

# Lily of the Field:

## The Stable Games Part One



Lyka Bloom

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LILY OF THE FIELD: THE STABLE GAMES PART ONE

by Lyka Bloom

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Lily spun on the dance floor, arms over her head, biting her lip, eyes squeezed shut. The bass of the dance music thrummed in her belly, driving her gyrations until she felt as if she may explode with the energy welling within her. When the beat dropped, she froze in place, knees bent, back arched, until the music kicked in again and Lily exploded with it. Around her, the other dancers were lost in similar abandon, an ocean of bodies undulating to the tide of music.

Smiling and panting, she followed the tug of Rachel's hand off the dance floor and to one of the high tables that stood around the perimeter of the main floor. Lily carefully navigated the two steps to the tables on high platforms that gave her legs a lean shape, showing them off to the mid-thigh where the blue mini began. She would never be mistaken for the curviest in the room, but her body was well-proportioned and muscled from years of cross-country and track. She had continued her running habits after college, and even her staunchest critics, of whom there were few, would never impugn her beauty, classical and elegant.

Rachel nearly spilled out of her red scoop top, highlighting her greatest assets. Where Lily was lean and lithe, Rachel was curvy and vivacious, with a wide smile that illuminated kind eyes. Her hair was blonde, shaggy, unlike the precise angles of Lily's dark hair. An observer would never pair the two young women together, but they were easy friends, and had been since sharing a dorm in college.

Rachel hopped onto a stool, flagging down a passing waitress to order two martinis while Lily adjusted herself in her seat, careful to hide her most private of parts from prying eyes, not the simplest task in the mini which threatened to ride up with every step.

"It's supposed to be short, you know," Rachel laughed, plucking a speared olive from her newly-arrived martini glass.

"I know, I know... it's just really short."

Rachel grinned, and Lily could see the silhouette of the olive resting on her tongue before Rachel closed her mouth and swallowed.

"You want to go?" Lily asked, scanning the crowd. Now that she'd left the dance floor, she was feeling a weariness settle over her. Wednesday night and here she was, out dancing when she would reasonably be in bed for her six a.m. alarm. She waggled her fingers to Rachel, who retrieved her phone from Rachel's clutch.

Rachel held the phone and squinted her eyes, staring across the table at her friend, holding the phone as if she were weighing it.

"I know how this goes. I give you the phone, you tell me it's late, and we go home."

"Maybe. What time is it?"

"Not even midnight."

Lily took a breath. Rachel was wonderful, but maddening when she was confronted with an end to her good time.

"How much 'not even midnight?'" Lily asked.

"Ten 'til."

"That's pretty close to midnight. I have to work tomorrow, you know?"

"Yeah, yeah. Finish your martini and we'll leave."

"Deal," Lily said, happy to have caught Rachel for this conversation before more liquor stoked her late-night fires.

Rachel almost spit the sip of her martini back into her glass when she saw them, tapping a long nail to get Lily's attention. Lily looked first to the tapping finger, then to Rachel and, finally, to the couple on the opposite side of the club, a pair of women who were creating a stir.

"Look at that," Rachel loud-whispered over the din of the club, but her emphasis was

unnecessary.

One of the women was older, perhaps mid-thirties, her body highlighted by a skintight rubber dress. It was black, with a small red ruffle that circled her waist made similarly of rubber. Below the skirt, which fell to her knees, rubber stockings melted into black, tall-heeled shoes with a red stripe running diagonally along their surface. Her hair cascaded in red curls to her mid-back, and Lily could see from even this distance that she was immaculately made-up, somehow regal in the fetish dress rather than trashy. In her hand, she loosely held a silver chain that led to the collar of the woman standing beside her, a girl that looked closer in age to Rachel and Lily, perhaps even younger. The collar was ornate, with draping thin silver chains running in parallel around the circumference of it, a D-ring at the base of the collar where the thin chain was clipped. Her hair was shaved close, but one could see the blonde stubble, her nose and lip pierced. She was also dressed in rubber, but in a simple catsuit that graduated in color from black to a smoky gray as it extended from the floor. She stood taller than her companion, largely due to the boots buckled onto her legs, also black. They had tall heels and the foot angled down harshly, forcing the girl to balance precariously on the tips of her toes. Still, she moved with precision and grace, following behind her companion until they reached the rails looking down onto the dance floor. She paused behind the older woman, head bent at a slight angle to the floor, but Lily could see her eyes scanning the crowd.

"What a freak!" Rachel squealed.

"Which one," Lily added, snorting with laughter.

"Aren't you glad you stayed now?"

"At least she can pull it off. She has an incredible body."

Rachel grinned. "You think she's sexy?"

Lily shrugged and stirred her drink with an olive. "I think it takes confidence to wear something like that and confidence is always sexy."

Rachel wrinkled her nose and turned back to the two women across the club.

"I think the admiration is mutual."

"What?" Lily asked, looking up from her drink to the women. They were both staring at their table, though Lily wouldn't swear they were looking at her in particular. The girl in the collar whispered something into the older woman's ear, who nodded, then turned her head, surreptitiously looking at Rachel and Lily.

With a slight tug of the chain, the older woman strode across the dance floor in long strides, her companion taking fast, shuffling steps on her pointed boots to keep up. The dancers parted for them, then stopped and looked after them as they passed. Lily could not look away as the girl climbed the two steps, tilting wildly to each side as she balanced on the narrowest of points. A set of circular stairs might hold the girl at bay.

Without hesitation, the older woman slid a chair from a nearby table between Rachel and Lily and seated herself while the young girl stood in the same docile position behind. The older woman offered a bemused smile and folded her rubber-gloved fingers together, turning her attention to directly to Lily.

"Hello," she said simply enough, but there was an odd weight to her words that made Lily pay closer attention, something commanding beneath the melodious and honey-warm voice. "This my girl Cora," she continued and Lily looked over her shoulder to see the girl do an odd sort of curtsy, bending gently at her knees, but at an odd angle dictated by the severe boots. "My name is Mistress Elena. And yours?"

"Lily," she replied, extending her hand to take the one offered by the seductive woman.

"Lily! Don't tell her your name!"

Mistress Elena pivoted quickly to Rachel, her smile never faltering.

"You must be her very protective friend. You don't have to worry. I'll care for her now. But I would appreciate your silence from now on if you wish to remain at this table."

"Elena," Lily began, but a black finger held aloft silenced her.

"Mistress Elena," the woman corrected. "Please say it correctly."

"Mistress Elena," Lily began again, "you and Cora are really nice, I'm sure, but we were just leaving."

"As were we," Mistress Elena said, her smile growing just the slightest bit wider. "Would you mind if we walked out with you?"

"Sure," Lily said, while Rachel countered with an overlapping, "No, thanks."

Rachel stared daggers into Lily across the table.

"What? It's the parking lot. We're all going there anyway."

"Quite right," Mistress Elena added, sliding from her seat with the faintest squeak of rubber. "Perhaps the cool night air will chill your friend's tongue."

Rachel cast another look of frustration to Lily, who was already gathering her things. She raised her eyebrows in a silent question: What do you want me to do?

The walk took longer than expected as Cora's efforts to climb the stairs was no mean feat. Lily reached to help the girl, but Mistress Elena brushed her hand away and gave her a chiding shake of her head. Lily withdrew her hand, passing by Cora on the steps as they made for the exit.

The air was indeed cool, but refreshing after the musky scent of the club and the drifting odor of cigarette smoke. Rachel marched a few paces ahead, stalking through the lot and making her anger with Lily known. Lily drifted somewhere between her friend and the oddly elegant fetish queen behind her, quietly enjoying the sound of the woman's heels on the pavement behind her. Even that clicking seemed somehow sophisticated.

"Oh, Lily," she said, quietly. Lily looked to Rachel, who had not heard, and Mistress Elena who stopped beside a plain white van.

Lily paused, too, casting another glimpse back to Rachel who marched on unaware, previewing the argument in her head she would have with Lily once in the car, no doubt. Lily turned to face the striking woman, who had taken the three steps closer to stand before her.

"You're an athlete?" she asked. "Your body's lines are exquisite."

"Thank you, I guess," Lily half-laughed. "I've been a runner for years. I'm flattered, but I'm not really attracted to women. If I were, you'd be at the top of the list, but I should get home now."

Another easy and cryptic smile from Mistress Elena, who ran her hands up Lily's arms and gave her forearms a squeeze.

"I have no interest in you sexually, Lily, but Cora was right. You are a marvelous creature." She turned her head slightly and said, "Cora."

Cora, who had been closer than Lily suspected, moved fast, placing a moist rag over her mouth. As she inhaled to muster a scream, her mouth was filled with the taste of medicine, biting her lungs and stealing the sound from her throat. An intense tingling spread rapidly through her as she feebly clawed at Cora's hand that held her by the back of the head, pressing the rag tight against her mouth. The world wavered and darkened and she felt herself falling.

She was still groggy when she woke, but her body was all tension. She bolted up, her head

clanging and buzzing until she could hardly put two thoughts together, riding an accompanying wave of nausea as she staggered to her feet.

Two things kindled her immediate alarm. The first was the room she found herself in. It was little more than a tall closet, barely enough room for her to curl on the floor. The walls were stained wood, and an examination with her fingers found it smooth and sanded. The floor was dirt, covered by a thin layer of hay, which had set her skin itching terrible as she trudged groggily back to awareness. A door was set into the wall to her right with no discernible latch, handle or knob. Pressing against it yielded no movement, save for a soft wiggle of the heavy door. She was only able to make out these details with the aid of a weak light set high above her in the ceiling, a dim globe that was covered by metal bars. Even if she could reach it, she would never be able to fit her hand through the criss-crossing iron.

As alarming as the cell she occupied, Lily was also nude. Her clothes were nowhere to be found, and she curled her legs against her chest, her pert breasts pressed against her knees as her arms folded around her legs. She took a quick inventory to determine if she could divine pain coming from her still-muddy senses. She seemed unharmed, and a brief check of her sex told her there seemed to have been no invasion there, either.

Lily rocked softly back and forth in the hay, her mind reeling to determine the goals of her captors. She remembered seeing some news special about sex slaves being kidnapped and sold into European brothels, and there was that movie with Liam Neeson, traipsing across the globe to rescue his daughter. She wondered if Rachel had called the police yet, or if she'd thought Lily left with Cora and Elena. That would be out of character, but so had her initial response to the latex-clad Mistress and her submissive.

Lily heard something beyond the door, another door opening with a squeal of rusted hinges. She scurried away from the door of her cell and pressed her back against the smooth wood. She instinctively covered herself again as she waited for another sign of life from her captors outside.

A slit opened in the bottom of the door, no more than four inches high and ten inches long, unnoticed at her first examination of the door.

"Hello?" she called out. "Who are you?" And, suddenly, the tears were coming as the weight of her captivity settle don her. "Please! Let me go!"

The last came out in a choked sob, but there was no answer from the other side of the door. Instead, a plate was pushed through and the slot closed again, nearly invisible in its camouflage.

Ignoring the plate, Lily stood, banging the heels of her palms against the door and calling out, "Help me! Please, let me go!"

She didn't know how long she pounded on the door, only that she screamed until her throat was ragged and her lungs ached. Finally, she collapsed onto the dusty floor of her cell and cried. She looked at the plate, a thin metal camping plate with rounded edges. It held an assortment of fruits and vegetables, including watermelon and slices of apple, broccoli tips and even a dull piece of bread that looked like whole grain. Defiantly she picked up the plate and threw it against the opposite wall only a few feet away, sending the plate clanging to the floor of the cell and the contents scattered over the dirt floor.

As if in response, the light above her went out, leaving her in total darkness.

"No!" she croaked through ragged vocal chords, but there would be no more light while she remained awake, an indeterminate amount of time that could have been hours. Finally, though, she did sleep amidst the food-littered hay, drifting off with the thick, grassy smell in her nostrils.

Lily felt the hand in her hair, twisting it and pulling her head harshly up, waking her and sending her body into spasming panic. She grabbed the arm that held her, raising to relieve the tug at her scalp, and found herself brought to her feet by the firm hand. She twisted around to find herself facing Elena, a harsh look in her eyes.

As soon as she opened her mouth to speak, to plead, to beg, Elena's hand, hidden behind her back, whipped to her mouth and forced a rubber ball into it, spinning her roughly and tugging at two straps extending from either side of the ball. With a practiced ease, the straps were buckled, securing the gag in place.

Another shove and Lily faced Elena once more, Lily's eyes wide and terrified. Elena smiled faintly, the slightest upturn at the corners of her mouth.

"Good morning, my lovely. You have been a very bad girl, Lily. Look at this stall. You've gotten your food everywhere."

Lily tried to speak through the gag and was met by the snap of Elena's hand, smacking her harshly across the cheek and silencing her. Elena looked almost apologetic as she grabbed Lily's hair and tugged her head back again, exposing her neck.

"The first rule. You do not speak unless I ask you to. Do you understand?"

Lily nodded, the pull of Elena's grip tangled in her hair making the motion terse and pained.

"Good. The second rule is this. You are no longer who you once were. You are my property now. Do you understand this?"

Lily did not speak, but she did not motion do indicate agreement or dissent, either. Elena gave her another quick tug at her hair, pulling a clump free of the roots.

"I asked you if you understand me, girl?"

Tears squeezing from the corners of her eyes, Lily nodded shallowly.

"Good. I am not a cruel woman by nature, and I hope you will not force me to be. But I also know what is best for you. You are a marvelous creature, Lily, and I would hate to see such a fine specimen go unused and unappreciated."

Elena felt the grip in her hair relax, and looked past Elena to the door, still open a sliver. Through the leaning crack in the door, Lily could see the dirt floor beyond and open stalls. It appeared as if she was in a barn of some sort, and the sounds of shuffling feet beyond suggested livestock of some sort.

"You can try to run," Elena smiled, a cold and humorless expression, "but you won't get far. I have employed measures to ensure my property remains safe."

Lily looked away from the door to Elena, her red hair soft and fragrant. She was a stunning woman, even if she was mad.

Another look to the door and Lily knew she had to try, had to attempt an escape. Mustering her courage and depleted strength, Lily wrested free of Elena's hand, leaving a swath of stringy hair behind as she pushed past her, banging into the door with her shoulder and throwing it wide.

She ran past the stalls, catching glimpses of movement behind the stall doors, but she couldn't focus on details as her head whipped around, looking for an exit. The barn was tall and wide, dimly lit in the deep interior save for lights over stalls and long pairs of fluorescents hanging from the high ceiling. She could see wide double doors across from her and made for it, her steps tumbling and off-balance as the panic pushed her to run with abandon.

She slammed into the double doors and pushed hard, felt them give some, but then bounced back against her. She turned away from them, ready to run the length of the barn to the other end, hoping the doors were open there, if they existed at all. She couldn't tell across the dim length of

the place.

She felt a sharp sting in her side and looked to her left where Elena stood, holding what appeared to be a gun, leveled at Lily. When Lily looked down, she saw a needle extending from her abdomen, synthetic yellow fur at the end. She pulled it out and held it before her, marveling at the fact she'd been tranquilized like a wild animal, and then the world shifted and grew dark.

As she fell onto the dirt-strewn floor of the barn, Lily heard Elena somewhere near, saying to someone else, "Did you see how she ran?" The question, she thought before darkness consumed her, was filled with admiration.

The gag was still in her mouth when she woke, returned to the cell she had attempted to escape. The light was on, and she could see that the floor had been cleaned in her absence and lined with fresh hay. She tried to bring her hands up, to unbuckle the gag from her mouth, but found that her arms were bound behind her. A quick struggle told her that something covered her arms from her mid-bicep down to her hands, confining her arms tightly and holding them extended behind her.

Lily had to twist onto her knees, finally standing with the aid of the wall, bringing herself first to her knees, then upright as she used the wooden surface for leverage. She pushed against the gag with her tongue, but the buckles were tight. Now, she was not only silenced but rendered partially paralyzed by the binding of her arms, encased in what felt like soft leather.

The door of her stall opened soon after, and Lily realized there must be cameras somewhere in the cell, probably behind the caged light.

She heard locks turning on the door and then the sound of wood sliding against wood and the door opened, revealing Elena. She was out of her latex, and now wore tan riding pants which tapered into calf-high low-heeled boots. Her top was little more than a corset, highlighting her thin waist and full breasts, the cream-colored corset decorated with tan-colored fleurs de lis that matched the hue of the pants. Connected to her waist was a long, black whip, curled like a snake and clipped to her belt. Her hair was back, pulled behind her so that her upper chest and shoulders were exposed, her skin vibrant and silk-soft in appearance.

Lily took a step away from her when the door opened, a move that drew another faint smile from Elena.

"I don't want to hurt you, Lily. But I can't let you go. So, you're going to have to start working with me if you want to find some happiness in your new life. And it can be gloriously happy, my pretty girl. But you have to accept what you are. Do you understand?"

Again, Lily remained silent, choosing not to respond through gesture. Her eyes, however, burned with anger and defiance. Elena only smiled wider.

"You are such a strong-willed thing. That's okay, though. I like a challenge. I've seen girls like you before. You'll break, too. And when you do, I think you'll find bliss, Lily."

Lily's eyes engorged with rage, raggedly coughing unintelligible words. Her voice was broken behind the gag, still tattered from her pleas the night before.

"Cora," Elena said, and the girl appeared, dressed in her black catsuit and impossible heels. She balanced precariously as she slid behind her Mistress, leaving a bucket in the corner of the room.

"You'll need to relieve yourself. Cora will empty your bucket every day. Are you hungry, Lily? It's been almost a day since you've arrived, and who knows how long it's been since you've eaten. Would you like something to eat?"

Lily's fierce defiance faltered and she looked at the bucket placed in the corner of her cell with blushing humiliation. Still, she did need to eat.

"Just nod your head if you'd like to eat," Elena said, and Lily thought she detected a note of real concern in her voice.

Lily nodded.

"Good. Now we have to have an understanding. When I untie your gag, you will not speak unless I direct you to. Do you understand?"

Again, Lily nodded.

"Very good, Lily. Cora, will you make her a plate, please?"

"Yes, Mistress," the pretty submissive said and retreated from the stall.

Lily found her bound arms pressed into her back as she backed away from Elena, advancing toward her.

"Hold still, Lily. I can't feed you if you don't let me remove the gag, can I?"

As before, there was a hint of honest affection in her voice, and Lily found herself growing still as Elena approached, reaching behind her head.

"Now, Lily, if you disobey me and try to scream or beg or even whisper, I'll have a gag placed in your mouth that will allow us to feed you through a tube. I don't want to have to use that on you. Please don't make me."

Lily winced a little as Elena's fingers found her cheeks and held them, admiring Lily as if she were a piece of art procured for her private collection. Her hands moved behind Lily's head and the tension on the gag sagged and disappeared. Lily opened her mouth to let the rubber ball pop free and she worked her jaw up and down and side to side, hearing her jaw pop as she worked the tired muscles.

Elena held a single finger before her and lifted her eyebrows, a soft admonishment. "Remember. No speaking."

Lily nodded tentatively, hoping the simple gesture did not constitute 'speaking' to Elena. Elena's nodding approval relaxed her somewhat, and Lily realized only then how tense she had been and how strangely tired she was now.

Cora returned very shortly with a plate similar to the one from the night before with its assortment of fruits and vegetables. Lily strained in the restraints holding her arms still, but Elena placed a hand on her shoulder to still her.

"Don't worry, dear. The armbinder will get more comfortable in time. It's important you understand I will not harm you unless you force me too. Open wide."

Lily felt her eyes widen in surprise at the notion of the armbinder becoming a permanent fixture. It made her feel helpless in a way that she had never experienced. Still, she opened her mouth and was greeted with a piece of cantaloupe placed on her tongue. As she closed her mouth around it and chewed, Elena's hand brushed her hair back. It was an oddly comforting sensation, and when Lily swallowed she opened her mouth again, rewarded with a strawberry.

It continued that way until the plate was bare and Lily's stomach felt full. Elena's demeanor has softened more, and her soft caress of Lily's hair grew more affectionate.

"That's a very good girl, Lily. Open up one more time, please."

Lily did and quickly found the gag returned to her mouth. She bit down on it, her tongue exploring the curve of it in the cramped space her mouth had become. When the buckle was secured and Cora had tested it, ensuring it did not dig deep furrows into Lily's cheek, the Mistress nodded for her submissive to leave. Cora gave a curtsy and exited the cell.

"You did very well, Lily. I hope you sleep well and we'll feed you again in the morning. If you keep this up, you'll find yourself very happy in no time at all."

And then, surprising Lily more than the kind stroke of her hair, Elena kissed her cheek and

dabbed away the deep red lipstick with her thumb.

"Sleep tight, Lily."

She exited and the light above Lily turned off as the door of the cell closed. Her muscles burning and belly full, Lily felt a great wave of fatigue wash over her. She knelt to the floor of the cell and rolled onto her side, which caused the least distress on her bound arms.

She felt ashamed of the way she had been treated as mere property, yet there was no obvious cruelty in her treatment, which confused her further. She wondered if this was the treatment Cora had been given to reduce her into such obvious subservience. In her imaginings, it was not the worst fate that could befall her, but the spark of hope still glowed in her mind. After she didn't report to school, someone would be looking for her. And Rachel saw Elena and Cora. She would be able to describe them to police, and how many latex-wrapped dominatrices could there be in the city? Even if she had been secreted away to some suburban farm, as seemed to be the case, people would search for her and, with a little help, find her. In time, she might forget it had happened at all.

Sensing her safety was not immediately threatened, Lily closed her eyes and soon slept deeply.

While Lily slept, Elena watched from her bedroom. The computer there received feeds from all the stalls, but it was the cell where Lily was kept that most thrilled her. She had seen the first hints of the creature Lily could become when she fed her. There was an anxiety, a deep fear that Elena understood, but, beneath that, an early sign of trust and obedience. It was this which would guide Lily toward her ultimate fate.

"Mistress?" Cora whispered quietly from the doorway.

Elena turned to her slave and smiled at the quiet servitude the girl expressed. She had once been merely submissive, but Elena's guidance had made her a girl entirely dependent on her Mistress for her happiness and well-being.

"Your guests have arrived."

"Have you served them?"

"Yes, Mistress," Cora asked, a hint of surprise in her voice. "Of course."

"How could I expect otherwise? Help me dress and we'll go meet them."

The dining hall was narrow, but long, with room for the cabinets at the end to display fine plate- and silverware and a long oak table that seated ten. The carpet was deep and red, and the chandelier over the table caught the candlelight to toss red and pink refracted shadows over the room.

Elena had been late in greeting them, but her outfit required an investment to apply. Tall patent black platforms gave her four inches of additional height, her lags clad in wide fishnets that added to the heels' decadence. Her waist and thighs were shaped by a black latex hobble skirt, a purple belt buckled at her waist, culminating in a scoop-necked top that paired the black and purple in a straight line design. Her fiery hair was curled at the end and fell like a ruby curtain over her shoulders, a bright purple flower tucked over her ear. Her face was carefully made-up, her lips painted to give them a tight 'O' appearance.

She drew the breath from her guests, a husband and wife of sophistication and wealth who would never dare to don such an outfit. Instead, the man - older, balding, his face showing the first signs of true old age - wore a finely-tailored gray suit. His wife, younger by twenty years, was draped in a gown of white, sequins splashed across the top and drifting to the waist were matched by a brilliant diamond necklace and teardrop earrings, the jewelry alone worth more than most homes.

"You look exquisite, Elena," the man said, taking her hand and kissing the top of it.

"And you, Roger. Always so handsome. Gloria!" Elena cried, holding the woman's arms in her hands and feigning a kiss on each cheek, "I'm so happy you've come."

"When we got your invitation, we couldn't say no."

Roger and Gloria Harwell were known in high society as an elite couple. Roger owned several news outlets, and had led the charge in making the move from paper to digital while his competitors floundered. Gloria Harwell had been born Gloria Hemphill, daughter and inheritor of a fortune made from a successful chain of fast food restaurants. While not glamorous, the business had crept into the billions in profits before her father died, and Gloria had remained on the Board of Directors following his passing, though she served as little more than a figurehead for the family.

They sat with Elena, now, near to her on her right, while Cora circled them and poured a well-reviewed red wine. Cora had been dressed in a lacy maid's outfit that Elena enjoyed on these occasions, and the expression of her pleasure had almost sent Cora deep into a submissive trance. For now, the slave relished her ability to serve her Mistress and the guests, as well as to provide a reflection on Elena's utter control.

"The games are three months away," Roger said, sipping the wine and raising his eyebrows appreciatively. "I hope you'll be ready. How is your Moonshadow?"

"She's in good shape. Ready to compete," Elena replied. She gave him a smile, but she could tell Roger was trying to get a rise out of her. The Harwell's stable was always the most awarded when the Stable Games were held. Neither Roger nor Gloria paid much attention to anything else since they had found the underground sport.

"We have a new entry," Gloria added. "A fine male specimen."

"How long?" Elena asked, honestly interested. She had purchased Moonshadow already trained, and the previous training of Paris had gone so poorly, Elena was forced to hire the services of another trainer, one familiar with the Harwells. In no time, word had made it around the circles that Elena's newest acquisition was beyond her control, the greatest criticism in their community.

"Two months, now. He's been high-spirited, but is really coming along."

"I'll be curious how you progress. I've just acquired my own."

Gloria looked genuinely surprised. "I didn't hear about any sales."

Roger nodded, his glass of wine emptied already. "You don't mean..."

Elena nodded, twirling the wine glass in a gloved hand. "I found her in the wild."

"That's very dangerous, Elena," Roger chided, "Not just for you, but for all of us."

"I have taken the necessary precautions."

Gloria couldn't resist chiming in, either. "And a wild pony... it's hardly worth the trouble. At least find someone already in your employ. Cora, for example."

Cora stood by the door to the kitchen, awaiting instruction. At the mention of her name, she tilted her head toward the table, but quickly corrected herself.

"Cora is too valuable to me as she is. No, I wanted this. And I think you'll find that the results will be worth it."

The conversation turned away from the livestock and to other matters, no bit of gossip in their social circle left unturned. For Elena, however, it was a ruse, her thoughts drifting back to the darkened stall where her latest acquisition slept.

When the dinner had ended, Elena saw the couple to the door, and gave each a kiss goodnight. As she released her soft grasp of Gloria, the heiress whispered, "If you need a trainer, call me."

Elena nodded and smiled, but she was livid, holding her expression as best she could while a storm of anger raged within her. She would make them see what she saw in Lily, and she would win the respect of her peers. The vow renewed, Elena shut the door.

Lily could not hold it any longer. While the thought of using a bucket for her waste horrified her, made her feel ashamed and somehow subhuman, she could not deny the need of her body to expel its waste. When she could hold it no longer, her abdomen cramped and pained, Lily arranged herself over the bucket and bent, using her bound arms to steady herself. There was a horrid patter as her urine covered the bottom of the bucket and another tremor of shame when the sound of her feces fell wetly into the bucket.

She cried as she stood erect, the smell of her offal in her nose, and she could sense the remains still clinging to her skin. A despair crept over her unlike any she had suffered thus far, and the helplessness of her bound arms seemed paltry compared to the control Elena expressed over her by making her feel so filthy.

As she wept, the doors beyond opened and then the cell door was open, too. Elena stood in the doorway, a pleased smile on her face, while Cora stood slightly behind, head down.

"Good girl," Elena exclaimed, clapping her latex gloves together. Her dress today looked like one tailored for the opera, with its hip-hugging waist and ornate rubber lacing at the sleeves. "I was afraid we'd have to resort to an enema if you'd waited much longer. You have to keep regular, my pet. It's important to me you stay healthy, and that means what comes out as well as what goes in. Do you understand?"

Eyes still wet-rimmed and bleary, Lily nodded.

"Very good girl. Now Cora will take you to clean up and I'll be back to give you breakfast after. Enjoy your bath!"

Elena retreated, leaving Cora alone with her. For an instant, Lily imagined pushing past the smaller girl, running again, hurling herself through the door if she must. Her bound arms stilled her, as she imagined how she would manipulate even the simplest door in this condition. Moreover, what if she did escape? What if she found her way to a road and safety? Who would help her, her hair dirty and tangled, her mouth gagged, arms wrapped behind her, the rest of her dirty and fouled? She would seem like a maniac running along the road, and would certainly be ignored until Cora and Elena could come to find her. And her treatment thus far, while humiliating, had not been overly cruel. Could she risk another escape to find herself punished further?

Cora took Lily by one of the gag straps and guided her out of the cell. Lily followed in staggering steps behind, exhausted by her shame and fitful sleep. It was short walk to another stall in the barn, this one furnished with a table, and Lily did not fail to notice straps where the arms and legs would fall when reclined on the table. Cora led her past this to the far wall, where a galvanized metal washtub sat, a hose coiled on the wall beside it.

Cora gave her another tug on the gag strap and Lily stepped into the tub. She heard the water fall when Cora turned a squeaky handle and she was buffeted by cool water over her shoulders and back. She shivered at the chill of it, but part of her was undeniably grateful to be cleaned.

Cora retrieved a sponge and soap from a nearby tray and wet the sponge, lathering it until bubbles popped on the soft surface. As Lily stood, Cora ran the sponge over her face and shoulders, over her chest where the cool water had made achingly tight nubs of her nipples, down her belly and around her back. She nudged Lily's legs apart and Lily moved as she was urged, spreading herself while Cora's sponge attended her most private nooks and crannies, then trailed down to thoroughly clean her bare legs.

When finished, Cora rinsed Lily with the hose again, and the water felt warmer, whether truly warmer or by acclimation it was difficult to say. After she had been rinsed free of the soapy

water, Cora applied shampoo to her hair and lathered the long auburn mane of the girl. Lily looked over her shoulder as the water shut off, and found Cora removing a towel from the rail of the stall. Lily was dried and her hair given attention, twisted into a long braid that fell between her shoulders behind her.

After the bathing had completed, she heard the stall door swing open and Elena was before her, examining her body. Lily still managed to blush under the intense scrutiny of the Mistress, her body bare save for the gag and armbinder.

"Very good, Cora," Elena smiled and patted the rump of her servant. She returned her gaze to Lily and ran a hand over the damp twist of hair. "Feel better, my pet?"

Lily nodded tentatively. The odd affection her captor showed her was disarming, and she found herself appreciating the treatment, despite the logical part of her brain that insisted this woman had abducted her and was keeping her against her will.

These thoughts were further challenged on the return to her cell, where the gag was again removed and Elena fed her a mixture of vibrantly-flavored fruits and a mash of oatmeal that was sweetened with honey and textured with bits of pear and apple. When she had eaten it all, Elena returned the gag to its place and secured it. It occurred to Lily after Elena and Cora departed, leaving her locked and alone in the cell once more, that it hadn't occurred to her to try to speak.

For four days, the process repeated. Every morning, her bucket would be cleaned and returned to her cell. Cora would take her out and bathe her in the metal tub, and every other day washed her hair. At the end of her morning cleaning, Elena would feed her, and the food was always fresh and delicious. When the ritual ended, she would be placed back in her cell to await her next feedings, one at lunch and one at dinner. The meals were largely comprised of fruits, but grains and vegetables found their way into the mix. It was always filling and always ended with her gag settled back into her mouth.

In the time between the feedings, Lily would pace the cell, growing used to balancing without the use of her arms. She found her thoughts were more picture-like, images instead of the monologues she performed for herself before. She wondered if the inability to speak weren't influencing her patterns of thought, shifting from verbal to visual. She was losing count of the number of days she had been kept this way, and tried to remember when she last heard her own voice and what she had said, what the timbre and pitch of her voice sounded like.

Despite the captivity, the healthy diet and care given by Cora and Elena had resulted in a sense of well-being in Lily, and she found even her stool looked healthy. It was ironic that she should feel such contentment in the arms of her captor.

When Cora came for her the following morning, Lily scarcely needed to be led, following quickly to the stall where she would be bathed, her mouth already watering at the thought of the breakfast awaiting her following the bath.

She stood still, quickly learning to keep her legs apart, as Cora cleaned her, and again her hair was washed this morning before it was woven back into the braid. Lily mused that, should she be rescued, she would be found in a state as healthy or more healthy than prior to her abduction. She even hoped the police would go easy on Elena, and Cora especially. They were twisted and sick to be sure, but there seemed to be no cruelty within either of them.

She was surprised to find Elena in the stall with them when the bath was finished, as the past days she had been waiting for Cora and Lily to return to the cell before feeding the lovely prisoner.

"Yes, I have a surprise for you," Elena said, noticing the girl's startled expression. "On the

table, pet."

Lily took a step backward toward the tub, but Cora held her by the strap and kept her still.

"I know you must be frightened, but have I ever caused you pain, outside of your own disobedience? I promise I will not be starting today."

Lily looked uneasily between Mistress and slave, weighing the truth of her words.

"You have done very well, and have grown accustomed to your place quickly, but it's time for you to truly step into your new life."

Elena, surprisingly, took a step back and angled herself so that the stall door was invitingly open just past her.

"Let her go, Cora," the Mistress said and Lily felt Cora's slim fingers release the strap of the gag. "You can try to run and we'll be forced to begin all over again. Or, you can sit on the table and let us do what we must for you to become the beauty you deserve to be. One path ends in pain, the other in perfection. The end result will be the same, but one path will give you some agency in your new life. Go on, then."

Lily eyed the open stall door, calculating the odds of getting past Elena before another fur-tipped tranquilizer dart found her flesh. Assuming she could make it past her and into the dark of the large barn, where would she find an exit? Beyond that, where would she go for help? She had no idea where she was, if she was even in the same state or country. And Elena had only struck her twice, and that was only in response to her disobedience, just like Elena had said.

She steeled herself, trying to remember that the rules set forth by Elena were arbitrary, the product of a deviant desire. And yet, she could not deny the kindness in the midst of the captivity.

Lily took a slow step toward the stall door, then turned and seated herself upon the table.

"Very good girl," Elena beamed at her, and Lily felt an irrepressible smile creep onto her face. "Now just lean back, pet."

Lily did and found her arms, held fast in the binder, secured to the table. An alarmed expression twisted her features into near-panic, but she was settled by another loving stroke of her braided hair by the seductive Mistress.

"Easy girl," she whispered. "It's just in case you panic. This is the most important part of your transition and I wouldn't want you to hurt yourself."

Lily found herself staring into Elena's eyes, soft gray pools that twinkled with wit and affection. She did not resist as her calves were similarly bound, leaving her helplessly immobile. Elena continued her caresses, whispering soft "shhh"s until Lily was secured.

"I'm going to remove your gag, now, my pet. We'll be getting you something much nicer. In the meantime, you are not to speak. Do you understand?"

Lily nodded under the woman's hand, prompting another warm smile.

"Cora," Elena said, looking over Lily's prone body.

In an instant, Lily could feel the straps on her gag loosen and Cora eased the rubber ball from Lily's mouth. Lily stretched her jaw and found that her muscles had grown used to her mouth being pried apart, so that the act of closing her mouth felt strangely unfamiliar.

"Open wide," Elena instructed and Lily complied.

She felt Cora's hand at the back of her head, lifting it as straps were fitted behind her head, another following the center part in her hair, another at her forehead, and she found that her periphery was blocked by rectangular blinds. She felt the straps tighten, a Y of leather descending from her forehead and parting at her nose, where the straps continued around and buckled beneath her chin, too. The crisscrossing straps made her feel suddenly trapped, and she

squirmed against her restraints.

"Easy," Elena repeated, stroking her hair, but Lily could feel the pressure of the straps against her face. Before she could think to protest, a long cylinder, made of a firmer rubber than the previous gag, was slipped between her teeth and secured with a snap on either side of her face. She tested the texture of it - smooth, soft to the bite but with a hard core at the center.

"You're doing so well, my pet. Your bit looks beautiful on you."

Lily frowned at the words. Bit... The notion of it conjured images of horses and saddles and reins. Surely, she had misunderstood. And then she remembered the shapes moving in the stalls when she had attempted her escape, shapes she had assumed were horses, as one would naturally assume in a barn, but now she began to realize what the "transition" Elena had mentioned would mean for her. She squirmed on the table, nearly frozen by the straps that held her fast, but still she bucked and twisted.

She stopped when Elena took her cheeks roughly in her hand and brought her face close to Lily's, a storm brewing in the previously tender gray eyes.

"You will stop struggling or I will be forced to discipline you. I don't want to mark my pony, but I will if I have to. Do you understand?"

Fresh tears leaked from Lily's eyes as she nodded, terrified and humiliated at the sound of the word 'pony' still resonating in her mind. She had been treated like an animal all along, she realized, and now she understood the grand design. What had been affixed to her head, she realized was a bridle, and a bit attached to that. Lily's green eyes were wide with fear as she stared into her captor's face, but she calmed herself, her breath still coming in great lungfuls.

"Better. Continue, Cora."

Cora half-circled the table until she stood at Lily's bare feet. She bent and retrieved what appeared to be a boot, and so Lily thought it was until she felt it forced on her left foot, the heel harsh. Her feet were forced into a downward angle, like the cruelest of heels she had worn, and her toes pressed together. She watched as Cora tightened and laced the boot, her calf completely sealed within it. They were black, with bright red laces that ran the length of the boot. The toe of the boot was highlighted with a band of red she assumed circled the heel. She could feel the weight of it immediately, making her enclosed left leg feel twenty pounds heavier than the right.

This discrepancy was remedied quickly as Cora gave a final tug on the laces of the left boot before tying it into a knot, then quickly guided Lily's right leg into a matching boot. The same sensation of constriction and enclosure followed, as well as the weight. Lily's legs felt heavy and difficult to move, particularly following her days of limited activity. She could see the muscles in her thigh straining to move them.

"You'll be able to run soon enough," Elena said, her voice warm and full of encouragement, but there was little comfort to be found for Lily. Bound in the bridle and the boots on her feet, her arms useless behind her, she felt reduced, a puppet dressed and admired by her captor.

"Just a little more," Elena whispered, and once again Lily felt her body lifted by Cora's small but firm hands. More straps encircled her and she looked down to see Cora securing more buckles, one running horizontally along her chest above her firm breasts, two more running in parallel beneath. Her shoulders twitched under the weight of more straps and, finally, her ass was raised as a strap was fitted between her legs.

A harness, Lily thought, that's what this is. The straps did little to cover her, rather they highlighted her bondage, accentuating the image of her as a bound pony.

Elena examined Cora's work, occasionally tightening a strap here or there to fit more firmly against Lily's skin. When she was satisfied with the results, Elena stepped back from the table

with a final brush of Lily's hair.

"Very good. You can let her up now," the Mistress said to her slave.

Lily felt the tension against the binder release first, not that the loosening straps gave her any more control over her arms. They were useless appendages enclosed by soft leather, a single appendage shaped from two, a vestigial reminder of her humanity.

Her legs were freed, too, and Lily felt more wholly the weight on her legs. It wasn't until she slid from the table, however, that she understood the effect the harsh slope of the boots had on her stance. Her toes were pointed almost vertically and she immediately lost her balance, tumbling to the floor. She saw Cora rush to help her, but a lift of Elena's hand stopped the girl where she stood.

"It's alright, Cora. Our new filly must learn to stand on her own."

Lily looked up, then, eyes pleading, tilting her head to capture sight of both Cora to her left and Elena to her right. The blinders on either side of the harness limited her vision, making direct line-of-sight a necessity.

Struggling, Elena rolled onto her knees and lifted one leg, her shoulder against the table where this new version of her had been created. She saw that there was no heel to rely on, and that the boot terminated in a heavy and very real horseshoe. She closed her eyes, firming her resolve. This latest humiliation would have to be shouldered until she could do two things: learn how to run in these abominable boots and wait for a moment to escape. Until then, she was helpless, and defiance would only lead to abuse, of that she was sure. It was better, then, in her mind, that she should play Elena's game. In time, she would surprise the Mistress with her escape. For now, she would content herself with satisfying her expectations to alleviate the harshest treatment.

Lily dug her teeth into the bit between her lips and slowly rose, carefully placing her other boot just behind the first to aid her balance. Her muscles burned with the exertion of holding the stance, her toes screaming to relieve the pressure. She felt crippled, not only by the worthlessness of her arms, but by the hobbling boots.

Elena clapped her hands together, delighted. "Very good, pony! You'll be running in no time!"

Lily gave her a defiant stare, unsure how she would ever be able to walk successfully in these monstrosities, never mind run. Still, she would have to endure. The only other choice was to surrender wholly, to cast her mind away and allow this woman to use her body as she saw fit. She was too strong for that, Lily vowed, she would not be beaten by the bizarre costume she'd been forced into.

Elena circled her, and Lily chose to remain still, allowing the inspection lest she fall again in trying to turn in such a short circle. Her cheeks flared red at a soft stroke along her backside and a firm clap on her bottom, as if appreciating the haunches of a prize animal.

"Very good indeed, though you'll be using muscles you've never used before, or, at least, not in this manner. You'll begin your training immediately. Two hours on the walker, Cora."

"Yes, Mistress," Cora replied quickly.

"When you're done, we'll take her to her new home."

Lily's eyes widened in panic. She at least knew what to expect from this woman, but if she were to be sold, to be thrust into a new circumstance where she could not hope to predict the behavior of her new captor, all hope might be lost. She felt Elena was coming to trust her some, and that would be the cruel Mistress's undoing.

"Don't look so worried, my sweet pony. You've graduated from the cell is all. Tonight

you'll sleep in your very own stall."

That was good, Lily told herself. There would be no locked doors, no isolation. She would be able to see more of the barn and begin to forge her plans for escape.

"Go on, Cora. Get this pony some exercise. We have no time to waste. The games are in two months."

"Yes, Mistress," Cora repeated and Lily blanched as the young girl clipped a chain to each side of the bridle, ending in a leather holder.

Cora, she realized with a wave of humiliation, had taken her reins.

She was led to the far end of the barn, her target when she had first attempted escape. The journey had been slow and Lily fell four times before finding that angling her knees together and using the outside of her boots (hooves!) gave her better balance. It was an awkward gait, but, since assuming it, she had not fallen once.

Cora whispered encouragements to her, but had never lifted a finger to help her to her feet after a fall. The instruction Elena gave her was unquestioned.

They made their way across the hay-strewn ground until they came to a large circle at the far end of the barn, near double-doors bolted and closed. Even in what must have been late morning, the sunlight coming through the skylights high above did little to illuminate the bulk of the barn, the rows of fluorescent lights making the interior preternaturally bright. The harness dug into Lily's pale skin, and the chafing was already beginning to itch maddeningly. Her inability to address the nagging feeling only intensified it.

Cora tugged gently at the reins and Lily followed, shamed by how easily she was led by the merest gesture with the chains. She looked down to find that the circle was defined by a shallow depression that served as a perimeter for a pole in the center of the circle. Affixed to the pole was a long wooden beam, perpendicular to the pole and chest high, the edge of it terminating where the groove had been carved into the earth.

Cora pushed the beam and it swung easily around until it threatened to hit Lily in the middle of her back. Cora pulled her out of the way as the arm glided past and Cora stopped it between them.

"This is your walker, pony," Cora said, her voice light and airy, like the beat of pixie wings. As she spoke, Cora secured the end of Lily's reins to the arm of the walker, and the newly-minted pony understood at once what the device was for. She would be leashed to it and forced to push it in the wide circle, beating down the dirt of the circle further. When the reins had been secured and tested with a firm tug, Cora stepped back.

"Mistress will teach you commands soon. For now, you will start walking when I say. Understand?"

Lily could no longer bear the humiliation, and tried to speak around the bit, her words coming out as muffled syllables, but still she tried, awkwardly forming the words, "Please. Please, help me. We can both leave." The words, however, were unintelligible and only resulted in a quick lash from Cora, her long and slender fingers striking Lily's cheek.

Lily flinched, fresh tears running down her cheeks before finding the bridle, following the angle of the straps and dropping to the dirt floor.

"Don't do that again, pony. If you do, I'll tell Mistress. Do you understand me?"

This time, Lily only nodded.

"Then start, pony."

Lily pressed against the beam, the flat out of it pressed against her belly, and began walking in carefully measured steps. Her calves and thighs were strained from the trip to the

device, and now the uneven path beneath her feet threatened to send her to the ground.

You have to learn, she reminded herself, if you can't get out of these boots, you're going to have to learn to run in them, to wait for your chance and then run.

She stood straighter, lessening the angle of her knees and pushing herself through the stinging pain in her legs, finding a rhythm to the steps. Still, she felt her legs threaten to give from under her, but she righted herself and pushed on. Each time she navigated the circle, she glared at Cora, standing just outside the circle and watching her walk. The girl's catsuit gleamed under the severe lights, her short, stubbled hair golden under them. She was pretty, Lily thought, and that's why Elena took her, no doubt. Just as Elena had taken Lily, for reasons she couldn't immediately discern, or simply chose not to.

With each turn of the walker's arm, each circumference of the path, Lily began to understand. Her body was slim, muscled, the body of a runner and an athlete. She had been chosen because of her physicality, her build perfect. Even as Lily's gait grew more confident, she knew. Her body was uniquely built to perform in this way, as an animal admired for its speed and sleekness.

She stilled those thoughts and concentrated on walking, ignoring the steady ache in her legs as she learned with each step how the hooves on the ends of her legs would behave with the slightest pressure or uneven ground. She banished all other thoughts but that - learn how to walk, then learn how to run. After an hour, those were the only words that remained.

She was surprised from her trance-like repetition by Cora's sudden, loud, "Enough, pony! Stop!"

Lily did, surprised to find that even standing still now was easier. She was by no means expert at this new balance, but neither did she feel as if she would fall at any moment. She stood that way, motionless, one hoof planted just ahead of the other, one leg straight, the other bent slightly at the knee. It was having stopped that told her how much pain awaited her, as her legs screamed with the strain of her walk.

Cora approached and unleashed Lily from the arm of the walker, slipping her hand into the leather-lined holder at the end of the chains. With another soft tug, she gave Lily silent direction to follow.

Lily was even more surprised by the ease with which she moved, still shaky, but she was heartened to find that running in these boots would not be impossible, only very difficult and would require much practice. She resolved to walk around the perimeter of her stall until she could run almost as fast as she'd been able to before on bare feet.

Instead of taking a right toward the cell that had been home to Lily for uncounted days, Cora led her to the left, along the rows of stalls. One stall door was open, and Elena stood just inside. Lily was less interested in that, however, than in the stall beside it.

Beyond the chest-high door of the stall, a face peered out, partially hidden by a bridle that Lily imagined matched her own. The bit in her mouth was white, as was the bridle itself. Her arms were not tied behind her in a binder as Lily's were, but instead had been fitted with hoof-like mittens that laced up her forearms. She rested these hooves on her chest, her breasts much larger than Lily's. Her harness was colored a matching white, and the crown of the harness sported a white plume rising a foot from the top of her head. Her eyes were a deep blue, and her head tilted curiously as she watched Cora lead Lily to the stall.

As they grew closer, Lily saw the name "Moonshadow" in gold script against the stained wood of the stall door.

"Good work today, pony," Elena smiled, ushering Lily inside, led by the reins in Cora's

hand. "You're taking to your hooves very, very well. To celebrate, I have a special dinner for you!"

Lily heard the girl in the neighboring stall shuffle closer and look over the side of her stall, peering in.

"You did well today, too, Moonshadow," Elena grinned, ruffling the hair of the girl looking over the shared side of the stall. The girl shuffled happily and grinned back around her bit, making a strange nickering noise that barely resembled human sound.

To Lily, Elena said, "Moonshadow needed some carting today. I'm sure you'll be fine at pulling a cart, too, pony."

Lily bristled at the insistence Lily and Elena expressed in referring to her as 'pony,' but she was in no position to argue the usage of the word. Instead, she nodded.

She was stunned into a squeal as Elena's hand lashed out and smacked her cheek, the same spot Cora had struck her, and dark blossoms bloomed before her eyes as she staggered and regained her feet.

"You will no longer nod, pony. That is a human expression, and you are no longer human. You are a pony. Do you understand?"

Lily remained still, resisting the immediate urge to nod.

Elena smiled. "Good. You will now learn how to communicate with others. You will give a single stomp to agree or answer positively. Two indicates a negative response. Understand?"

Balancing awkwardly, Lily lifted a hoof and brought it down, dragging the tip shallowly through the dirt floor of the stall.

Elena clapped her hands together in delight and the proud smile returned to her face. "Good, pony, *very* good! You are an outstanding creature! I expect great things from you, you know?"

Lily did not respond, watching Cora as her reins were clipped to a U-bolt on the wall opposite the stall door. She noticed the other girl did not have such a leash, but, Lily supposed, she was past the point of needing to be restrained. The notion made Lily shiver, as if she were glimpsing a possible future where no trace of her old life remained.

True to her word, Elena produced a covered plate, lifting the lid as if presenting a magic trick. Lily was all but certain she was going to exclaim, "Ta-daa!"

Under the lid was a bowl of the oatmeal she'd had previously, this one resplendent with bits of many types of fruit. Still, Lily's notion of a celebratory meal was a well-prepared steak, or perhaps a baked salmon, not this gruel. When Elena saw Lily's face droop at the reveal, she laughed.

"What did you think, pony? You were going to get people food?" Another tinkling laugh came from the Mistress. "If you want to eat, this what you'll have. Would you like me to take it away?"

Lily's shame colored her cheeks again as she dragged her hoof twice through the dirt.

"Fine, then. Eat up."

Cora passed behind her, standing outside the stall door as Elena presented the bowl to Lily. The humiliated girl looked up at Elena and back to the bowl.

"Go on, pony. Eat up." Elena dipped her head and made a biting motion, pushing the bowl toward Lily's face. Finally, the girl understood, and realized it was yet another way Elena would dehumanize her. Still, she had to eat.

Lily dragged her hoof again through the dirt.

"Cora, the bit."

Cora reached from behind Lily and unsnapped the bit, freeing Lily's mouth. Lily imagined crying out for help, but felt she had been smacked and humiliated enough for one day, and bent to the bowl, using her lips to take the warm meal into her mouth.

Elena held the bowl with one hand and stroked Lily's hair and shoulders with the other, reassuring her until the bowl was empty, save for a few wet lines left behind by the girl's tongue. When the last bite was swallowed, Elena nodded to Cora and the bit was returned to its place between her jaws.

"Good night, pony. Sleep tight."

The red-haired owner fixed the end of her leash to a hook on the wall, which was then padlocked. Elena backed out of the stall and secured the door, just out of reach of Lily's reins if she had fostered notions of escape. Without her hands, the reins held her as surely as any cage.

As the lights turned out in the barn, Lily strained to reach the near wall, where the girl called Moonshadow still peered over the edge with her bright, curious blue eyes. Lily tried to speak, to make a word form from her hobbled tongue, but the girl only stared, tilting her head more curiously. With a sigh, Lily leaned her head against the shared wall and found she was actually warmed by the girl's bridled cheek rubbing against her own. The simple act of comfort brought fresh tears and Lily nuzzled the pony back, the need for some sort of honest caring overwhelming her.

Cora's head was nestled pleasantly in Elena's lap, her expert tongue coaxing another climax from her Mistress. With one hand, Elena caressed her slave's hair, the other managing the focus on the surveillance camera in the barn.

Inside her stall, Lily was rubbing her cheek against Moonshadow's, and the sudden and clear image of the two ponies pulling her cart sent Elena over the edge of passion, bucking her hips against her slave's eager mouth.

As she sighed contentedly, watching the affectionate display from the barn, Elena was sure that the short time between now and the Stable Games would be enough. Though Lily's training had only begun, she was progressing splendidly, walking far better on her first day than any pony she'd seen.

The coming days would be spent ridding the pony of the last of her humanity, and then the training could start in earnest. With her focus on the Games, the pony would learn fast, and her body would be disciplined and swift.

"May I please you more, Mistress?" Cora asked between cleansing laps of her tongue.

"No, my beautiful slave. Prepare my bath and you may go to bed. We have a lot of work to do."

"Yes, Mistress," Cora replied happily, rising and hurrying to the attached master bath. She heard the pad of her slave's feet, followed by the sound of running water. It was quite the home she'd made for herself and her slave. And now, the promise of a champion pony, too.

The Harwells knew that a new pony would be competing, but they had no idea what this new acquisition was capable of. As long as she could avoid any surprises, Elena was certain that Lily would surprise them all.

"And fuck you, too," Rachel screamed into the phone, tossing the cell onto her bed. It had been days since anyone had heard from Lily, and no one seemed to give a single shit.

Her parents were absentee at best, and one of the things Rachel had always admired about her friend was her strength and ability to find her way in the world, despite adversity. And Rachel, her closest friend, had let her down.

By the time she'd reached her car in the parking lot of the club, Lily was gone, along with the freaks that haunted their final moments. She had only two names to go on - Elena and Cora. She would find her friend, she knew, because to not find her would be to allow the guilt she felt to consume her.

The police were helpless, having searched Lily's apartment to no effect, and the description Rachel provided of the latex-clad couple at the bar had turned up no leads. If they were unable to help, she would find someone who could.

Rachel searched the internet for a local private investigator. The ads she came across looked like the seediest sort, but perhaps she needed a deviant to find one.

She sent four emails to various local offices and awaited their response. It was almost ten at night, and she expected no replies. She was surprised when one came quickly, the one woman she had contacted. Denise Dwyer, the name was, and she asked two questions: Can you afford \$75 a day and are you willing to do anything?

Typing a quick response, Rachel assured her that the answer to both questions was a yes. A meeting was arranged for the following day and, for the first time in two weeks, Rachel lay back on her bed and slept with something resembling peace. She would find her friend and, when she did, she would make sure her captors paid.

## **About the Author**

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Lyka Bloom has been working as a technical writer for several years before turning her attention to the kinkier side of life.

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