like the other sluts I've put in front of her. I don't know which of you I ought to kill... or both, maybe.

The awful anger gradually assuaged and sanity returned, and the glazed, mad look faded from Darrick's eyes. Nonetheless, Argo's face had turned blue before Darrick released him, and the slave crumpled to the floor, heaving for breath.

"I fucked her because you commanded it," Argo managed to gasp.

"You will never fuck her again," Darrick said grimly.

Chapter Thirty

Alone again

Darrick left the palace, the very next day. He was said to have left on a protracted business trip, but he took Argo with him. Lana, shocked by events over which she had no control, but which involved her as the central protagonist, it seemed, was unsure what this meant for her. She only knew that she had seen an insane jealous rage overtake Darrick, and his crazed jealousy centred upon Argo, his lover, and not Lana, his slave. She was confined in the harem for three days, quietly brooding, served only by Umar, disquieted by a persistent, nagging feeling that something momentous had occurred, and that it would directly affect her life.

Surely enough, when Umar came to her on the fourth morning, unlike on every other day until then, he did not supervise her bath, soap her breasts, her belly, her back, her cunt, and then lovingly rinse and dry her body before anointing her with scented oils. Unlike other days, he did not stretch her on a marble table and massage her body until it became exquisitely vibrant under her touch. He did none of that on that fateful day. Instead he simply ordered her to squat over the Turkish-style toilet, and he watched as she eliminated her wastes. Then, without a gesture to even the most cursory washing of her intimate parts, he ordered her to her feet.

"Follow me," he said, and Lana detected a heavy sadness about his demeanour which frightened her. She dropped to her knees and crawled behind him, at the heel of his suede, calf-length boots. "You must hurry," he hissed as he lengthened his stride, and she scurried on her knees behind him, straining to keep up. Umar stopped at a small, grilled gate, and he waited for the guard on the other side to unlock it. This led directly to the outer area of the palace, beyond the walls of the harem, and Lana had never before been allowed there. A slight breeze came through the wrought iron furls of the gate, causing the silk of Umar's baggy white pantaloons to billow against her shoulder as she knelt behind him. As the gate was opened, Umar told her: Grip the thong of my boots in your teeth."

She obeyed, lowering her head to almost touch the ground to bite the long leather thong at his ankle. The thong strained against her teeth as he stepped forward, and Lana was forced to follow on hands and knees, like a dog with head bent to lick the foot of its master. He led her across a sandy yard and out, through another gate, this one unguarded. His stride had mercifully slowed, allowing her to keep pace. In her short time at the palace she had never seen this functional area. It was the farm, it appeared, devoted to the purpose of keeping the desert palace and fortress supplied with food and water, and it was a hive of activity. She dared to look around. Beside some, stables across the yard, a man was putting a large prancing chestnut stallion to a whinnying white mare that was tethered helplessly within a wooden frame. The stallion's massively tumescent pink penis hung hugely beneath his belly. Lana realised that she herself had no more rights than the white mare who waited helplessly to serve the prancing stallion. The tethered mare was nervously dancing in the stall, but she was also flashing her clitoris at the advancing stallion, enticing him with her helplessness.

Beyond the stables, Lana saw a large treadmill, a water wheel, that was turned laboriously by a whole gang of sturdy young men and women, each of them naked, their skins deeply tanned by the fierce sun, toiling beneath the whip of a merciless overseer. And to the right, on a smooth stone circular slab that was some fifteen feet in diameter, shaded by the thatch of a straw awing, a very fair skinned woman flailed grain with a long chain that was affixed to manacles about her wrists.

Umar led her round the back of a steamy laundry, where perspiring washerwomen toiled over huge vats, their naked breasts pendent, arses raised high. Behind this building, though, Lana

was confronted with the sight that really terrified her. Waiting there, beside a huge circular pit, she saw Kadin Salih and the three junior kadins. A young female slave knelt behind them, holding a bowl. More frightening, a sturdy whipping saddle, tall and narrow, its polished wood gleaming in the morning sun, had been positioned to the left of the pit.

"Ah, here she is," Salih said. "Where have you been Umar?"

"I came as soon as I received the word, Kadin," Umar said carefully.

"Tardiness isn't appreciated, even from my husband's senior steward," she replied.

Lana noted that the woman's voice had become even more imperious. Lana glanced nervously about her. She looked down at a wide circular pit, barely a foot away from her right knee. The pit was sunken in the yard, some eight or nine feet deep and, perhaps, forty feet across, its sides of smooth stone. Six long and thick wooden shafts radiated from a hub at the centre of the pit, and a single donkey, chained to a shaft, strained to turn the huge wheel.

"Faster!" the pit overseer roared.

Lana felt instant pity for the poor beast as the man cruelly lashed its back with a long broad-bladed whip. The animal snorted in pain and strained forward.

"We shall see her punished," she heard Salih tell Umar.

"Lana has transgressed, Kadin?" Umar asked, and Lana was grateful to him for trying to defend her, even such a muted manner.

"She has incurred the wrath of Prince Darrick," Salih said. "Like all the other sluts he acquires. Put her on the saddle."

When instructed, Lana rose to her feet, and stood to attention before the polished whipping stool, head held high, staring straight ahead as if oblivious of the women who looked on. Her heart pounded, but only the swift rise and fall of her breasts betrayed her fear.

"Forward, bennu girl!"

Lana swallowed hard. She took a pace forward and, without further prompting, laid herself upon the whipping saddle, feeling the leather warmed by the sun, smooth against her naked belly. The muscles in her back tightened. "Relax," Umar murmured. Lana consciously tried to ease the tension in her buttocks. Satisfied, the steward, using a small wheel to the side, cranked the saddle, raising her arse and stretching her until the tips of her toes barely touched the ground. A hand, Umar's, she supposed - gathered her hair and swept it forward over her head, removing any impediment should they choose to lash her back. A hand touched her taut buttocks, surprising her, and she jerked. The watching kadins laughed.

"Relax," Umar commanded again, and she felt his cool fingers stroking her flesh. Strangely, despite the circumstances, she found herself reflecting that Umar's hands were always cool. Lana struggled to concentrate her mind, as again she sought to relax her taut muscles, willing the flesh to soften, wriggling slightly upon the saddle. Then the stroking hand was gone and she fearfully awaited the punishment, anticipation coursing through her like a flame of fear.

Yet when the first blow came, it caused Lana to gasp in utter surprise, expelling all air from her body. Indescribable pain seared through her. The rattan cane! She had not expected that. Her legs turned to water and she began to protest, but when the second cut was laid swiftly upon the first her pleas turned into a loud and wailing yell. Her fingers tightly clenched the bars of the stool, knuckles white. The third stroke brought another screech as fire seemed to spread from Lana's tortured buttocks to utterly envelop her. The fourth, an upward stroke, precisely traced the line across her upper thighs beneath the swell of her buttocks, where the flesh is particularly tender. Her screams echoed around the yard. Two more vicious strokes completed the chastisement and everything seemed to merge into one fierce and continuous pain, without dislocation or pause. Her body lay supine upon the whipping stool, utterly spent, hanging like a rag doll.

She did not know why they had beaten her. They did not require a reason. Slaves are not always beaten for their instruction or punishment: often, they are beaten just because it pleased the Master or Mistress.

"Shear her hair!"

Her hair! No! Umar's large hand immediately, mercifully, gagged her lips before she could scream her protest. Lana weakly struggled to rise, even though her body was still aflame with terrible pain. The steward easily held her shoulders immobile in a vice-like grip. She was quiet and still then because resistance was futile, and she could only sob pitifully as the slave girl grasped her long hair and expertly wielded a pair of steel shears across her scalp, removing the long, lovely flaxen tresses to the very roots. The girl handed the shorn hair to Salih and stepped back.

"White skinned, blonde haired and blue-eyed bennu girl," the Kadin said. "My husband is such a fool. He doesn't even like girls. You will come to consider yourself unfortunate that you were not strangled on the cord of a bow." Lana wept quietly, her hair chopped short and rough, feeling less than human before the kadin's cruel, implacable gaze. Kadin Salih turned to Umar and said: "Throw her into the pit."

Umar hauled Lana to her feet. Their eyes briefly met mine, and Lana saw compassion in Umar's sad glance. Umar, she knew, had had no wish to do this thing; then the look was gone and his eyes hardened as he unceremoniously lowered her by the arms into the deep pit. The steward dropped her and she sprawled painfully in the dust below, but the little pit overseer immediately grasped her arm. The watching women laughed lightly above as the overseer dragged Lana across the pit floor. He thrust her against one of the horizontal shafts of the wheel.

"Grasp the wood," the overseer ordered.

Numbly, Lana obeyed. The grubby, little man fitted rough leather cuffs about her wrists. She could smell his body odour as he chained her to the shaft. A whip cracked, and she heard the donkey squeal. The wheel began to turn and Lana found herself dragged forward. The overseer's lash bit into her calves. There was to be no mercy: She must work with the donkey, her shoulder hard to the wheel. The whip bit against her already-tortured buttocks and she strained her tired and aching body forward upon the shaft. Its weight and resistance surprised her. Her feet scrambled in the dust as, back arched and calves tensed, she struggled with all my strength to push the shaft with the donkey. The women of the Royal Harem looked down and laughed as Lana wept in humiliation.

"You may provide her with water, but otherwise withhold all food and nutrition," Kadin Salih called to the Pit Overseer. "And work the bitch mercilessly until she dies."

Chapter Thirty-One

In the pit of despair

Lana clasped entwined fingers behind her head, feeling the coarse and uneven chop of her hair. She shivered as the pit overseer hurled a pail of cool water over her, washing away the dust and grime. It had been three days since Kadin Salih had condemned her to toil at the shaft alongside the donkey, without food. The donkey was fed well, but not Lana. The overseer merely gave her a pan of water to lap, like an animal. She was ravenously hungry. The hard toil was quickly leaching all strength from her body. And twice the kadins had come to see her misery at the shaft, perhaps to see whether her condition was deteriorating. The overseer had whipped her unmercifully on these occasions, sycophantically trying to impress, and she almost had to run around the pit pushing the heavy shaft. The women called out to her as she toiled. "Little Ass" they called her.

Lana shuddered as another pail of water lashed against her body, and she felt her nipples harden. 'How long can a body remain alive without food?' she wondered.

"Come," the overseer ordered, wringing out his sodden, grubby djebelah as he scurried to the alcove at the side of the pit, moving the donkey aside with a kick of his bare foot.

Lana followed the loathsome little man to the cavern-like recess which provided shelter and accommodation for both slave and donkey when they were not worked at the shaft. She noted that fresh straw had been strewn upon the ground, and her filth had been freshly cleaned away. Still, though, an unwholesome animal stench permeated the air. Lana had tried to maintain a small area at the rear of the recess for herself, keeping the donkey away and ensuring that he did not foul it. At the open end, though, her own wastes mixed with those of the animal, to be collected for use in the fields.

The odious little man waited mutely, his whip, ever-ready.

She sighed and sank to her knees. The overseer never used her name. He probably did not even know her name. It was of no consequence to him. Pit slaves did not have names. As far as he was concerned, neither did they have thoughts that may be expressed in speech. Lana was not allowed to speak; the man whipped her soundly whenever she tried to do so.

Lana, although growing weak through lack of sustenance, leaned forward and downwards until her breasts touched the rough straw. She rested her cheek upon her crooked arm, feeling his naked thighs against her upraised buttocks. She wriggled her bottom and widened the placement of her knees as his inordinately large cock, already massively erect, nudged against her flesh. She gasped as it bludgeoned unceremoniously into her sex, his hands at her hips trying to pull the moist female flesh onto his length. Lana ground her head against her arm as he began to piston to and fro, his balls smacking against her lower buttocks. As so often before, she found her body bucking against his thrusts, moving with a treacherous, helpless rhythm.

He used her roughly and without concession to her own needs. She was his chattel. Lana, of course, accepted this. It was a slave's lot to provide her body for such usage. After all, the humble overseer was now as much her master as the Prince Darrick himself. He had taken her often in the two days since she had been there, and always took her in the same manner, wordlessly, from behind, like an animal in the field. That, perhaps, is what Lana had become: a female beast to be rutted without passion. When he was through, the overseer simply lowered his grubby djebelah and pushed her roughly aside. She lay panting upon the straw, her knees drawn up in foetal fashion, barely noticing as a chain was locked about her ankle, shackling her to the wall. The overseer then pushed a pan of water closer to her and left. The donkey suddenly

snorted, perhaps himself aroused by the aroma of sex. The sound reminded her of the scene she had seen when the prancing stallion had been put to the caged white mare.

She knew, though, that her torment could not last much longer. Without food, she could not live for long in that awful pit of despair.

Chapter Thirty-Two

Lana collapsed upon the straw in the alcove of the pit. She ached in every sinew and muscle. The sun was still hot, even though it was evening, and dust caked upon the sweat on her naked body. Hunger gnawed at her belly. Yet she no longer seemed to crave food. She wanted to sleep, nothing more, and buried her head into the crook of her arm.

"Up," the overseer said.

Lana groaned inwardly. This common man had been an unmerciful beast to her since she had been condemned to the pit, stinging her with his accursed dog whip at the slightest provocation, seeming to delight in abusing her as her strength ebbed away. She struggled to push herself up on a stiffened arm and turned. The unshaven and grubby overseer stood alongside another man, who wore a smart turban. Lana blinked. The man held a dagger across the scrawny throat of the pit overseer.

"You!" Lana said.

"Yes, it's me," Tomas confirmed with a small, grim smile. "I have come to take you back. Just as I promised."

"Stand," the overseer beseeched her.

Lana struggled to rise, her hand on the rough wall at the rear of the alcove.

"She is filthy," Tomas said accusingly.

"I will wash her, Master. I will bring water."

"Her hair has been hacked off."

"It will quickly grow, master."

"She is ruined," Tomas said.

"No master. With food...she can easily be restored. Please, I beg you..."

"You don't deserve to live, you filthy beast," Tomas said.

The last thing that Lana saw as blackness closed in on her, just as her legs gave way beneath her, was Tomas slicing the blade deeply across the throat of the Pit Overseer. Blood pumped from the gash and splattered over Lana's inert body.

Chapter Thirty-Three

Lana is transported with Salih

When Lana was loaded, barely breathing, into the windowless slave wagon, she was vaguely aware that another woman was already seated on the opposite bench seat. In the brief time that the van door was open, under the light of a lantern, Lana saw that the other woman was fully clothed, in a long dark gown, probably olive green, although it was difficult for Lana to determine the colour in the dim light. However, although this woman had been permitted clothing, she wore a closely fitted leather hood over her head and her wrists were fastened to a broad belt round her waist. Her ankle was shackled, chained to a slave ring; this was expected, for anyone to be unchained in the slave van would almost violate slavers' codes. Lana was laid upon the padded leather of the metal seat, slick and cold on her naked flesh, and she felt her right ankle being grasped as someone affixed a chain upon it. It all seemed rather pointless to Lana, since she could scarcely move, even had she have wished to so. She felt a broad belt being tightly cinched round her waist, and her wrists were then clipped to it. She weakly tested the bonds, but her movement was mainly restricted to her legs, with only minimal possible adjustments elsewhere. Then she faded into half-consciousness again. The journey seemed to take about two hours, perhaps more. Lana wasn't sure. It was a miserable journey. Only the steady jolt of the van linked her with reality. Finally, however, the movement ceased and, after a short time, during which they were left eerily in eery silence, she suddenly felt cold air on her naked flesh and a hand closed round lower leg, and the ankle chain was unlocked. She was carried from the van and warm air caressed her body. Then everything went black again.

Back on a boat

"Good evening," a familiar voice said when she stirred at last.

Lana was lying on narrow ledge under an awning. She blinked to focused her bleary eyes and saw Tomas standing there, smiling down.

"So it is you," she said. "I wasn't dreaming in delirium."

He gave a small bow. "At your service," he said.

Lana, still chained in the belt, wrists clipped to her waist, looked around. She was on a ship, lying on the open deck of a large wooden vessel with three tall masts. The woman in the green gown, still closely hooded and belted, stood nearby on the deck. And a free woman leaned against the ship's rail, dressed in form-fitting black trousers and jerkin, almost man-like in garb but irrefutably feminine.

"These are the slaves travelling with me to Laura. Tell the Captain I wish to leave as soon as we have sufficient clearance of the harbour bottom."

The woman nodded and turned away, walking towards a central door further back on the main deck. Thomas bent to scoop up Lana and hoist her over his shoulder. He then took the hooded woman by elbow, and guided her ahead of him, to a set of steps and then into a companion way. Lana hung limply over his shoulder. He carried her down a long passage, pushing the other woman on ahead. Eventually, he stopped at a cramped door, strangely shaped to follow the curve of the hull, and he produced a large iron key to unlock it. Thomas ushered the hooded woman into the cabin beyond and stepped in after her. He lowered Lana onto a bunk.

It was a surprisingly spacious area, with a high wide bunk at one end, and a heavy plain wooden chair fixed beside it. The cabin was lit by lamps and a smell of burned oil tinged the air. Tomas manoeuvred the hooded woman to the chair and clipped her belt to a ring on the back rest. Lana huddled on the bunk, but she watched as Tomas moved to grip the arm of the woman

and manhandle her roughly to seat her in a wooden chair. He quickly fastened her wrists to the chair arms and then unfastened the laces of her hood and pulled the leather forward, away from the woman's face and sweat-bedraggled lank hair. Lana watched quietly as the woman widened her mouth to permit the removal of the gag.

Then though, Lana gasped, and she raised her body to look more clearly. It was the Kadin Salih!

"You'll be gutted alive for this," Salih snarled, her eyes blazing.

Tomas merely laughed and produced his vicious, long curved knife from his belt – the same knife he had used to despatch the Pit Overseer. "Think carefully before your next statement," he said, placing the point of the knife at the corner of her mouth. "It could well be the last time you have a tongue. I don't need you intact, and speech isn't a required ability for you."

Salih was about to respond, but she thought the better speaking further. Instead, she remained fiercely tense in the bonds of the leather belt, as Tomas sliced her clothing from her. The door opened, and the trouser-clad woman entered. She glanced at Salih and said, "So that is the fabulous Kadin Salih. She doesn't look much."

Tomas laughed again, carefully cutting away the gown and its under-layer. In seconds strips of fabric hung loosely at Salih's waist, exposing high, proud breasts with large badges of dark, almost black areolae. He stooped to grab the hem of the ruined gown and rip it free of the belt, over her feet. She wore a white undergarment, not unlike the underwear that Lana had once herself worn in another life, and the knife made light work of removing the flimsy garment, leaving Salih completely naked. Lana objectively appraised her, frankly, as one slave to another. Contrary to the trouser-clad woman's dismissive assessment, Salih had a fine body with magnificent breasts, an incredibly slim waist - albeit tightly constricted thus by the broad belt - and long, well-shaped legs with painted, manicured toe nails.

"Is the Captain ready to leave?" Tomas asked the trouser-clad woman, collecting up the rags of Salih's garments. "It would be as well to leave here quickly."

"Within minutes," the woman answered, and even as she spoke, the ship gave a lurch. "The tide is beginning to run and we can slip out early."

"Spread your legs widely," Tomas ordered Salih, patting the interior of her thighs and resting his knife against the apex of the slit of her sex. "Henceforth, you are to display yourself openly at all times."

Salih reluctantly obeyed, and Lana saw the trouser-clad woman smile slightly. Flower-like petals of inner labia protruded, plainly visible, from the thicker lips of Salih's sex. Tomas nodded his satisfaction, and then turned abruptly and left, ushering the manly woman out too, closing the cabin door behind him.

Lana lay on her bunk and looked across at Salih. She saw a single tear emerge from those dark, flashing eyes and trickle down her cheek. The ship's timbers began to creak and there was a crunching sound from beneath, and the vessel lurched as if to tip, and then settled and seemed to sway freely. It was evident that they were on their way. The noise surprised Lana. It was something she hadn't expected on a wooden sailing vessel, but the constant grinding and creaking of protesting timbers, the sound of waves crashing against the bow, and the hiss of water sliding along the hull... all combined to a loud cacophony down in the bowels of the ship.

"The ship is moving," Lana said.

"Silence, slave," Salih snarled.

After that, neither of them spoke. Salih, though, naked and fastened to the chair, closed her eyes and wept.

Tomas honours his promise

“Well,” Tomas said, entering the cabin with the trouser-clad woman when the ship had been safely out to sea for more than half an hour, “I’ll take a brandy to fortify myself.”

The woman smiled, slightly reproachfully, Lana thought, as she went to take a flask and glass from a nearby cupboard. She poured a good measure of the amber liquid and handed it to Tomas. “You look well,” she told him as he accepted the glass.

“I’m very well...I’m flushed with success. I have rescued this creature, although she is barely alive,” He stooped to tenderly stroke one of Lana’s ringed nipples. “She was one of my acquisitions some time ago. What do you think of that?”

“You stole her back? It’s a breach of the codes, Tomas.”

“Yes. But she has to go back. I promised I would return her, if ever the time came.”

“All the way back?”

“Yes.”

Chapter Thirty-Four

End of the awakening

Helena felt Tomas ease his cock from her hot cunt and she heard him grunt as he rolled from her. She lay there for a few, long seconds, motionless, statue-like. Then she opened her eyes, not slowly, but in one swift wide-eyed movement. He was standing there, naked, beside the hospital bed. She wanted to blink, but did not do so. It was very white: white walls, white floor, white bed linen, white ceiling, with diffusing blinds covering the window and lending a translucent white quality to the light. Seemingly shocked, he stood motionless for a while, gazing back at her. Then he reached to stroke her left breast, softly, his fingers lingering on her erect nipple, and she felt a shudder course through her body. That very shudder, the involuntary quiver of flesh, caused delight and wonder in her. She heard him give a small laugh.

"Welcome back," he said, and she saw him reach for his clothes.

"He has no shame?" she thought, watching him pull on his thin white trousers. A sheen of perspiration filmed his brow. Tomas was perspiring. Around Lana the screens and machines of an advanced medical technology hummed and flashed. He looked down at her and smiled slightly. He was quite handsome.

"You raped me," she said quietly.

He seemed startled and hesitated for a second, and then pulled the white tee shirt over his head. "Yes," he said.

"You raped me several times," she said, recalling his visits, when he had stripped and taken her as she lay helpless to resist, unable to move, locked in her own obscure layer of consciousness.

"Yes," he admitted.

"I knew it was happening. Every time, I knew it. Why did you do it?"

"Why?" he asked in obvious surprise. He clearly hadn't expected that question. "Because you were so beautiful, vulnerable and delectable."

Helena held her gaze for long moments but didn't respond to that. Then she struggled to rise up a little, looking down at her breasts, at her sex, at her hip... No rings adorned her body, no piercings, and no tattoo. She flopped back, as if exhausted by the mere effort.

"I remember everything," she said, closing her eyes and throwing a wrist across her brow. "Everything!"

"I'm glad."

"It kept me alive," she said. "You kept me sane. I lived for the times when you would come to me. So maybe it wasn't rape."

"No, maybe not."

Then she opened her eyes again, looking up at him from beneath her wrist as she said accusingly, "But you sold me as a sex slave."

"Yes," he said, reaching to tenderly stroke her flaxen blonde hair, "but I brought you back too."

"They will arrest you and put you in gaol."

"No," he said with a small, sad smile as he stooped to plant a small, delicate kiss on her lips before turning to walk to the door. "I shall return to my other time, my other world."

"That's ridiculous," Helena said.

However, even as he paused, as his hand rested on the doorknob, as he turned to look back at her in a gesture of farewell, his figure seemed to dissolve and he faded away, the door still unopened.

Helena drifted back into an all-too familiar haze of half-consciousness.

When she next opened her eyes she saw a familiar black face looking down at her. “Jiffa,” she murmured with a faint, wan smile. She saw him blink, as if surprised, and then his expression seemed to morph instantly from utter astonishment to pure delight. He beamed widely.

“You’re awake,” he said in wonder, placing his hand on her brow. “My God, you are awake!”

Chapter Thirty-Five

Helena Meets the Cast

“Hello, Mrs Winter, how are you?”

Helena opened her eyes from her peaceful slumber. A man in a grey business suit peered down at her.

“Welcome back to the land of the living,” he said.

Helena suppressed a gasp and cringed back against the bed. She was uncertain whether to address him as ‘Master’, or as ‘Sir’. But in the end she did neither. The grim-faced man was surrounded by other, younger men, acolytes, people who deferred to him. This did not surprise Helena, because people had always bowed before his frightening authority.

“I am Mr Mostel, the Senior Consultant,” he said, laying a finger on her throat and feeling her pulse. “You won’t recognise me of course...”

‘Oh, I recognise you, all right!’ she thought bitterly. She had recognised him instantly. She would have recognised him anywhere, in any time. The last time Helena had encountered this man, he had been Mostel the Head Slaver. She knew this man and she knew what must now follow.

“Remove her gown,” Mostel said to no one in particular but with an authority that expected to be instantly obeyed. “I will examine her thoroughly.”

There it was! She knew it! The bed sheet that covered her was pulled back, and Helena pulled the gown down tightly around her thighs. “You have examined me before,” Helena dared say, twisting against the hands that reached for her gown.

Mostel gave a small smile and he spoke patronisingly. “Indeed I have. However, I usually leave that to my staff, so you are honoured with my personal attention again today. You are a very special young lady.”

“A bennu girl,” she murmured, half to herself. Then, Helena was aware of strong black hands, pulling her torso upright, untying the hospital gown and pulling it away from her, leaving her naked. She looked up at the man and saw Jiffa, the steward, smiling broadly at her. He was wearing a white tunic, with a high capstan collar and flap that buttoned across the chest. A plastic name badge was pinned to his breast. “Help me, Jiffa! Stop them doing this to me!”

The black man beamed in delight as he turned to the people around the bed. “She knows my name,” he said happily.

Mostel turned to Jiffa. “Did you know her before her trauma?”

“No sir.”

“Interesting,” the consultant mused, reaching to pull the skin beneath Helena’s eye and peering at her iris. He asked her: “And how do you know Mr, er....” Mostel paused, looking round for help with the name.

“Jiffa, sir. My name is Jiffa Song. I’m the Head Nurse for this section.”

“What about Tomas?” Helena suddenly asked, sitting up in the bed, undaunted by her nudity.

“Have we got a Tomas?” Mostel asked.

“I don’t know Tomas,” Jiffa said, “but ward orderlies come and go.”

“And Homere Homere?” she persisted.

Mostel looked nonplussed at that name too. Jiffa said, “Sir, if I may... Mr Homere is the patient’s former employer, sir. He pays for her hospital care and visits occasionally.”

Helena glanced around at Mostel’s coterie of people who crowded round her bed. She

certainly recognised two or three faces. One was the man who had so brutally force-fed her in the slave cells, almost breaking her teeth in the process. Another, without a doubt, was the blonde groom who had fallen in love with her. He now wore the white smock coat of a junior doctor, with a folded stethoscope protruding from his pocket, and he seemed nonchalant. Helena's hands absently touched her nipples, but there was no evidence of either rings or piercing there. The whole world seemed to be spinning in a crazy vortex.

"I don't understand," Helena blurted, clasping her palms to her temples, bursting into tears, cowering back on the bed, suddenly afraid of the smiling, inquisitive faces that crowded in on her.

She heard Mostel issuing instructions in a low, calm voice, prescribing medications and dosages.

"I don't want any more medicine," she screeched.

"Everything is bound to be somewhat confused for a while," Mostel said as Jiffa took her by the wrists. "I've merely instructed that you be given a mild sedative, Mrs Winter, to help you relax. Also, after I've examined you, we will move you to another room, so you can have some company. It's important to exercise your brain."

The side-ward with Eve

"Sorry to wake you, but you were shouting out, something about your hair." The voice was that of a woman, speaking English with a distinctive Australian accent.

Helena opened her eyes, and she at once noticed a subtle difference in the light. She saw an olive skinned woman looking across at her from the next bed. There was a friendly smile on the woman's heavily freckled face. Glancing around, Helena saw that she was in a small hospital ward with walls of the lightest peppermint green. Bright sunlight flooded through the window.

"Where am I?" Helena asked, wiping a hand over her clammy brow.

"You're in a side ward. They call it a HD room ... HD for High Dependency. I guess you're still on heavy meds. You were well out when they wheeled you in here. It'll be good to have some company around here. And you have nothing to worry about, your hair is great."

"You're Eve," Helena said suddenly.

"Yes," the young woman said, obviously pleased. "They told me about you too. Hi, Helena...good to meet you."

"You too," Helena said, not in the least surprised to see her there. "I'm starving. When do they feed us?"

Eve smiled. "Take a sip of water," she advised.

Homere - Russian Oligarch and sponsor of Helena's health care

"Helena, my darling girl," Homere Homere said in his thick Russian accent, cradling a huge bouquet of flowers and leaning to kiss her on both cheeks. "I can't tell you how glad I am that you've come back to us."

Helena smiled. "Hello, sir."

"It's nearly two years since... You, you look wonderful. How is this possible? It's a miracle. I thank God!"

"I understand that I have you to thank for paying my hospital bills. They must have been substantial. Why would you do that?"

Homere looked startled. He laid the bouquet on the bed cover, across her thighs, and she could smell the heady scent of jonquils. "Why wouldn't I pay your hospital bills?" he asked. "You don't remember? The accident..."

"Only in snatches," she admitted. "I'm not sure what is real and what is in my

imagination.”

“You remember me, though?”

Helena hesitated. She well remembered Homere Homere as her Lord and Master, as her owner, in a strange and alien place, in another time. Physically, he was unchanged from those memories. She also remembered that he had given her away as a gift, almost on a whim. How could she tell him that? She had no recall of him in any other way. “Yes, I do remember you, sir,” was all she said.

He breathed a sigh of relief. “Well,” he said, “your job with me is still open, no matter how long it takes... Just get well, and then you can pick up the pieces and start again. I will protect you better this time, I promise.”

“What about Darrick,” she said, reaching for a bottle of water and taking a deep swig, hoping that it would dull the hunger pangs.

Homere opened his mouth as if about to speak, but he seemed to bite on his words. He glanced across at Eve, who was watching him with interest. Eventually, Homere said quietly: “They haven’t told you about Darrick yet? I’m afraid he divorced you, Helena. It wasn’t expected that you would... Well, there you are.”

“Darrick... My husband?” she asked, trying to keep the amazement from her voice.

“Yes, he found someone else.”

“He left me for a man. Is his name Akbar?”

“Ah, so they *have* told you. I’m sorry, Helena, but the two of them went back to the Middle East together.”

“I am so hungry, sir. Did you bring any food?”

Chapter Thirty-Six

Six months later- The End-game

The tattooist and body piercer gazed at Helena's detailed sketch. He whistled slightly, showing his appreciation. "This is nice work, if a little weird."

"Thank you," Helen said. "You can replicate that design on my back? *It isn't* important to be exact, but the details must all be included. The feathered tail of the bird should curl round my hip and end here at the very apex of my sex lips."

After her return to her 'normal existence', Helena struggled to regain some semblance of order to her life. Her blonde hair had grown to a reasonable length. However, strange yearnings bedevilled her recovery. An entity she had come to call Tomas frequented her dreams, visiting often, forcing her to yield to bizarre sexual demands, and she was never certain if it was reality or a figment of her mind, not until she awakened and found herself in her own room, heavily perspiring and with her cunt sodden with her own juices.

"You're quite sure about this?" the heavily-tattooed man asked, gazing up from Helena's sketches. "This is pretty drastic stuff."

"I'm quite sure," she replied. "Can you do the piercings?"

"These are the size of the rings?" he asked, showing the sketch. "They are quite large and heavy."

"Yes."

"And the lower rings..."

"The cunt rings?"

Helena thought the man winced slightly at her crude language, and she smiled slightly.

"Yes," he said, glancing up. "I've never seen a design like this. They'll need to be specially made with a small jump ring connector welded to each one, or maybe a drilled hole. I'm not sure if it'll work."

"It will. Rings like that are quite common in some places."

"And you want a pair of piercings for a small rings, say 14 gauge, 3/8" or 7/16", sitting up under the clitoral hood tissue in a horizontal placement, right next to the clitoris."

"Yes."

"With a single ring through both of the piercings and a bead in the middle, resting under the hood, directly against the clitoris."

Helena smiled and nodded. "Yes, directly against my clitoris," she said, "with another, larger ring visible at the apex, linked by a fine chain that loops through the clitoral hood rings. You can do that?"

She saw him look again at the sketch and then back at her. "Maybe," he said. "I'll need to look."

"Of course," Helena said, standing and unbuttoning her striped Oxford shirt-dress. She was naked beneath the dress, as was her habit since the coma. She had lost some weight, for she hadn't been eating properly.

Helena in Homere's office

Helena placed a pile of documents neatly on the tooled green leather surface of the desktop. It was late on a Friday evening, past nine o'clock, and the rest of the team had left long since. Homere Homere scarcely glanced at her. Working by the light of a single desk lamp, he was already dealing assiduously with a similarly sized sheaf of papers.

"It's all pretty straightforward, sir," she said, straightening the stack.

“Yes, yes,” Homere said, glancing over the top of gold-rimmed *pince nez* spectacles. “Helena...” he began, as if about to say something important.

“Sir?”

“How are you keeping?”

“I’m all right,” she said.

“I don’t see you eating.”

“I drink lots of water.”

Homere nodded. His eyes swept over her, as if assessing her weight. “Your neck,” he said

Her fingers flew to the mark of the tattoo, visible on her neck despite the high collar of her blouse: the flames that emerged from the mouth of the rampant dragon, licking at the softness of her throat. “It’s a tattoo,” sir,” she said.

He placed the expensive fountain pen atop his papers. “Let me see it.”

“It— It covers my entire back.”

“Let me see...”

Swallowing, her heart suddenly pounding, Helena began to unbutton her blouse. She slipped it from her shoulders, turning to allow the silk garment to fall and pool on the nearby office chair in front of her dress. She wore a white lacey bra, and was conscious that the areolas of her nipples were clearly visible through the semi-transparent material and she quickly turned her back to him, displaying the multi-hued, graphic tattoo; he seemed to take some moments, surveying the scene depicted there.

Then he said, “Take off the bra.”

She inhaled. The demand - it was more than a request - was inevitable. The strap of her bra concealed some of the main features of the picture, the dragon’s mighty penis as it penetrated the bird-like creature. Her fingers reached behind her unclipped the clasp, and her breasts to sprang free as the bra hung loose.

“Take it off.”

Helena hesitated but obeyed, slipping the straps from her shoulders and turning slightly to drop the lacy garment on top of her blouse. She looked down at the gold rings that now pierced her nipples, and crossed her arms over her breasts. The long lyre-like tail fronds of the mythical bird curled round her waist and disappeared into the waist band of her skirt.

“Interesting,” she heard Homere say. “What does it represent?”

“It’s just a picture, sir. A mythical thing.”

“Take off the rest of your clothes. Let me see it fully.”

She swallowed hard. As usual, Boris Homere spoke in a tone that brooked no dissent. He wasn’t accustomed to being disobeyed.

“Yes, sir,” she said quietly, reaching to unbutton the waistband of her skirt.

She remained facing away from him as she stripped off the skirt and underskirt, placing them on the chair. As had become her custom of late, she wore no other underwear, except for high black stockings that hugged her thighs. She remained immobile, like a statue, aware that he was inspecting her.

“Very interesting,” he said again, and she heard him rising from his desk and walking round it to reach her. Then his fingers were on her skin, trailing gently over the images, obviously aware that it wasn’t fully healed. “What kind of mythical beasts are these, Helena?” he asked. “It’s unlikely that a woman would have these engraved on her body without knowing the story.”

“It’s called a bennu bird, sir,” she said, her voice barely audible, still clasping her arms over her breasts. “It— Well, her ravishing by the dragon represents the awakening of her sexuality.”

“Indeed,” he said, taking her wrist and lifting her arm away from her body to allow the fingers of his other hand trail to her flank. He moved to stand in front of her, his fingers following the tail to the very apex of her shaven sex, with the newly hung golden ring and the small chains that disappeared into the slit of vulva.

“And the body piercing?”

She opened her mouth to speak, but no words came. Instead, she remained silent as he reached to lift her arms away from her breasts and stood for long seconds inspecting the rings on her turgid, pink nipples. Breathing heavily now, her whole body seemingly suffused with a blush as she felt his right hand trail down her flank again, reaching between her thighs and touching the rings and the still tender and swollen pierced nether lips.

He smiled slightly and slipped his finger fleetingly into her moist cunt. That gesture, she knew, transcended mere inspection. It was a proprietorial indication of ownership. As if transfixed by his eyes, she felt his left hand on her shoulder, pressing downwards. She silently sank to kneel at his feet. He unzipped his trousers and freed his already rampantly erect cock, holding it in front of her eyes. Without instruction, she leaned forward and took its bulbous glans into her mouth. He ran the fingers of his hand through her blonde hair, tightened his grip, holding her head.

“You know the kind of work that I do?” he asked, as her head moved back and forth on his cock.

Helena, gagged by his cock, looked at him quizzically with wide, wondering eyes. How strange that he should ask such a question, she thought. Homere Homere rarely wasted time on small talk, even at normal times. His business activities were wide-spread, some of them on the very edge of the law. She nodded and stupidly attempted to answer as she sucked, merely producing a long humming sound against the tumescent flesh. He seemed to shudder and stiffen at this, and it was reminiscent of another time with him, in another place.

She continued to bob her head on his cock, taking him as deeply as she could, making slurping noises as his salty pre-cum mixed with her own saliva. Suddenly, though, he hoisted her hair, pulling her head from his cock, the pain tingling at her scalp. She rose from her knees, and he manoeuvred her to lay her across his desk, her back on the green, tooled leather surface and her head resting the sheaf of papers he had been working on. Homere lifted her legs high and suddenly, unexpectedly, slapped the rear of her thighs, above the band of her stockings. She gave a small, whimpering cry at the rough treatment. Then he pressed her knees widely apart, keeping her legs high, and although her eyes were closed she assumed that he was looking down at her lewdly displayed flesh with the new rings and chains. Her long hair was fanned about her on the papers on his desk; she turned her somewhat as something pressed uncomfortably against the back of her skull, and she heard the fountain pen drop on the floor. He hadn't seemed to notice, and he pushed her thighs even further apart, making her instinctive want to reach to protect her vulnerable clitoris, but her hands remained voluntarily above her head, fists lightly clenched. Even when his hands left her knees and he began to slap the inside of her thighs, she kept her thighs widely open. She gasped and writhed as he stroked her engorged bud of her clitoris.

“You are very easily aroused, Helena” she heard him say, and then he leaned forward and took her left nipple into his mouth, gold ring and all, and sucked it deeply. And she heard her own helpless, full-throated moan as his hand moved to her other breast.

Even as his cock slipped into the sodden folds of cunt, she was gasping, and moaning, and an irresistible orgasm was already roaring through her senses. He fucked her hard atop the antique desk, keeping her legs high and wide, with heels pinned under his armpits. Her breathing seized and she yelled and screeched loudly, writhing madly under him. He reached his own climax in short order, hammering against her, regardless of her tender cunt lips. Then,

without any pretence at gentle caring, he pulled himself from her and stood up, leaving her panting.

“The bennu bird was truly awakened,” he said, adjusting his clothing.

Eventually, wearily, Helena eased herself upright, sitting on the desk and brushing back her lank hair. “May I leave now, sir?” she said.

He smiled thinly. “Of course,” he said.

Helena slid from the desk and reached to collect up the bundle of clothing from the office chair.

“Dress in the outer office,” he ordered. “I must get back to my work.”

Helena nodded and walked naked to the door. Pausing, she turned and said: ‘Sir, the Americans...’

‘Ah yes, the Americans,’ Homere said with a weary smile, fastidiously inspecting the antique Montblanc pen he had retrieved from the floor. After a moment’s thought, he sighed deeply and said, ‘Fucking Americans! I’m dealing with it. Be gone now. Go home!’”

Tomas is Waiting

Helena returned to her own office and dressed. It seemed that she was free to go, at last. Her desk was clear, the PC was already powered down, and her filing cabinets were locked and secure. She was happy to be leaving everything in order.

Helena donned the jacket of her black Chanel business suit and her black Prada belted overcoat, adjusting the coat belt so that its knot was placed to the right of her hip. She picked up her Prada bag of black fabric, inherited from her mother. All of these things were treasured items. Without even glancing back, Helena went to the door, leaving the lights burning, and she made for the stairs.

Looking down to the hall below, she him waiting, pacing the tiled floor. “Tomas,” she called as she descended the stairs.

He looked up at her and seemed to be very sad. “I’ve come to take you back,” he said.

“Do I have a choice in the matter?” she asked as she reached the ground floor.

“No,” he said, taking her arm and leading her down a passage which she had never seen before.

Straight ahead, a large gleaming stainless steel shutter blocked the whole corridor. Arm in arm with Tomas, Helena marched towards the shutter, her heels clipping on the marble floor. There was a hydraulic hiss as they approached and the panel smoothly slid aside.

“This is it then,” she said, pausing for a second...

“Yes,” Tomas answered. “This really is the point of no return.”

Helena nodded. They walked through the door together, and it closed with a hiss behind them.

The End

“Locked-in syndrome has been described as the closest thing to being buried alive,” Mostel told Homere as they sat together beside the bed where Helena Winter’s lifeless body lay.

“So, she’s finally gone.”

“Yes, Mr Homere. She died peacefully last night. I doubt if she experienced any pain. In fact, I think she had long lost her higher brain functions. The decision to withdraw her feeding was absolutely correct, I’m sure.”

Homere nodded. “It’s a sad day though.”

“She had been in a vegetative state for almost two years. We did our best. Most health professionals don’t recommend further treatment after a person has been in a vegetative state for more than 12 months because the chance of recovery is virtually zero. I’m sorry.”

“May she finally rest in peace,” Homere said.

The Epilogue

Medical Footnote

According to official medical records, Helena Winter, aged 24, suffered a traumatic brain injury in a road traffic accident, and she remained in a vegetative state for the next twenty-two months. The notes show that, although technically conscious, she never had any sense of awareness at any time after her accident. She was therefore considered not to have experiences of any kind. Learned doctors recorded that, as far as they could tell, she was not aware of bodily sensations, such as feeling pleasure or pain, and unable to have thoughts, memories, emotions and intentions of any kind.

Ultimately, a court application was made to withdraw her nutritional support. She was then sedated, and allowed to die in her sleep.

The Final Word

“Such requests, often made by relatives whose lives are on hold, their grieving in suspension, are increasingly controversial. There have been tales of patients...returning from ‘the dead’ after months and even years, as well as accounts of sudden recuperation following vigorous massage, deep brain stimulation, and even the administration of sedatives. Members of the Cambridge team, as well as specialists at the Putney hospital, point out that these ‘Snow White’ examples have as yet no reliable supporting scientific evidence that would lead to a routine diagnostic or treatment strategy.” John Cornwell, The Sunday Times