



FIVE EROTIC STORIES OF DOMESTIC SERVICE!

M A D E FOR HIRE

COMPILED BY KOJO BLACK

S w e e t m e a t s

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-Kojo Black

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MADE FOR HIRE



COMPILED BY KOJO BLACK

A S w e e t m e a t s B o o k

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C o n t e n t s

SWEET. SWEETER.

BY KYOKO CHURCH

8

GARDENING DAYS

BY ESMERALDA GREENE

41

LACED

BY AMÉLIE HOPE

65

SAFEKEEPING

BY ANNABETH LEONG

99

L. A. ARMOIRE

BY B.Z.R. VUKOVINA

124

For immoderate masters and lascivious servants

SWEET. SWEETER.

BY KYOKO CHURCH



“Get on the chaise,” I remember him saying with calm authority. “On your knees.”

Mmm, yes. I float in the delicious memory as the sun beats down on my bikini-clad body, warming my outsides while my thoughts warm me from within.

When he uses that tone, it accesses some primal part of my brain. I eagerly clambered on all fours onto the dark leather chaise in his room — the chaise which, now that I think about it, seems to be there for this purpose alone. It puts me at just the right height.

I looked back at him as he positioned himself behind me and I was struck again by just how hot he is, all chiseled and sculpted and masculine. As he put the head of his tool against my opening I moaned and swayed my hips, enticing him further. He thrust inside me then and...oh god, did it feel good to be taken that way, from behind, so wanton and animalistic.

In the seclusion of the beautiful retreat he’s had built in his backyard, I snake my hand down and cup myself between my legs, squeezing and enjoying the squirmy feeling provoked by my hand and amplified by the thoughts of last night, as I stretch my body out on the padded deck lounge. I shiver in delight and think perhaps he’s in the mood for round two again today, maybe a lazy Sunday romp

KYOKO CHURCH

after Saturday night's hardcore fucking.

Inside I find him in his home office. He's intent on the computer screen but I'm hopeful the sight of my scantily clad body could distract him. When he doesn't turn around right away I push my body in between him and his desk.

"What're you doing?"

"Distracting you," I say, hands behind my back, tits pushed out, trying for coy flirting.

"Babe, I gotta work on this. I was right in the middle of my brief."

"But it's Sunday," I complain. I sit in his lap, not quite deterred. I wrap my arms around his neck. "I was just thinking about last night," I whisper into his ear. "And I'm all worked up again."

Although his arms encircle me his body doesn't soften to my embrace. "Again? Babe," he sighs. "I'm just not there. I'm smack in the middle of this case." When I pout he adds, "God, sometimes you're so ... insatiable." And the way he says it it's obviously not a good thing.

I pry myself away from him as his words sink through me, making a hot sting burn behind my eyes and bringing a queasy feeling to my stomach. "Sorry," I mutter as I bow out of the room, half hoping he'll see how his words hurt and come after me. But when I glance back he's once again embroiled in the text on the screen.

I can't be upset, I tell myself. He did say this morning he had work to do, was under the gun to get his case ready for Monday. I should have just gone home. But his suggestion that I relax by the beautiful new pool, the prospect of a sunny Sunday lazing by the water seemed enticing. Now I slump back down in the deck lounge in a sulk. I stretch out, still horny, and try to think other thoughts.

A clatter at the gate makes me jump and sit up. A boy laden with pool equipment — poles and brushes and hoses and a pail of what looks like bottles of chemicals — is standing there looking awkward, like he was not expecting to see anyone.

"Uh, sorry," he says. "I'm here to look after the pool for Jack? He gave me a key for the gate."

Aside from his array of equipment, he's all legs and arms. His dirty blond hair flops down into his eyes, though thankfully not in that horrid coiffed way that's so popular now. Just in an errant, messy way. He's anything but coiffed. His eyes look too big in his face. He has a snub nose and full red lips. His posture is slightly stooped, as though he's not quite sure yet what to do with some recently acquired height. His eyes blink from behind a pair of glasses, glancing at me and then away, then back again, waiting for my response.

He looks nervous but not in a shifty way, just an innocent way that makes me want to comfort him somehow. I smile at him and he appears to relax a fraction.

"Oh, sure," I say. "Come on in."

I shift in my chair as he clambers by. I must admit to being just a little uncomfortable, suddenly self-conscious about my lack of clothing. Plus the unexpected appearance of a teenage boy. Teenagers in general and boys in particular always make me nervous, they've always done so, right back to when I was a teenager myself. That seems a lifetime ago now. God, I'm old, I lament inside. Old and rebuffed and past my prime, nothing to do about it now. Those same heated prickles of rejection threaten inside me and I shoo the thoughts away.

I look over and see the kid struggling by the filter with the hoses and poles and I don't know what to do with myself. Do I offer to help? Do I offer him a drink? I feel like I don't even know how to talk to him. Kids today don't even speak in full sentences, do they? I inwardly cringe that I'm using the term "kids today." I feel like Grandma shaking my cane and screeching, *Back in my day!*...

I go over and say, "You okay? Can I get you a drink or anything?"

He looks up at me and something about his stare hits me straight in the gut. Whoa, what the fuck was that? What are you a cougar now? So desperate that jail-bate is starting to look good? Since when do you have any emotion about teenage boys other than vague terror?

He stands and says, "Yeh, I'd love a beer."

KYOKO CHURCH

The way he says it instantly puts a smile on my face. Like he's trying to be all casual and cool, like he orders up beers all the time. Except that the way he shifts his weight and doesn't know where to land his gaze screams otherwise.

I trace my toe along the stone patio decking and narrow my gaze at him. "How old are you?" I ask, but I'm smiling as I ask it, teasing.

"Eighteen." He shrugs, and the insecurity is gone, leaving just a trace of cool defensiveness.

Is he eighteen? I guess he could be. To me he just looks young. Way too young for whatever feelings are insidiously creeping through me. "So I shouldn't really be giving you alcohol then, should I?" I say and dammit if I cannot get that teasing tone out of my voice.

"Well, I guess we wouldn't want you to get arrested," he says, suddenly bold. "Up to you," he shrugs again, going back to his poles and hoses.

Oh ho, the kid's got some balls too. Interesting.

I walk back into the house, more because I don't know what else to do than because I really intend to get him that beer. But something about the situation makes me feel like it would be seriously uncool for me not to just give it to him. Seriously uncool? Apparently a two second conversation has put me back in high school too.

I stride into the kitchen, open the fridge, grab two beers, turn around and run smack into Jack.

"What the hell are you doing?" he says.

"I'm...I'm getting beers?" I say, weakly.

"For you and Mason?" he says, gesturing out the kitchen window to the pool area where the kid has the skimmer out and is skimming the surface of the water. Jack sounds incredulous.

"Uh, is that his name? I just, I offered him a drink and he asked for a beer. Why, is he not old enough?" I say and I sound pathetic, even to me.

"He's eighteen, Laura. And what the fuck was that out there just now? It looked like you were flirting with him."

"What?" I say, but my cheeks flush red. "What do you mean?"

I just asked him if he wanted a drink.” Defensive, defensive, oh why *so* defensive, Laura?

Jack eyes me suspiciously, as though he’s seeing some weirdo for the first time instead of his girlfriend of three years. “I don’t know,” he finally says, and he rubs his temples like I’m really trying his patience. Not for the first time I feel our own age difference. Only twelve years, but still. Do I have daddy issues? Because I absolutely hate it when he goes all paternal on my ass.

“I told Frank I’d pay his kid to clean the pool for me this summer,” he says. “I’ve known him since he was in kindergarten. I guess it’s just weird to think of him drinking a beer. With my girlfriend.” He adds that last part with the same suspicious glare, and I shove those crazy feelings I was having way back into the dusty corners of my brain before I feel even ickier than I already do.

“But I guess he is an adult,” he says. “I’ll take them out.” He grabs them from me and leaves me staring out of the kitchen window as he walks to the pool, twisting off the top of a beer and handing it to Mason before twisting the top off the other bottle and clinking it with the kid. Then he takes a long swig.

I should go home, I think. And then I do.



I stare at the numbers on my screen after lunch on Monday, but they start to blur and swim before my eyes. I wipe the sheen of sweat from my forehead with the back of my hand and note the temperature in my apartment has risen to thirty one. The ceiling fan does nothing but push the hot air around. The window unit sputters ineffectively.

I eye my phone for the millionth time. I should just call him. He’ll say I can work at his place, of course. It’s not that. It’s just that I don’t want the ensuing conversation about why I keep my own crappy apartment with its shitty air conditioning unit, and why don’t I just move in with him. I don’t know why, really, so I can never do anything but make vague maybe noises and try to put him off. But

KYOKO CHURCH

the repetition is trying, and I don't really want to go through it again right now.

I could just go and not call. But that doesn't feel right either.

In the end I settle for a text and that effectively skirts the living arrangements conversation.



In the comfort of Jack's temperature controlled home, by 4:30 I've finished the bookkeeping work I'd scheduled for the day. I give myself a mental pat on the back. I feel like a swim.

I do keep a couple of drawers of my own things at Jack's place, so I slip on one of my bikinis and head out to the pool. The air outside is hot and thick. I dive straight in off the diving board. The cool water sluices by me and I'm at once invigorated and refreshed. I get out, spread a towel out on the lounge and flop down on it, now grateful for the warm sun that beats down and caresses my cooled body.

My thoughts meander back to Saturday night, before the chaise lounge.

I was expecting what had become our usual Saturday routine: dinner, some wine and then when things moved to Jack's bedroom, some touching, caressing and some (probably) missionary position sex.

So when Jack began kissing down my torso and didn't stop as he headed south of the border I giggled. "Mmm, whatcha doing?"

"What do you think," he said, looking up at me.

"Ooh, to what do I owe this lovely surprise?"

"Well I just don't know," he said, smirking.

Ah.

At a dinner party at Lacy and Josh's the week before, after a considerable amount of Cab Sav, Lacy heard Josh make a snide comment to Jack about not getting enough head. Lacy, glass of wine swaying in hand, interrupted them. "You know," she said. "I'm so tired of hearing men complain about not getting blowjobs. What

about us? It's not like you're always looking to eat at the Y."

I giggled helplessly. My inhibitions had fled with that third glass. "Oh my god, totally! Never happens anymore," I contributed. I looked over at Jack and could immediately see he really did not approve of this revelation in front of our friends. Oh well, buddy, I'd thought. Then do something about it.

So that night, I guess he'd decided to.

I shift in the lounge. I've brought a book out with me but it's not holding my attention. I close my eyes and the memory of Jack's lips trailing down my body replays in my head.

Settling down between my thighs he spread my labia, exposing my sensitive little clit. He gave me another look. "Is this what you wanted," he asked, and then stuck his tongue out and licked it delicately.

"Oooh, yes," I moaned and pushed my hips up for more.

He went to work on me, licking and sucking. I hadn't had a warm, wet tongue caressing me down there in, well, what to me was far too long, and it felt heavenly. He pushed two fingers inside me and I groaned and arched my back, spreading my legs wider. Jack knows just how to get me there and he licked harder and faster, wiggling his fingers against my g-spot while sucking the little nub into his mouth and flicking it rapidly.

A hazy thought flitted through my mind then, and does again more clearly now: part of me wishes he would take his time.

But that's silly and selfish and I got head and it was amazing. I came hard as his tongue pushed me powerfully over the edge... and thinking of it has me all wet again now. Mmmm, yes...so horny now. Very horny.

I glance at the time. It's nearly five.

Jack will be home very soon. When I texted him to tell him I would be here, he said he'd come home early so we could go over some client files before his weekly racket ball game — files I hadn't billed yet, since I was waiting for more details from him on some expenses.

When I first began working for Jack, how I'd look forward to

KYOKO CHURCH

these meetings, fraught as they were with sexual tension. Me, seated at a desk going over his billing hours and he, standing behind me, occasionally leaning over to point to some line or other on the paper. Our hands, our fingers would briefly touch, momentarily meet on the page and then one or the other of us would shy away. Or his chest would brush up against my back, raising all the hairs on the nape of my neck. I was conscious of every subtle move of his tall, muscular frame and every one of those moves seemed to connect with my groin.

Finally, after our third meeting or so, I'd turned to face him and found myself staring at his crotch. A bulge. I looked up at him in surprise and his only response was to reach down, grasp my hand and place it over the soft material of his trousers as the fabric strained to conceal his stiffening cock.

I smile as I remember the heat and passion of that first clothes-ripping, limbs-flailing, body-slamming union — which of course only contributes further to my current state of arousal.

But now is not then.

Now Jack will expect me to concentrate and get his accounts sorted and his clients billed with as little input from him as possible. I will need to be sharp, ask the right questions. And judging by his response to me yesterday, he will not be in the mood for diversionary tactics.

But now my libido has kicked into overdrive, as if it knows I am seeking to tame it and it redoubles its efforts, refusing to be quelled. My mind is clouded with images of tongues and body parts and humping. I feel myself moist and hot between my legs and it's so distracting.

I need to do it. With my little thing. Do I have it with me? Of course I do. I always do. For just such an occasion.

I go back into the house, grab my purse and freeze. Where do I go? I can't go up to the bedroom. If Jack comes home while I'm still there he'll wonder why I'm up there by myself in the middle of the day. I could go into the powder room. I glance at the clock. Five o'clock exactly now. No, I don't have time. He'll be home any

minute and it will take me longer standing up in there. If I can just lie down with my thing I'll be done in a minute, the way I'm feeling, my body now even more eager, anticipating the vibrations. Oh god, yes...those vibrations. I'm desperate for it.

I dash into the family room and fish my special little helper out of my purse. Its smooth egg shape and shiny contours calm me, knowing that blissful satisfaction is near. I don't lie on my back. I need to be fast, and the fastest way is when I can hump down on it in my hand while lying on my front. Quickly I slip it inside my bikini bottoms and settle it between my labia, just over my clit. Even the cool hardness of it feels intensely good and when I ease myself down to lie flat on the sofa with my face buried in a pillow. I click the button on the attached remote and the vibrations purr into action. My hungry body convulses and I stifle a cry.

Oh yes. Ohhh yesss. This is what I need. I won't be long now. I feel my body winding tighter with glorious sensations and my release is imminent. Oh fuck...yes. I shove two fingers inside me too, because I just can't help it. I rock the vibrating egg against me with my palm and I cum hard, my sex clenching my fingers, my hips thrusting into my arm, into the sofa as I hump, not caring about anything now but ringing every last bit of satisfaction out of this sweet release.

Sated I stand up quickly. I have to clean up fast before Jack walks in the front door. But when I do, I immediately see Mason outside, standing on the pool deck and turning away from the sliding glass doors of the family room.

Oh fuck. Oh holy fuck. Mason? What did he see?

"Laur?" I hear the door, Jack coming in the front. I stash my vibrator back into my purse, wipe my juices on my thigh, adjust my bikini and smooth back my hair.

"I'm here," I call out, clearing my throat as I hear the shakiness rise in it.

We both walk into the kitchen from opposite ends of the house.

"You okay?" he says. "You look flushed." He looks out the window. "Oh, Mason's here." Then back at me, eyes narrowing. "Did

KYOKO CHURCH

something happen?”

“What?” I say. *Did it?* “No, I— I didn’t even realise he was here.” *Obviously, or I wouldn’t have been going for it on the sofa.* “He must have just gotten here.” *Just in time to watch me acting like a bitch in heat.*

My brain will not shut up from its ranting in my head. Did he see? How long was he there?



It’s only when I’m lying in my own bed back in my own apartment that night that I truly begin to calm down. The rest of the time at Jack’s, before he left for racket ball, was an uncomfortable nightmare. I kept catching glimpses of Mason through the office window, as I tried vainly and hastily finish up Jack’s accounts; or I’d see him out of the kitchen window, when I’d pad in there to grab a cold drink. But each time I managed a glimpse of Mason, he was staring intently at the pool, apparently focussed on his work.

Maybe he didn’t see.

But deep down I know he did.

Was he shocked? Disgusted?

Certainly a guy his age, with all of today’s access to porn and live web cams, he would have seen much more attractive women masturbating in ways that were sexy, alluring, enticing. But what I did. Desperately humping a toy on the sofa. God. So embarrassing! I think I never want to go back to Jack’s again, as long as Mason’s going to be there.

Except.

Except there’s just one thing that makes me sure in my head that I will go back, will go the very next day, in fact, in the hopes that he might be there again. There’s one thing that makes me do it again, masturbate again, this time leisurely, slowly, deliciously slowly with all the time and privacy my own bed allows.

That is the memory of his eyes, just as he was turning away from the sliding glass doors. Our eyes met. For a split second we were staring at each other. I stroke myself, run my fingers up and down

and all around my clit over and over, tease myself, shove my fingers into my sopping heat and back up to my clit again, thinking about what I saw in the depths of that stare, in that solitary moment.

Not disgust. Not embarrassment. No.

Lust.

And not lust in a knowing way, like in the way Jack used to look at me when the mood would strike him and he'd bind me up in his bed and then stand back to admire his handiwork.

Can lust and innocence reside in the same place?

Oh yes, they can. Powerfully so, I suddenly realise. I saw it in that fleeting moment reflected in his eyes. All the carnal things he wanted to know, but didn't know yet.

Oh god. I rub my clit hard, harder, finally thinking the thought that has lingered around the edges of my consciousness since I saw his face through the glass that afternoon.

I want to teach him.

I thrust two fingers inside myself and cum hard on my hand, harder than I did that afternoon as I gasp out under my sheets, all twisted around me from my writhing.

Shit. What the hell am I thinking?



“Well, hello there.”

I jump even though, truth be told, part of me is waiting for him.

“Hi,” I say, but it comes out like a squeak and I'm seized by terror and regret over my decision to come back to Jack's today.

But the summer heat wave continued and it really was unbearably hot in my apartment. So hot that when Jack saw they were forecasting another scorcher with heat alerts and the whole bit, he called me and told me to just start work from his place in the morning. He said he wouldn't be home till late, had a dinner meeting, but that I might as well just plan to stay the night.

Just go, I told myself, he won't be there. How much work does

KYOKO CHURCH

a pool need? It's brand new and he's spent two days on it already.

And somehow in the light of a new day, when I thought about yesterday and the memory of our eyes meeting, suddenly I was certain I'd imagined it. He probably just walked by and saw me getting up from what looked like a little cat nap on the couch. And why am I giving so much thought to some kid anyway? I have work to do and I won't be able to get it done at my apartment.

But as soon as I see him standing there in the backyard, hardly any pool equipment this time, just a skimmer net, that's all, I know. He saw. He definitely saw. And what's more, it's the reason he's back. It's written all over his face.

His eyes pan down my body, again clad in a swimsuit after the day's work, a one piece this time. I'm at once irritated by his suddenly brazen staring, and infused with a sense of power. My embarrassment vanishes.

"My eyes are up here," I say and am rewarded when he flushes a deep red and meekly looks me in the eye.

"Oh my god, I'm sorry," he mumbles.

"Did you get a good look?" I say with an iciness in my voice I've never heard before.

"Yes. I mean, no!" he corrects himself, and now his "well hello there" swagger is all gone. He's blushing and nervous and shifting around. Mmm, yes. I like him better this way.

"Is there something bothering you?" I say. "Something you saw yesterday you'd like to talk about?" God, where did I get the nerve to say *that*?

He nearly drops the long skimmer pole, grabbing at it as it slips and catching it at the last moment. "Um, I dunno, maybe," he says, now really not knowing where to look or what to do with himself.

"Well, if you're not sure..." I say, with all the feigned boredom I can muster and pretend to go back to my book. But I'm really using my book as a shield to hide the fact that I'm perusing his person, taking in that too long, unkempt hair, his pale body that's just recently gone from skinny boy to the beginnings of muscle of the man he'll

soon be, those insanely full, red lips that are almost feminine and those deer in headlight eyes.

I imagine the girls at his school probably dismiss him as geeky. I would have, when I was in high school. I always fell secretly in love with the stereotypes. The student council president. The star of the hockey team. I aimed high, but only ever pursued them in my dreams. When Jack, with his cool charm, dashing, rugged handsome face and the body he keeps so well sculpted at the gym five mornings a week, made his feelings about me known I could scarcely believe it. But the truth is if I were back in high school today it would be Mason I'd peruse, and not the equivalent of the hockey star at his school. The pretty package is nice but right now the naked insecurity, the slightly hard edge borne of rejection, the turmoil that appears to go on in his head seems infinitely more interesting and alluring to me.

"I just," he says, shuffling around, staring at the ground. "I didn't think girls really needed to do that," he finishes, sounding as young as he is.

"Needed to do what, hon?" I say. I know I'm toying with the kid but I can hardly help it. I feel like a cat with a mouse.

He swallows hard. "Make themselves...or um, you know, do what you did."

"Masturbate?" I say, and I can't believe the calmness I manage to press into my voice as I articulate each syllable. "It sounds like perhaps you don't know a lot about what girls need."

He flushes really hard and I think I've gone too far. Oh shit. Then he looks up at me and the look in his eyes make me realise one thing for certain.

He's a virgin.

"You're probably right about that," he whispers.

All the cat and mouse play goes out of me. All the irritation and false bravado. In that moment I see rejection and pain in his eyes and god do I want to wrap my arms around him. Or maybe my legs.

"That's okay," I say, putting my book down. I sit up on the lounge, swing my legs down so my feet are flat on the deck. I pat the space beside me and he sits down, staring straight ahead. "You can

KYOKO CHURCH

ask me things,” I say, gently now. “If you want.”

He stares into his lap. “I kind of do that a lot,” he breathes. He lets out a “ha” like he is trying to lighten the tone of the confession but it doesn’t really work. I’m surprised. I didn’t think someone his age would have this worry. I’d thought all that hairy palm and going blind nonsense was way behind us. But who knows where he’s grown up?

“Oh yeah?” I say. I want to smile but he looks so serious. “Like, how much is a lot.”

“Like, a couple times a day.”

I don’t say anything.

“Okay, more like five or six.”

I do smile then, let out a chuckle. But the poor thing just cringes and shrinks down.

“Aw, it’s okay,” I say and put my hand on his back. I feel him tense. “Really,” I say with as much sincerity as I can. “It’s just your body exercising its biological imperative.”

He looks up at me. “Yeah?” And he even manages a weak smile. “Biological?”

“Yeah,” I say, taking my hand off his back and tucking both hands under my thighs, suddenly aware how close to me he’s sitting. “You know, procreate or die? You’re healthy.”

“Healthy,” he says. “Guess you are too.” And I get a big, flirty grin, I can’t help myself. “I like talking to you,” he says, and I feel simultaneously flattered and extremely nervous. He’s looking at me in a way no one has before, boy or man. I start to say something but he looks away. He reaches in his pocket and pulls out a phone. “Would you put yourself in my contacts?” he asks, passing it to me. He looks so casual now and I guess this is what all kids must do, add people, follow people, request people, collect people.

“Sure,” I say, all awkward, trying not to feel ancient. I punch my number in, hit Save and hand it back.

He stands up and looks toward the gate. “Well I’m going to get going,” he says, still holding the skimper.

“What about the pool?” I ask, trying to suppress the feeling

of disappointment that he's leaving. So what? So the kid is leaving.

"Oh," he says and a little smile creeps onto his face. "I— I think it's fine today."

So that's how I become his confidante.

Or that's how I put it to myself.

I'm just an older friend he can come to when he has questions. Secrets he needs to share. The fact that I don't tell Jack is down to the personal nature of this. I don't want to betray his trust, I want him to know he can come to me, confide in me, that I wouldn't be blabbing it all to his dad's friend.

So he opens up. He emails me and a torrent of pent up passion rolls out. All of his fantasies, his sweet, sweet fantasies that surprise me with their romance. Aren't boys his age supposed to be surly and jaded? Aren't they supposed to be tainted by video games and porn and reduced to taking all vowels out of words from texting? He is not. He spells out words, uses complete sentences and those sentences describe elaborate dreams of passionate unions. He's never had it before and he's desperate to know how it will look, feel, sound, smell, taste when he melds his body into another's, when he "becomes one," as he says, with the girl of his dreams. I have an angel on one shoulder who is moony eyed over the beautiful innocence of his words while the devil on my other rubs her hands together with glee.

And pretty soon Mason puts me in the starring role.

"Let me watch you again," he says.

It's Friday and Jack's not coming home for dinner, what's new. I haven't been back to my apartment all week. I tell myself it's because of the heat.

"Watch me?" I ask, even though I'm pretty sure I know what he means. This is the third time Mason's come to the house without doing anything to the pool. But that's mostly because I've been inviting him inside where we'll be comfortable in the air conditioning in t-shirts and shorts. If we're outside by the pool, we'll be in swimwear. I will feel his eyes on me again. And with all the knowledge of his

fantasies now, I don't trust what I'd do.

But today it's just too nice and we are out by the pool and I'm wearing a bikini and he hasn't been able to peel his eyes off me. And now he's asking to watch.

"Like before," he whispers.

"Mason, I..."

"Come on," he urges. "It's not like I haven't already seen you do it. Please."

"Mason, this isn't right. I can't do that. You should be spending time with a girl your own age. You can do all your experimenting together.

"I don't care about our ages. I'm an adult and so are you. I don't want to experiment. I want someone who knows to show me. Laura—" he says, and I'm alarmed by the sudden urgency in his voice. "I want to know how you pleasure yourself." The fact that he says it like that, uses those words, I feel something loosen inside me. "I want to know," and his voice gets so soft I have to strain to hear, "so that I can be the one to do it for you."

I can tell how badly he wants to look down at my body again but he doesn't. He keeps his gaze on mine. I feel hot and it's not from the sun. My angel is chirping away about Jack, about this being his friend's son, that I should leave him to have the experiences he is supposed to with some nice little girl he knows from school named Brittany who has posters in her locker of the latest boy band and has a part time job as a lifeguard after school. But the devil. Oh the devil in me has things to say too.

"Please, Laura," he says. "Why won't you show me how to please you?"

How do I explain it to him? How do I say, your innocence, your naïveté, that look you give me — all filled with naked, untapped lust — it awakens something in me. Something scary. Something I don't know if I want to acknowledge. It feels like a beast slumbering beneath the surface of my calm exterior.

I want to do things to you, I imagine telling him. All your little comments and charming self-deprecations about your inexperience

coupled with your open-mindedness. Your obvious willingness to learn. To please. God, how it makes my brain whirl and stew and conjure. I want to take you. To make you. Make you my own.

Wouldn't he run screaming if he knew the depraved things that the alluring combination of innocence and eager curiosity invoke in me? All the lurid fantasies I've had. Not just making. Forcing. Restraining. Making him beg. Making him suffer. And then denying him over and over. The idea of pitting his neediness against him makes me burn bright with evil, carnal plans.

His wide eyes blink back at me from behind his glasses and it's all I can do not to grab him and shove his face exactly where it can pleasure me most.

But I don't.

"Mason, I'm sorry," I say, rising and trying to avoid seeing the hurt that springs into his eyes. "I can't. This is just wrong. I've got to go."

I grab my things and race back to the sanctuary of my stuffy apartment.

On Saturday the weather breaks and it rains.

It rains all morning and I stay in bed. I think thoughts of Mason, of being his first, of teaching him things, of going beyond anything he's thought of in those sweet fantasies he's emailed, of going somewhere dark. First I use my fingers and then I use my bullet vibe. By the time I'm finally sated, I've lost count of how many times I've brought myself over the edge thinking about a boy who — when I said my favourite singer in high school was Huey Lewis — said, "Who's Huey Lewis?"

And it seems anything but healthy.

Around noon Jack calls me and asks when I'm coming over, what do I want to do for dinner. I tell him I'm not feeling well.

"I could come over there," Jack says. "I feel like I haven't seen you in a long time."

"I was there all week."

"I know. But my mind was so involved with the case. I'm

KYOKO CHURCH

sorry.” I don’t want to hear Jack apologise. “Let me make it up to you,” he says, then he lowers his voice. “I could do more of what you liked the last time.”

Oh god.

I tell Jack I really think I’m coming down with something. And get off the phone as soon as possible.

When does the switch in my brain flip? When do I give up denying the inevitability of giving in to what I want, regardless of what my sane self tells me is right for the kid?

I’m not sure if it happens the 500th time I check my emails and texts that Saturday only to see that he hadn’t sent anything, my heart falling each time. Or if it’s on Sunday morning when I finally give in and break the void with just one text to him that says only, “I’m sorry.” Or if it’s when he texts back with “Give me your address.” Yes, maybe it’s when I punch in my address, hold my breath and click send that I decide I just don’t give a fuck.

I know I waver for a moment when he walks into my place and looks around with appreciation at the little space in the world I’d carved out for myself and tells me that he and his buddy Owen are going to get their own place too, that he just can’t live at home anymore. I admit, when my illicit thoughts clang against the hard fact that this boy lives with his parents it’s with a dissonance that makes me cringe, and of course he lives with his parents — I knew that already. I falter. But then I close my eyes. And jump.

“Take off my bra now,” I tell him steadily.

We’re in my bed and he’s only in jeans and I’m the same now that my bra’s coming off. He manages the clasp well and I stop myself from any comment about it that might seem patronising. He pulls it away and looks at my naked torso and I feel almost stoned with lust as his greedy eyes take me in. He puts his hand up and cups my left breast in his right hand and groans. “Oh god,” he whispers. He reaches with his other hand too and moves to kiss me. There’s already been kissing, so much kissing, I forgot how much kissing there

could be before sex becomes the foregone conclusion. But this time his kisses are shaky and unfocussed. I can tell he just wants to feel. I pull back and lie on the bed. I take off my jeans so I'm clad only in panties now and his eyes burn trails all over me.

"Just touch me," I say. And he does.

He stares and stares like he cannot get enough and moves his hands all over my exposed skin. "God," he murmurs, more to himself. "Your skin is as smooth as my little cousin's bottom." Then his eyes fly up to meet mine and he covers them with both hands. "Holy shit, I can't believe I just said that."

I giggle and push his hands away, uncovering his face. "It's okay. It's okay, sweet thing. You're doing fine." I put his hands back on me and soon his breathing gets ragged.

"I want to give you pleasure," he says, using those words again that are my undoing. "I want you to show me how."

I reach over and take off his glasses, fold them and put them on my nightstand. "I'll show you my favourite way," I whisper and I ease off my panties.

He looks down at me where I've shaved myself almost completely, just left a little strip. His face flushes and he looks so adorably full of intent. He moves between my legs and I spread myself open for him with my hands, let him see it all. I know I'm wet, wet from all the kissing and touching and anticipation and somehow I don't feel shy at all, just brash and brazen and wanting him to see. And he does. He looks mesmerised as he lies on his stomach and moves his face down close to me.

"You smell so good," he breathes, looking up at me from between my legs. "I'll just lick right here," he says and gives the tip of my clit a tiny, tentative lick. *Bang!* The pleasure of that one little caress of his tongue goes all the way through me and I moan.

"Yes," I say. "Right there is good, sweetie. Very good."

He does it again then. More tentative little licks with his sweet tongue. "Mmmm...yes, that's good," I say. "Nice and slow." I want to put my head back, close my eyes, but then I'd miss watching him and watching him is so good.

KYOKO CHURCH

“Should I give it little kisses too?” he asks and I nod because it’s hard to speak. He kisses my clit and god do his full, red lips look good doing that. He gets bolder then, kissing and licking, licking a bit faster, then slower, poking at me a bit with his tongue. I do put my head back then, close my eyes, groan in pleasure. His tongue is wild and has no rhythm to it at all and I don’t fucking care because I like him using me to learn. After a while it’s all I can do not to put my hand on the back of his head and command him to just lick hard and fast, as hard and fast as he can. But I don’t do that. Because his way is delicious in its hesitancy. Ten or fifteen years ago I might have been frustrated, wanting the destination and not appreciating the journey. But now I lie back and give myself over to him and his inexperienced little tongue.

“Does it feel better,” he asks softly, “if I lick you lightly, like this...” and he peppers my burning nub with feather light little flicks that leave me feeling floaty and gaspy. “Or harder ones, like this.” And without further warning he jams his tongue down on me ruthlessly, tonguing fast and hard while I scream out and he stops short with me dangling on the edge, looks up at me, alarmed. “Oh god, did I hurt you?”

“No,” I rasp, panting and shaking. Now my patience has dwindled. “They’re...they’re both very nice, love,” I say, when I can form words. “Let’s do that second one again,” I say, trying not to growl it at him. “But this time, if I start screaming, you just keep going.” I feel like there’s fire in my eyes as I stare at him and see realisation dawn in his. “Okay?” And this time I do growl it.

He lowers his head to do it again but just before he starts he places one then two soft kisses on my little bud all while looking straight up at me and the sweetness of that action combined with the exquisite feel of his lips pursed around my clit pierces into me. Then he goes to work licking me hard and fast. And oh fuck, it does not take me long. I thread the fingers of my right hand through that floppy mess of his hair and hold on tight, I can’t help it, as I scream and writhe on his face, forgetting everything I was thinking about being gentle and patient. “Fucking christ!” I bawl out as his tongue

works me over the edge.

But then he keeps going! Oh god, it's so sensitive and I try to yell stop, to push him away but I can't make any sounds other than screams and he's still licking hard and intently, holding me by my thighs to his face, there's no stopping him and I guess I told him to keep going after all. Soon the sensitivity gives way to another orgasm. It's upon me before I realise it and it rips through me faster than the first. All I can do is pant and gasp out, Oh god! Oh god! Oh my god!

And thankfully he stops then. He looks up at me timidly and his face is so full of the need for approval I feel my heart break in two for how vulnerable he seems at that moment.

"I wasn't sure when to stop," he says. "Was that good?"

I pull him up to me. Gently I put his head to my breasts and stroke his hair, holding him on top of me. "It was so good, Mason love. So good."

I want his first time inside me, inside any woman, to live up to all the sweet little fantasies he's had.

Before I engage him in the not so sweet fantasies of mine.

We're lying side by side now. He still has his jeans on and I have the sheet draped over my naked body. I touch his arm and stare into his eyes. "You're sure you want to do this? With me?"

"Fuck yeah."

I giggle. "Are you nervous?" I ask, running a finger lightly up and down the fly of his jeans before pausing to pop open the button. I can see the bulge of his straining member beneath and goddammit it looks to be a tool that is all man, no boy.

"Not really," he says. "Just excited." He grins.

"I can tell," I say, patting his bulge. "Don't get too excited now," I tease. "We don't want things to be over before they begin."

"Don't worry," he says. "I can go for hours."

"Can you now?" God, his bravado is adorable. "And how do you know that?"

He looks stricken for a moment. Then stammers, "Well, I...I do with my hand."

KYOKO CHURCH

“I see,” I say. I lean into him, kiss him softly and whisper in his ear. “You know that a hot, tight, soaking wet, slippery little pussy like mine is right now will feel very different from your hand.”

“Oh god,” he says and groans. “I...I know!”

“Things might go a little more ... quickly,” I say as I ease down his fly.

Holy shit!

The erection that springs out at me is enormous. He gasps as I ring my fist around it and then I gasp too because it is so thick and heavy and hot in my hand.

“My god, Mason. How big are you?” I breathe.

“Nine inches,” he whispers. And I have hit the virginity claiming jackpot.

The idea that this sweet, gawky boy with all of his romantic notions is hiding this monster tool in his briefs is right then the hottest aphrodisiac ever. My pussy clenches at the thought of having him all rammed up hard inside me. But I will myself to be calm.

This is his first time. And greedily, I want it. I want to orchestrate it, conduct it for him, for me. I want to it be slow and savoured. I want his face the first time he feels all the sensations that he’s wondered about and tried to imagine for so long. I want all those first reactions, every gasp, every moan. I want them all. I want them for mine.

He’s uncut and beautiful. I ease his foreskin back and he’s all shiny purple, a ripe plum I long to suck into my mouth. But I’ll save that for another time, as pre-cum is starting to flow from his slit and I sense it’s not my mouth he’s hungry for.

“So eager, my sweet boy,” I say, as I use my thumb to spread some of that delicious looking clear fluid around his head. He moans.

“Please, Laura. Please let me be inside you now,” and his pleading is all the sweeter for the way his voice cracks in the middle.

“Mmm, yes, I want that now too, Mason,” I whisper. I let go of him and he lies back and kicks his jeans and boxers off. His cock looks even huger now that he’s totally naked and it’s juxtaposed against his slim frame. I straddle him and lean over, putting my face

close to his and reaching down to grasp his cock. "I'm going to put you inside me now," I whisper. I watch the look in his eyes as I place the head of him against my slippery wet entrance.

"Oh fuck. You feel so hot."

"You just lie there and let me move on top of you, okay?" I study his face and will myself to remember every moment, to savour every bit.

"Okay," he says.

I'm so wet from the two orgasms I had with his mouth that almost instantly my pussy coats his huge head with slipperiness. I stay leaning over him, staring at him as I ease more of him into me. He's so fucking big, I am stretched so open and it feels amazing but I am concentrating on his face. He keeps closing his eyes and groaning but he's fighting to keep them open. I'm sliding down on him so slowly and he looks like he's in a tortured bliss. Finally I feel the head of him knock the back of my pussy with that beautiful dull ache. He's all the way in and I lean down to kiss him and listen to him breathe.

"Oh fuck," he says. "You're so tight. So wet."

I kiss his cute snub nose and sit up on him, relishing the feeling of him all lodged deep in me, full and hard and hot. He looks up at me and I take his hands and move them up my torso and onto my breasts.

"Oh my god!" he says. "You," he whispers, breathing hard even though I haven't moved on him yet, "You look so amazing on me like that."

I can't help but feel sexy and powerful and feminine. I loll my head back and feel my hair brush against my back, his hands on my tits, as I start to move on him, slowly, up and down on his thick shaft.

"Is that good, baby?" I whisper, looking down at him again.

"God, yes," he hisses out. But his hips are bucking up at me, wanting more.

"Aw, you want it faster, horny boy?"

"Please!" He sounds desperate.

"Okay," I say, with a wicked grin.

I pull his hands off me, rise up on my knees and bounce up

KYOKO CHURCH

and down on his cock in a smooth fast rhythm. God, does he feel amazing pounding into me like that.

“Oh fuck, I’m gonna cum!” he shouts. And immediately I stop.

“What happened to “I can last for hours?”” I say, unable to wipe the huge grin off my face.

“Oh please,” he moans, ignoring my question. “Is it okay if I do it inside you?”

“It’s okay, it’s safe,” I whisper, my insides flipping over his fervour, the level of his need. “But let’s do it this way.” I put my hand behind his back, motioning for him to sit up and we shimmy up the bed so his back rests against my head board and I’m still astride him. I press myself against him, lean down and smash my breasts into his pale, hairless chest, hold him and wriggle myself around in his lap, clenching him with my pussy muscles.

“Oh god, how are you doing that?” he gasps. “What are you doing?”

“Just holding you,” I whisper into his ear. Then I clasp his head to my breasts and start to move.

He wraps his arms around me and moans. He starts thrusting his hips up into me and I meet him, pushing down to him each time, creating a more intense friction.

“Is it good Mason, baby?” I look down and kiss those sweet red lips. “Do you like having your cock buried deep inside my tight little slit?” I breathe.

“Oh my god,” he whispers and his eyes widen bright and shiny with lust. My lascivious words have pushed him to the brink.

“That’s it,” I say and I lean back a bit so I can watch him. Then I clamp my pussy around him tight as I can, preparing to relish the moment of his body’s surrender to mine. “Cum for me.” And I pump myself up and down on him.

His breath comes out in a gasp and I can feel his huge pole go rigid inside me, ready to blow. He lets out a strangled grunt and explodes. His hands grasp at me as I ride his orgasm out with him, savouring the feeling of pulling his cum out of him with my body.

“Oh god, I love being inside you,” he murmurs, his lips against the swell of my breast, his cock still inside me, half hard now. He pulls back to look at me. “I love our bodies moving together,” he says. “I love ...”

And suddenly my heart rate spikes and my stomach is in my throat because I know exactly what he’s going to say. His eyes are saying it before his mouth does.

“Mason, don’t,” I say.

“...you.”

Oh shit.

My buzzer goes and suddenly Jack’s voice comes floating in from the front door speaker.

“Laur, it’s me. Buzz me in?”

Oh holy shit.

Jack walks in to my apartment carrying two Styrofoam containers with steam coming out of holes in the top.

“Soup,” he says as I eye them, my brain spinning. “Chicken,” he adds.

“Thanks,” I say, trying not to constantly look back at my bedroom door.

I remember what I’ve told him and I cough, a little half-heartedly.

“How’re you doing?” he asks, setting the containers down on the table and going for bowls.

“Terrible,” I say, looking on helplessly as he pulls the bowls out of the cupboard. I cough again.

“You do look flushed,” he says.

We both sit down. He looks at me. I look at the soup containers.

“Hey,” he says, reaching across the table for my hands. “I know I’ve been a little ... pre-occupied lately. But are we okay?”

Are we?

“I’m just really not feeling well, Jack. Do we have to talk about this now? I didn’t know you were coming. I must look like a mess.”

He chuckles and reaches for my hair. “I like your bedhead.”

KYOKO CHURCH

But without thinking I cringe and pull back.

He frowns. Then gets up. “Well okay. I guess I’ll leave you with the soup.”

“Really, thanks Jack. That was sweet,” I’m saying, but as he approaches the door he sees Mason’s Converse near the couch. My eyes follow his gaze and something heavy drops into my gut.

He whirls around to look at me and his eyes are filled with disgust. He looks briefly at my closed bedroom door and for a horrible moment I think he’s going to go in there.

“What the fuck is wrong with you?” he spits. I’m rooted to my spot, cowering. I want to disappear. The look in his eyes makes me want to tear my skin from my bones.

“I can’t—I can’t even be in the same room with you.”

He throws open my apartment door and stalks out.

Then I really hole up in my apartment. I send out a mass email to my clients to say I’m sick. I shut down my laptop and stuff it under the couch. I turn off my cell phone and unplug the land line. I feel compelled to rip out every mode of communication to create my fortress of solitude.

Thoughts swirl around in my head. About Jack. About Mason. For a moment I convinced myself that I wanted to give something special to Mason, something to cherish. But really, Jack’s right. I’m just a disgusting old pervert. *Come on*, my devil jeers at me. *You know what you wanted to make him do, the fantasies you had. He’s just a sweet boy with even sweeter ideas. But you know what you wanted to do to him.*

I am a horrible, horrible person. I want to extract myself, to quarantine myself from society.

But on the second day of my self-imposed exile my buzzer rings. That I could not shut off. But I can ignore it. Which I do. The first six times. Then it starts getting a little harder to ignore. The eighth time it buzzes Mason’s voice comes through.

“Laura. It’s Mason. Please let me up. You won’t answer your phone or your emails. Please.” There’s a pause. “We can’t do what

we did and then you just ignore me.” Oh god. Stop talking! What if a neighbour hears? “I’m not going away. I can stand here all day and press this thing.”

So I let him up.

He stands there in my living room in his long denim shorts and his white tee, as skinny and awkward as ever. I am struck again by how young he looks and I mentally berate myself for the millionth time.

“Why won’t you speak to me?” he says. “I’m sorry about Jack, Laura, but please, won’t you at least talk to me?”

“Mason, you shouldn’t be here,” I croak, trying to smooth my hair, covering my puffy eyes. “You should stay away from me.”

“What? Why? I love being with you. What we did...the way you...were. With me. It was so beautiful. It was perfect. It was all of my fantasies, everything I imagined it would be.”

“Exactly,” I whisper.

“Exactly,” he repeats. He looks at me pointedly but I stay silent. “So why would I stay away?”

“Because...” I say. I look at him then, so forlorn, so passionate, so...open. And I feel my steady heartbeat, feel the blood pumping through my veins, feel something threatening from underneath, that beast awakening, uncoiling, unfurling.

“Because?” he says, all innocence and confusion.

I try to look away from him but I can’t. “Because,” I say again, heat rising in my face, synapses in my brain firing in all directions, making things course and pulse and hum through my body. “The things I want to do to you are not sweet, Mason. I look at you and, I don’t know what it is, but I want to control you. To own you.”

He’s staring back at me and he is speechless. He looks a little scared. I know I should really stop now and send him away. But now I’ve started. The ball is rolling, the cat’s out of the bag, the horse is out of the gate, there’s no stopping, it’s all go.

I take a step towards him. “Did you like it when you were inside me and I rode you until you came hard?” I whisper almost ferociously. “Well, what if I didn’t, hmm? I mean, what if I rode you

KYOKO CHURCH

but didn't let you cum? What if I stopped? And what if I did that over and over? Until you were begging, until you were crying, until you were desperate and would do anything for me to release you?" I'm panting now, almost nose to nose with him, and he's wide eyed and slack jawed.

"And what if, at that point, I made you lie down and I straddled your head and rode your face until I'd had orgasm after orgasm? Until I just couldn't cum anymore. And then I made you get up, get dressed and sent you home, balls all achy and sore with unspent cum and with strict instructions not to masturbate or touch yourself while you were away from me.

"You should stay away from me, Mason—" I breathe low but taking care to enunciate each word. "Because I want to make you my plaything. My fuck toy. My human dildo to use and subjugate. That's why."

We're both silent. My words hang thick in the air between us.

"Go, Mason," I breathe.

"No."

"Go!"

But he grabs me. Pulls me to him, says, "I've never been harder in my whole life." And I feel him, his enormous prick that screams he's a man even if he still looks a boy, stiff as steel and pulsing against my hip bone. I reach up, curl my hands in the mop of his hair, and kiss him hard.

Mason's pool boy gig didn't work out. But I think he's much better suited to his job as houseboy.

"I've finished all of your laundry now, Ma'am," he says.

Like most thirty-something women, I've always hated when someone calls me Ma'am. Except when Mason says it. I remember the first time, when I'd instructed him, rather coldly, to get his cock out for me. "Yes, Ma'am," he'd whispered, and it landed right in my gut, those two little words, stoking the fire that was already there. And even now, three months in, every time he says it, it's so good, laden as it is with his submission to me.

“Well, thank you, Mason,” I say. “I suppose you’ve earned a reward then.” I turn from my laptop.

“If you think so, Ma’am.” I can see he’s already starting to get excited. His shorts have just started to form a bulge in the front. His eagerness has always been compelling, but he’s even more eager these days and it’s all I can do not to rip his clothes right off him.

I close my laptop and stand, move close to where he is in my living room. “And what do you think you deserve, my boy?” I say, tracing my fingers down his chest that’s starting to rise up and down more distinctly.

“I’m always hopeful you’ll let me cum, Ma’am,” he says, not looking at me.

“Ah, yes. Always greedy for a little release, aren’t you?”

“Yes, Ma’am,” he whispers.

“Mmm. And what if—” I say, unbuttoning my blouse and letting it hang open, fondling my breasts over my lacy cream bra and pushing them together under his nose, “...what if today is just a day for you to look?”

“Ohhh...” he says, looking mesmerised at my firm tits. I know he longs to touch them but he knows he can’t, not without permission. His fingers twitch at his sides. “I love to look at you Mistress. But please, please let me cum. It’s been five days now.”

I giggle. “Five days is not a long time, Mason,” I chide. I slip my blouse off my shoulders now and undo the button and zip of my jeans, letting him see just a glimpse of the top of my panties. I look up at him all coquettish, pausing with my jeans open. “Unless you’re a naughty boy who’s used to jerking it multiple times a day.” He groans. I pull off his t-shirt and his shorts and he’s standing in my living room in his briefs. I can see he’s fully erect now. He springs into action more easily than ever since I’ve taken him in hand, as it were.

I press myself against him and delight in feeling slinky and feline. I turn around, arch my back and ease my jeans down over the globes of my ass, hearing his intake of breath as I do it. I step out of my jeans and now I’m just in my lacy bra and skimpy matching panties. “But it’s true,” I sigh. “It has been a while for such a horny

KYOKO CHURCH

boy. Do you want me to let you touch yourself while you watch me get totally naked?” I ask over my shoulder as I sway my hips from side to side very close to his straining cock.

“Oh god, Mistress,” he breathes, his eyes glued to my ass.

“Or do you want me—” I say, turning around and running my hands over his chest again, listening to him pant “— to do it for you?”

“Oh Mistress!” Once when he asked for my touch I gave him only feather light strokes for two hours before sending him home without making him cum. “Will you let me cum if you touch me?” he pleads.

“Well, all right, my love.” I say gently.

“Really, Mistress?” His body is practically vibrating he’s so excited. I’m not usually so easy to persuade.

“Yes, really. If you want to cum by my touch instead of your own, I will do that for you. Is that what you want?”

“Oh yes, please, Ma’am!”

“Good!” I say, smiling brightly. He looks close to bursting with the excitement of imminent relief from the weight in his swollen balls. Until I say: “We’ll do a slow release.”

His eyes widen. He looks momentarily frozen. Finally he speaks and words rush out like a waterfall.

“Mistress! Oh god, Mistress, no! Anything but that! Anything but the slow release!”

“But you said it was what you wanted,” I say, all feigned surprise. “For me to make you cum with my touch.” I smile sweetly. “If you’d prefer we could have NO release.”

“Oh Mistress.” And he actually starts to tremble.

“Now be a good boy. Go in my room. And assume the position.”

We have our safe words. We established them right away and Mason’s only ever used his once, when I went near his tight little virgin asshole. He’s not ready for that yet. But I can be patient.

In truth, I know that if there’s one thing he loves as much as

begging for something he loves to happen, it's begging for something he secretly loves *not* to happen. So as I wait for him to position himself with his back against the wall of my bedroom, all while still pleading for a fate other than the slow release, I just smile. If I didn't know this already the enormous meat pole jutting from his body would tell me all I need to know anyway.

I could cuff him to my bed, and have done. But sometimes the mental bondage is even more fun. I simply tell him he cannot move. And then he mustn't. There are no bonds to strain against. He must be disciplined and he must fight to control his urges.

Watching the battle is delightful.

First I tease just his eyes and his ears. I roll all over the bed in my bra and panties, writhing and squirming and telling him how horny I am, cupping my mound and grinding against my hand. I ask him how much he wants to lick my pussy as I slip my hand in my panties and dip my fingers into my slippery quim. He is among those treasured males who not only love to lick pussy but crave it. I listen to him beg for my cunt while I frig myself hard to three consecutive orgasms all while he stands immobile against my wall.

"Do you wish you could just see underneath my little panties right now?" I ask, panting, lying back on the bed with my legs spread, my fingers hooked inside the leg of my panties, teasing, threatening to pull the isthmus of satin to one side so he can see my shining pink folds.

"God, yes, Ma'am. More than anything."

"Mm, not today," I say, but I rise to stand in front of him and offer him my fingers which he hungrily licks and sucks clean.

His body is taut with tension. I know how badly he wants to thrust his hips. He's trying not to shift from one foot to the other. He's pressed his body against the wall like he's desperate for whatever support it can give him.

I sink down onto my knees and pull his briefs down with me. His eyes follow me and he lets out yet another groan. I know what the sight of me on my knees before him does to his sex addled brain, to see my mouth near his straining erection. He once told me he could

KYOKO CHURCH

almost cum from the sight of it.

I smile up at him. He's so hard his foreskin is already mostly retracted. I wet my lips and kiss the shiny purple head as I ease the rest of that flesh back. "Unh! Oh!" he cries.

With his cock firmly in my grasp I ask, "Are you ready for your slow release now?" And I place another wet kiss on his head.

"Oh Mistress, no, please no," he grovels. "Please pump it out fast." Oh how his breathless begging makes my stomach churn with desire.

I only smile and shake my head no. "You remember the rules. You stay still. Don't move. I'll take your cum from your cock in my own time," I say firmly.

"Yes, Mistress," he says, his voice weak with helplessness.

"If you move, I'll stop. And you won't get to cum at all."

"Oh fuck," he moans.

I push his cock into my mouth very slowly, listening to him pant and groan. The very first time I did this my sweet boy ejaculated into my mouth during that first push. And as turned on as he is right now I know it's not going to take much. So I just do one painstakingly slow stroke in and out of my mouth.

"So hard not to move my hips, Ma'am," he says through clenched teeth, his whole body as rigid as his cock.

"Aww, I know, Mason, I know. Soon, baby. Soon I'm going to take your cum from you," I say, as I slide my fist up and down his wet pole, once, twice, three times. He lets out a strangled cry.

I hold him firm around the base. I rise up so my mouth is level with his prick. "Watch me now, Mason," I say and I start to tongue the underside of his cock.

I don't stroke it. Not with my hand or my tongue. That would trigger powerful surges of orgasm and that's not what I want. I just do steady, short laps up and down on the underside of his cock, massaging that special spot where the head meets the shaft with my tongue. His ecstatic moans as he rises painfully slowly to his pinnacle connect directly with my pussy. He's trembling; I hear his sharp intake of breath and then the whimpering cry he lets out at the top,

right as he's cresting, sounds so helpless and pure. I think it might be the most beautiful sound I've ever heard.

I keep my firm grip on his shaft and speed up my tongue just the tiniest fraction. But not much. He shouts out and his hips jerk hard involuntarily. "Please! Please! Miss! Ungh! Uh!" Sobbing cries escape from his lips as he battles his body's strong impulse to thrust and thrust and shoot out all the pent up cum in his balls. But he can't. Because I hold him fast against the wall and just lap that spot that makes the cum ooze and pulse out, so frustrating but so much more intense. He howls and grunts and moans out his protracted release as cum spills like lava from the tip of his cock and down, coating him, coating my hand, making a lake on the floor.

When he's done he collapses onto the bed, weak, shaky, but oh so grateful. He clings to me, desperate.

"What do you want to say, love?"

"Thank you, Mistress."

"For what, boy?"

"For making me cum."

"And what else?"

"For making it..." and he pauses, because this part is hard. And therefore oh so much sweeter to hear. "For making it a frustrating one," he growls low.

"Mmm, yes." I smile. He nuzzles me. Nuzzles me some more. "Shhh, it's okay, I know what you want. I'm going to let you have it today," I say as I put my hand on the top of his head and push it down.

GARDENING DAYS

BY ESMERALDA GREENE



I heard the front door of the house thump closed and looked up to see her coming toward me, walking along the flagstone garden path. Something about her walk, the set of her face, told me she was trouble. I was working on the west flowerbed of a big, recently-built McMansion belonging to a Mr. and Mrs. Bouchet, sticking tulip bulbs into imported loam that probably cost more per pound than anything I'd had for supper last night. I hadn't met the clients yet — all the planning and design discussions having been handled by one of my partners. But I figured this must be Mrs. Bouchet marching up to me now. Everything about her bearing and her attitude said, "I own this place and don't you forget it." I stood up from my squat as she approached. "Good morning!" I called out cheerfully. "Mrs. Bouchet?"

"I've been watching you," she said by way of a greeting. "You're putting those bulbs too close together."

I looked down at the thirty feet of flowerbed I'd already planted, and the ten feet left to go. "Well, Ma'am," I said slowly, "This is what the plan calls for. You know, the plan you and Mr. Mellor decided on. This many bulbs in this much ground, that's how far apart they have to be spaced. Now if you want them spaced further apart, that's fine, but..."

GARDENING DAYS

“They told me the man who would be doing the planting had some kind of a Mexican name. Is that you?”

I had to smile at that. “Yes Ma’am. Jorge.” I pronounced the name carefully for her: Whore. Hey. “That’s me, Ma’am.”

“You don’t have an accent,” she said accusingly. She was dressed in white linen trousers and a cream colored blouse with a high neckline. With her blonde hair and pale skin, the overall effect was something like a woman-shaped puddle of spilled milk. But behind her stern expression there was a pretty face, well-kempt, thirty five-ish, and her body was nice. She was a petite little thing, maybe five foot three, lean and toned and with small, perky tits up high on her chest. I was trying to guess if she had a bra on...

“Is that how they teach you to behave?” she snapped out suddenly, her voice shrill. “To stare at your employer’s *tits* while she’s talking to you?”

Oops. Busted. “Um, I... Um... I mean...”

“And now you’re smiling!” she almost shrieked. “You ruin my garden, you ogle my *tits* like I’m some kind of tramp, and then you stand there grinning like an idiot!” She seemed to like saying the word “tits.”

“Ma’am...” I said uselessly. I couldn’t quite manage the trick of getting rid of my smile, so I just put my arms out to the side and shrugged, in what I hoped was a convincing “Hey, I’m just a silly harmless Mexican” pose.

I was still holding two tulip bulbs in my left hand, and for some reason those specimens of *T. pulchella* caught Mrs. Bouchet’s attention. She glared at them for a second, and then she suddenly shrieked, “Would you put those down!” and lashed her arm out, slapping them out of my hand. I was so startled I jerked my head back, and at the same time put my hand on her shoulder. “Jeeze, lady, take it easy!”

My hand was on her for less than a second before I took it away, but she glared down at her shoulder with icy daggers coming from her eyes. There was a palm-sized smudge of dirt on the once-pristine fabric. “You dirty bastard,” she said in a cold, dry voice.

“Look at this!” She pointed at the smudge, the hand of her pointing finger pressing against her breast. She moved closer to me, and closer, and closer still, so that our bodies were almost touching. I had about a full foot of height on her, so she had to tilt her head up to look at me. “What are you going to do about this, you *prick*?” she asked, her voice soft now. Her nostrils were flaring, her lips were parted and quivering, and her whole face was flushed. I’ve seen women who were angry before, and none of them looked like this. What this woman looked like was...horny. She was positively *glowing* with sexual need.

Aha, I thought to myself, the pieces falling into place. *That’s what this is about*. I grinned down at her. “Well, let’s see if we can wipe that off,” I said, and I put my hand back onto her shoulder, moving it around there for a bit before sliding it down to cup one of her trim little tits.

Her mouth fell open and her eyes got all soft and fluttery. I groped and massaged her, flexing my fingers to press them into her, feeling her hard nipple against my palm, smearing more and more dirt onto her cotton blouse. “You’re getting me all dirty,” she sighed, leaning forward to push herself harder against my hand.

“We gardeners are dirty bastards,” I said, and I brought up my left hand so I could work on both of her breasts at once. We were standing at the back of the property and there was a six-foot privacy hedge separating the Bouchet’s lot from the nearly identical upscale tract house next door, so I wasn’t worried about us being seen. I took my hands away from her tits and put them on her ass, my arms around her and pulling her tummy tight against mine. “You’ve sure got a sexy little body, Ma’am,” I said.

I put my face close to hers so she could move in for a kiss if she wanted, but she turned her head away, looking disgusted. “Yes, and don’t you wish you could get some of it, you dirty pig,” she said. As she spoke she was humping her pelvis against me, lifting herself up on her tiptoes and working hard to get the lump in the front of my pants pressing into her at just the right spot. “Well you can forget it. You aren’t sticking your filthy little prick into *my* cunt, you bastard.” I didn’t worry much about the harshness of her words. I was having

GARDENING DAYS

too much fun groping her ass and helping her to grind her pussy against the bulge of my cock. She had long legs for her size, so in spite of our height difference it only took a little cooperative effort to get our sexual parts lined up very nicely.

We stood there like that a little while longer, dry humping each other, pawing at each other's asses, both of us breathing hard. Then she reached back to grab my wrist and brought my hand around to the front of her, pushing it to her crotch. I slid my fingers between her legs and stroked her up and down, taking my cue from her moans and whimpers about how much pressure to use and where to use it. Soon she was standing almost sideways to me, leaning against me with her knees bent and her thighs spread, supported by my arm across her back. I took my hand from between her legs long enough to yank open the button and pull down the zipper of her slacks, before working my hand inside. At the last moment I decided not to go inside her panties as well, thinking that my dirty paw against her bare pussy might be more than she wanted.

So I massaged her pussy through her panties, and she liked that. She let out a throaty moan and her legs gave way even more, so that it seemed I was holding most of her weight. She reached down and clamped her hand around my wrist in a ferocious grip, controlling the movements of my hand, pressing me in a little harder. Even through her panties I could feel she was luxuriously wet and, as I moved my fingers, the fabric of her undies slid up and down along the furrow of her cunt like it was riding on greasy ball bearings. She started making a deep, grumbly sound in the back of her throat, repeating it with each exhalation. It was an urgent sound; a sound of want and desire and need. It was the sound of a woman who's on the verge of cumming.

That low, grumbly sound became high pitched, almost a squeal, and her body was shaking all over, spasming and quivering and jerking. She slumped against me, and I had to stagger and dance a bit to keep from either losing my balance or dropping her to the ground. She shuddered and squealed for what felt like quite a while, and the whole time her hand was gripping my wrist so hard that it

hurt.

Finally she relaxed. She took deep breaths, her body still sprawling against me, letting me hold her weight like I was a piece of furniture and had nothing better to do in the world than to keep her ass up off the ground. But I did have something better to do. The spectacle of having this sexy woman cum on my fingers had left me with some pretty urgent needs of my own. My cock felt like a slab of iron in my pants, throbbing, pulsing, and painfully bent out of shape. I roughly jerked Mrs. Bouchet upright and onto her feet, and then I was pawing my belt and pants open. When I had my cock out in the fresh air I hunched my hips in her direction, hoping she'd take that as an invitation.

She looked down at my member with an expression of utter disdain. "Get that dirty little thing away from me," she said, turning her head away.

I had to look down. Yes, it was my cock that was sticking out of my pants, all right. My old familiar *verga*. I don't mean to brag, but "little" was not the correct word to describe it — at that moment or at any other time since before my voice started changing. And it wasn't dirty, either. This bitch didn't care what she said, so long as it was mean. But I wasn't in the mood to argue with her. "Oh come on, Mrs. B," I said. "Just jerk it a little with your hand. I made you feel good, didn't I?" I guess I sounded pretty pathetic, but my dignity wasn't what was uppermost in my mind at the time.

She looked down at my cock again. I thought that perhaps she was warming up to it, feeling a little respect for its length and girth and for its (what I hoped were) handsome, classical proportions. I should have known better. She reached out to it, touched it lightly at the head, and then did a graceful swirl of her hand around the shaft that left her with her fingers wrapped around my balls...

And gave a hard squeeze.

I bellowed out a "Yow!" and shoved her away from me. She stumbled and fell backward, landing on her ass in the flowerbed with her hands behind her. "Fucking bitch," I growled at her. I was bent over and curled in on myself, succoring my bruised testicles with both

hands. But I quickly realized that other than one nasty stab of pain, no harm had been done. A second later I was straightening up, and my hard-on hadn't gone down at all. I took a step toward her, holding my cock in my fist and pointing it at her face.

She seemed happy to stay where she was, sitting in the dirt, her arms braced behind her, her pants open and her panties showing (bright green, I saw now). She smiled up at me. It was a scary, carnivorous smile that showed her upper and lower teeth. "Yeah, come on," she said in a low, purring voice. "Come stick that thing in my mouth, and just see what happens."

I looked at her teeth and decided I didn't want to see what would happen. So I started jerking myself off, standing near her, but not so close that I'd be within range of any sudden, alligator-like lunges. "Fucking bitch," I said again, my hand moving faster.

Still she was giving me that flesh-eating smile. "That's right, little boy," she said. "Jerk your little wiener until it squirts. That's all your sort is good for, isn't it? I bet you'd like to stick it in me, to fuck me right here in the dirt and pound my ass into the ground. You'd like that, wouldn't you?" She threw her head back in a laugh, basking in the joy of her own taunting. Then, still leaning back on her left arm, she brought her right hand forward, stuck it into her pants, and started rubbing her pussy, doing it from outside her panties, just as I had a few minutes earlier.

I jerked harder, sometimes holding my hand still and thrusting my hips to fuck my fist, shoving it deep, imagining it plowing into this bitch, making her groan as I stretched out her cunt and slapped my balls against her ass. "Show me your tits," I said. "Show me those sweet tits, Mrs. B."

That just brought another tinkling little laugh from her. "Fuck you," she said. "My *husband* gets to see my tits. Not a dirty little *nothing* like you." She was staring hard at my cock, her eyes hungry and her mouth open. She was loving this, and she probably would have loved it even more if I'd jumped onto her and torn those linen pants off of her and shoved my dick into her and pounded her ass into the ground, just like she said. Probably. I didn't feel like taking the

chance, so instead I just kept fucking my fist.

I was getting close, and so was she. Her hand was a blur of motion inside her slacks. Her fingers had pushed her panties well up into her cunt, and the top of the panties had slid down far enough for me to see that she didn't shave. There was a nice healthy patch of blonde curls there, and every last hair of it was sopping wet. "Come on, you bastard," she moaned. "Make that little thing squirt." She paused to take a panting breath. "If you even *can* squirt. You look to me like a *dribbler*." Again she laughed in delight at her own sneering abuse, and the movement of her hand became frantic. Her shoulders and back were starting to twitch, and she was making that grumbling sound in the back of her throat again.

A few more thrusts into my fist and I was there. I just had time to take a step closer to her, and then the feeling was roaring over me like a crashing wave. I made a croaking, explosive groan as my creamy cum started shooting out of me. I wanted more than anything to get some of it on her face, and I got my wish. A nice big stripe went up her left cheek, across the bridge of her nose and onto her forehead. After that, my knees started to buckle and I couldn't aim so well. Most of the rest of it went onto her blouse; the blouse that had once been cream colored but now had my dirty handprints over both of her tits.

And while I was still grunting and spurting, Mrs. Bouchet's shudders and twitches reached a pinnacle that engulfed her whole body, and she made a series of tight little whimpers, each one coinciding with a frenzied burst of motion by the hand she had at her pussy. And all the time her eyes were fixed on my cock and her mouth was open wide, as if she was hoping that some of my cum would land in there.

Then both of us were still, just breathing hard, she sitting in the dirt and me standing on unsteady legs. I was feeling pretty good, and I smiled down at her, half chuckling as I panted to catch my breath. "What are you grinning at, you simple-minded idiot?" she snapped. "And get that *worm* away from my face!" She aimed a backhanded slap at my cock, only missing because I took a hasty step

back.

“You’re cute, Mrs. B.,” I said, still smiling. “I think I like you.”

“Why aren’t you working? Do you think I pay you to stand around with your filthy little pee-pee sticking out of your pants?”

I gathered up my cock — which, even though it was now limp and indeed dribbling, was definitely neither filthy nor little — and tucked it away.

Mrs. Bouchet looked down at her blouse and the streamers of cum there. “Just look at this,” she said, her voice strangely soft now. “Just look at this mess you’ve made.” She was sitting with her arms braced behind her and both of her hands palm-down in the soil of the flowerbed. Now she lifted her right hand and used it to wipe at her blouse. But her hand was caked with dirt, and that dirt became mixed with the dripping streaks of my semen. She moved her hand back and forth across her front, leaving behind broad, stripy smudges of jism-mud. “Just look at this mess,” she said in a throaty whisper. Her eyes had the hazy, blissed-out look of a junky who’s feeling their drug of choice gurgle out of the needle and into the vein.

I watched her, enthralled by what she was doing, and by the obvious sexual pleasure it gave her. “You... You’ve got some cum on your face too,” I said after a while.

“Oh, do I?” she said innocently. And sure enough, up came her hand to her face, and with her eyes locked to mine the whole time, she smeared the mix of cum and dirt over her forehead, her nose, her left cheek, and down across her lips. She was breathing deep and fast again, and so was I.

And then she broke the spell, looking away from me, climbing to her feet. “I thought I told you to get on with your work,” she said, her voice still thick and breathy with sex. “I’ll be back to check on you later.” And off she went, her steps a little wobbly, her hand wiping at her face again. After she’d gone a few yards she noticed that her pants were still open and were starting to fall down, and she hitched them up and buttoned them as she walked.

I stood there, looking in the direction she’d gone even after she’d disappeared around the corner and I heard the front door of

the house open and close. I think a minute or two went by before I realized my mouth was hanging open.

I worked through the morning, finishing up the tulips and moving on to the irises and peonies. It was shortly after I came back from my lunch break when I saw Mrs. Bouchet coming my way again. She'd changed into a cute little summer dress; sunshine yellow and mid-thigh length, the front of it held up by a couple of spaghetti straps. An uncharitable person might have said that the outfit was a bit young for her, but not me. I thought she looked sweet enough to eat.

She marched up to me, all business. "What did you say your name is?" she demanded. "José or something?" I carefully pronounced "Jorge" for her again and she sighed with annoyance, as if Spanish names had been invented with the sole purpose of causing her inconvenience. "I don't know why you have such a silly name if you don't even have an accent," she said.

I couldn't quite follow the logic of that, but it seemed to me that Mrs. Bouchet really wanted me to have an accent. "I am sorry, Señora," I said, doing my best imitation of Eli Wallach in *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. "Is zee name mi mamá geeve to me."

She made another huffy sigh and turned her back to me, pretending to survey the work I'd done. There was no back to the top of her little sundress; just the front, held up by those spaghetti straps tied behind her neck. "You certainly haven't gotten much done here," she said, backing up toward me as she spoke. "I suppose it's to be expected that a man like you would be lazy as well as dirty."

I leaned in to her, taking hold of the free end of one of the straps to her dress and tugging on it, dipping my head into the crook of her neck, breathing in her perfume and the clean smell of her hair. "That's right, Señora Bouchet," I whispered into her ear. "Jorge is lazy, and you are a fucking fox."

"What are you doing? Get away!" she yelped, twisting around to back away from me. But I was still holding onto the thin strap of her dress, and as she stepped away the bow knot at the back of

her neck was pulled undone, and the sunshine yellow top fell down, exposing two of the nicest tits I'd ever been privileged to look at. They had a perfect, ski-jump concave slope to the upper side, then a couple of eager, upward-pointing, rosé pink nipples, and finally a pertly rounded convex curve at the underside, gliding down to her torso.

"Oh! *Now* look what you've done!" Mrs. Bouchet said, staring down at her own bare chest, but making no move to cover herself.

I was gaping at her like a kid on Christmas morning, looking at all the presents piled under the tree. "Damn, Miz B, those are *sweet!*" I was so full of admiration that I forgot to use my phony accent.

"Oh, stop being childish." She turned around and backed up toward me again, lifting the two untied straps of her dress and passing them back over her shoulders. "Now tie these up again. Right now." She was arching her back so she could thrust her ass as far as possible in my direction, and it brushed against the front of my pants.

I ignored the straps she was trying to hand back to me, and reached my right hand up under the back of her dress. No panties, as I'd suspected. Just the two smooth, warm, round globes of her little bottom. With my other hand, I reached around in front of her, to her tits, pushing down the front of her dress. "I think you want me to fuck you, Mrs. Bouchet," I whispered, burying my face in her hair, kissing the side of her neck. "I think you want me to put my cock up against that blonde pussy of yours, and you want me to slip the head between your little pink cunt lips, and then you want me to slide the whole thing up inside you, filling your belly with hard brown Mexican cock. Am I right, Mrs. Bouchet? Is that what you want?"

"How... How dare you, you pig, you prick!" she sighed, grinding her ass against my groping fingers and putting her own hand over mine where I was fondling her adorable left breast. "You stop that this instant. Take...your...dirty...hands...off me!" And then, a little belatedly, she matched her actions to her words and squirmed away from me. She pulled my arm away from her tits and twisted her body, then pushed hard at my chest with both hands. This action got

her feet tangled up, and as she pushed against me she lost her balance, falling backwards and landing on her ass at my feet for the second time that day. It was a neat piece of work; she almost succeeded in making it look like she hadn't planned and choreographed the whole maneuver. The only part that didn't seem to go quite the way she intended was that she landed with her ass on the lawn instead of the freshly turned soil of the flowerbed.

She quickly set about correcting that error. She rolled over onto her hands and knees and started crawling away from me, but at an angle that brought her past the edge of the lawn and onto the patch of dirt where I'd just planted a cluster of peonies. "How dare you touch me," she said over her shoulder. "How dare you speak to me like that." The skirt of her dress was covering her ass, so she reached back with her now-dirt-caked hand and lifted it, pulling it up onto her back. "How dare you say that you're going to fuck me," she said, lowering her chest to the earth so that the puffy outer lips of her cunt were aimed squarely at my face.

That was more than enough invitation for me. With one long stride I was up close behind her. I dropped to my knees, yanking my pants open as I went. Mrs. Bouchet let out a moaning, gasping "Aaggh..." as I moved my cock head up and down between those beckoning cunt lips. She was so slick with wetness that I almost slid into her before I intended to. But I held back, withdrawing a little so there was only a whisper of contact between my cock and her pussy.

"Get that filthy thing away from me," she growled, rocking back to try and force me into her. "Don't you dare fuck me!" I moved back with her, keeping myself poised just outside her entrance. "Aaggh!" she groaned again, and I could swear her cunt gaped open for a moment, like a mouth begging to be fed. "Don't you dare...put that dirty thing...in me!" The last two words came out almost as a sob, and again she shifted back to try to engulf me.

I couldn't hold back any longer. I nudged the head of my cock into her, and then I put both hands on her beautiful ass and pulled our bodies together, sliding in and in and in. This time, it was the two of us together who grunted out our "Aaggh!" as the front of my

thighs snuggled up close to the backs of hers.

And for a while it was just good old-fashioned fucking. I gripped her by the hips and slammed myself forward and into her, and she ground the heels of her hands into the soft dirt to push back at me. After a few minutes it was clear that she was climbing that final slope to the precipice of orgasm. Once again she began making a throaty growl far back in her throat, repeating it with each exhalation, the sound becoming ever louder and more urgent as she shoved her ass back at me harder and harder. Soon the urgency of her raspy exhalations reached a crescendo. Her back began arching upward over and over in a kind of spasmodic twitching, and she threw her head back and let out a series of sharp, gasping cries.

And then something truly amazing happened. Softly at first, but then harder and harder, I felt her cunt closing down around my cock, gripping me. It was like nothing I'd felt before. I'd known a few pussies that gave a little squeeze or a clutch, and that's all very nice when it happens. But Mrs. Bouchet's cunt-clenches were in a whole different league. This was firm and insistent and rippling and quivering and pulsating and liquid and sucking and utterly amazing. The entire time she was having her orgasm, her pussy was milking my cock like the world's greatest hand job and blowjob combined. That was more than enough to tip me over the edge, and in no time at all I was shaking with crazy spasms and convulsive shudders, grunting like a bull as I pumped rhythmic pulses of cum into that incredible, grasping cunt. And as the grand finale to my orgasm, I completely lost all my coordination and balance, and I toppled forward onto Mrs. Bouchet's back.

My weight suddenly landing on her was too much for Mrs. Bouchet. Her arms and legs gave way and she pitched forward, the two of us falling together like a couple of stacked-up pancakes dropped onto a plate. It's a wonder that I didn't knock the wind out of her when I landed on her like that, but she seemed fine. Her head was turned to the side with her right cheek resting on the ground, and she had a sleepy half-smile on her face as she lay there and moaned softly as my cock pumped its last few squirts of jism into her belly.

Some time later, once my awareness had slithered back into my head, I realized that it wasn't exactly gentlemanly to be lying on top of a woman with my weight grinding her body into the dirt, so I rolled off of her. Released from underneath me, Mrs. Bouchet rolled over herself, away from me and onto her back.

"Wow, that was really amazing," I said with groggy reverence.

"You got me all dirty, you stupid fucking pig," she said.

"Aw, come on, lady. Can't you turn that shit off for even..."

"Just look at my dress!" she interrupted. Her yellow sundress was now just a twisted wad of begrimed, no-longer-yellow fabric around her waist. She tugged a corner free from the wad and held it up. "It's ruined!"

I didn't look at the dress; I was looking at her body instead. The whole front of her, from the right side of her face down to her knees, was covered with dirt. It was the finest garden loam that too much money could buy, but it was still dirt. Parts of her just had a dusting, while elsewhere the stuff was caked on, mixed with her sweat and stuck to her in clots and lumps. I rolled toward her and reached out to cup one of her exquisite little breasts, moving my hand to smear the dirt into her skin. "God you're beautiful, babe," I cooed at her. "Clean or dirty, dressed or naked, you are the hottest, sexiest piece of ass..."

"How dare you touch me with your filthy hand, you prick." She said this in a soft, purring voice, making no move to get my hand away from her. She lifted her head and scanned down the length of herself, ignoring the dress this time and looking at her body. "Oh, look what you've done to me!" she sighed. "Filth everywhere, all over me! Even in my hair!" From the direction of her gaze, and the fact that she lifted her belly just as she said this, it was clear she wasn't talking about the hair on her head. And in fact there was a fair amount of dirt mixed and mingled with the golden blonde tendrils of her pubic hair. It looked fucking incredible.

She had her hands palm-down on the ground beside her and she was slowly, rhythmically, flexing her stomach muscles to hunch her pussy upward, and her breath was coming deep and fast. So it

didn't exactly require a Ph.D. in female sexuality to see that Mrs. Bouchet wasn't finished for the day. She wanted more, and with no other eligible guys in the immediate vicinity, I figured it was up to me to give it to her. It had been a decade or two since my sixteenth birthday, so I knew my cock wasn't going to be up to the job for a little while yet. No matter; I'd wanted to get my mouth on this lady's pussy since the first moment I saw her.

I relinquished my hold on her beautiful breast and maneuvered myself downward, at the same time positioning myself between her legs with my face at the level of her muff.

"What are you doing," she said in a flat, sleepy tone, spreading her legs for me as she spoke. "Don't you dare put your dirty mouth on me." This was immediately followed by a warm, husky moan of pleasure as she lifted her groin toward my face and I met her halfway, pressing my lips to her cunt and sliding my tongue along her slit and then up inside her.

I was quickly reminded of the fact that I'd just pumped one of my more enthusiastic offerings of cum into the pussy I was lapping, but I couldn't let that slow me down. When a woman opens her legs for a man — even if she's a woman who feels a need to play-act at being a mean, stuck-up bitch who doesn't want the very thing she's asking for — that man has a duty. So I lapped and licked, suckled and slobbered, and generally did the best job I knew how to do. And very quickly Mrs. Bouchet was too distracted to keep up her stuck-up bitch routine. She was moaning and sighing and murmuring sweet nothings like "Yes...yes!" and "Oh god...like that!" Her hands were still pressed to the ground beside her, and now she was opening and closing her fingers, grabbing and releasing fistfuls of soil. Before much time at all had passed, her various vocalizations were reaching a peak of volume and intensity. Digging the backs of her heels into the ground, she arched her belly upward, lifting her ass and driving her pussy hard against my mouth. When it came, her orgasm was signaled by a long, tremulous groan that seemed to last longer than any human lung capacity should have allowed.

I lifted my head from the luxurious wet nest between her

thighs. The lower half of my face was covered with a thick, dripping conglomeration of girl-cum and boy-cum, and I mopped away as much of it as I could with my hand. Then, I reached up and wiped it onto her belly, starting at her pubic fur and sweeping up across her stomach to her ribs, smearing the viscous mess into the dirt that already covered her.

Lying inert in her post-orgasmic stupor, Mrs. Bouchet didn't stir, didn't even fully open her eyes, but I think she knew what I was doing. "You...prick..." she mumbled, the words almost unintelligible. "Don't...touch...me..."

"I love you too, Mrs. B.," I chuckled, shimmying up beside her. I propped my head up in my hand and just lay there looking down at her pretty, pretty face. I think she dozed for a minute or two. When her eyes fluttered open I was gazing into them, grinning and feeling like a very lucky just-got-laid teenager. She didn't miss a beat; without even a momentary flicker of uncertainty, her eyes went hard, glaring back at me. "Why aren't you working?" she said. "Why are you just lying there? You should be ashamed, lying in the mud like a *pig*."

"Yes Ma'am," I said, still grinning. I had a tremendous urge to lean over and give her a big wet kiss on the lips, but I knew she'd probably smack me in the face if I tried it. I settled for putting my hand on her stomach, feeling the gooey, muddy mess there. She let my hand stay on her for a while, and then she rolled away from me and got to her feet. As she stood, the tangled-up wad of fabric that had once been her dress slipped down over her hips and fell to the ground. She stepped out of it and then bent to pick it up, giving me a terrific view of one of Mother Nature's finest asses in the process. She held up the little scrap of cloth and tsk'ed over it. "Just *ruined!*" she said, and then she was walking off toward the house, holding the dress in her hand and clothed in nothing but a layer of dirt.

I didn't see her again that day. I spent the rest of the afternoon digging up and replanting the peonies and irises, since our antics in the flowerbed had gotten all the bulbs pretty well mixed up and jumbled. It was while I was gathering up my tools to leave that I got

an idea for something I could do for Mrs. Bouchet. A little present I could give her, so to speak.



I'd barely started work the next morning when I saw her marching toward me. She was dressed in light beige shorts and a white knit blouse this morning, her blonde hair loose and fluffy around her head instead of pulled back in a bun as it had been the day before. While she was still a good distance away, I put my plan into action: I pulled out my cock and started taking a leak.

"It's about time you got here this morning," Mrs. Bouchet said as she got closer. "I don't pay you..." That's when she saw what I was doing.

I was standing sideways to her, pissing onto a lilac bush. (Urine is a good fertilizer, rich in nitrogen, but it really should be diluted before use. I'd have to give the lilac a good watering soon.) "What— What are you *doing*?" Mrs. Bouchet squawked out, playing the "outraged" card for all she had. "Why, you...you...dirty, filthy..." As I expected, she kept coming toward me. She wanted to get nice and close.

"Sorry Mrs. B., but when you gotta go, you gotta go, right?" Smiling innocently, I pivoted toward her, turning my whole body. I watched her face, using my peripheral vision to aim. My stream splashed across the tops of her white Sperry Top-Sider sneakers, her ankles, and up onto her shins. I waggled a little from side to side to make sure I got both legs.

Her mouth snapped open and her eyes widened, her whole face a mask of shock and outrage. She gasped, and did it in three distinct stages, sucking in a breath, then another, and then another still, until her lungs were filled to maximum and her little tits were pressed tight to the inside of her shirt. Then she froze like that, her mouth open, her lungs full, her tits out. I finished peeing and gave myself a few shakes, but decided not to put my cock away just yet.

Still she stood there frozen. Just when I was beginning to worry

that she'd pass out if she didn't start breathing again soon, the pent-up breath came out of her in an explosive shriek. "Oh!" she yelled, and then, somewhat softer, "Oh!" and finally a third one, softer still: "Oh!" She staggered backward with the third exclamation, bending over at the waist, a shiver running through her body and her eyes rolling up in their sockets. Slap my ass and call me King of the Aztecs if it didn't look like she was having an orgasm.

And then she lunged at me. If I'd had time to think I would have been afraid, but she didn't give me the chance. In a blink she had her arms around me and her body mashed against mine. "You fucking filthy prick," she panted at me. "You dirty, motherfucking bastard." She wriggled around until she had one of my thighs between hers, and then she was humping me, grinding her crotch up and down along my leg. Sounds were coming from her mouth, but nothing resembling words. She was grunting, moaning, whimpering. She opened her mouth and bit down on the collar of my shirt, then moaned some more, her voice burbling wetly through her mostly-closed lips. Then, after only seconds of dry-humping me, her body went into a tight, shuddering spasm that lasted for maybe a minute or two, after which she went limp, crumpling down to a crouching position at my feet.

"Oh," she said. Her head and upper body were leaning against my legs, her eyes exactly at the level of my cock, which had in turn been coaxed hard by her rampant reaction, jutting out parallel to the ground and pointing in the direction of the morning sun. Mrs. Bouchet's eyes were fixed on that part of me, following it as it bobbed and waggled. "You pissed on me," she said to my cock.

"Yes Ma'am," I admitted. "I had a feeling you might enjoy it."

Her eyes went up to mine, and a smile — an actual *smile* — flashed briefly on her face. It vanished from her lips almost instantly, but a certain warmth, a certain fondness even, stayed in her eyes. "You filthy bastard," she said softly. And then she was getting to her feet, pulling on my arm and leaning against me with the easy familiarity of a long-time lover. Without another word she went off

in the direction of the house, wavering unsteadily down the garden path. I looked after her for a while, and then I folded my hard cock up against my belly so I could zip up my pants and get back to work.

It was maybe a half hour later when she came out of the house again. She was dressed the same: Shorts, blouse, Sperry Top-Siders, the last of these perhaps not so white as they had been before I tinkled on them. "I called your office," she said as soon as she was close to me.

She paused, giving me some time to imagine how that conversation might have gone: "*He knocked me down in the dirt, he jerked off onto my face and my blouse, he ripped my clothes off, he knocked me down in the dirt again, he fucked me from behind like a dog, he smeared his cum onto me, and let's see...oh yes, this morning he pissed on me.*" I'm a co-owner of the company, so it's not like they could just fire my ass with a snap of their fingers, but still...

After letting me stew for a bit longer, she went on. "I told them I'll need you for some additional work," she said. "I want you to re-sod part of the backyard. I'll show you." She started tromping off, almost immediately turning to look back to see if I was following her. "Well, come on!" she huffed.

She led me around the house to where there was a flagstone-paved patio that let out onto a few hundred square feet of lawn, sunken from the surrounding property and bordered by a low retaining wall. "This lower section of the yard," she said, walking out onto the grass. "What do you think?"

The lawn was in good shape. It had a couple of tufts of crabgrass and one lonely dandelion, but otherwise it was fine. "You want this resodded?"

"Yes!" she insisted. "Dig it all up, so it's just dirt! And then..." here her voice got softer, disinterested. "I don't know, plant some grass seed or whatever it is you do."

"Uh-huh," I said, starting to get the picture. I looked around, squinting an appraising, expert eye at the little field. "I can get a small rototiller in here, dig all of this up in a couple of hours." I took a step closer to her and lowered my voice. "The tiller will grind up

the grass and roots, mix it in with the soil and give it all a nice fluffy texture. This whole area will be nothing but rich, brown dirt. I'll rake out any rocks that come up, and the place will be as soft and comfy as a big featherbed. You could roll around in it all day long. How does that sound?"

"Don't be disgusting!" she said snippily, but as I'd been speaking I could see her lips parting, her nostrils flaring, her breath quickening.

"And then we could wet it down with a hose, and it will be one big mud pit," I said. "How does *that* sound?"

She sucked in a little breath, her lips quivering. "Is the soil here all right?" she asked. "I mean, is it adequate for anything I might want to plant?"

"Yeah, sure. It'll be just fine—"

"Bend down and take a good look," she commanded, pointing at the ground directly in front of her feet. "Don't just guess. Look at it."

I did what she wanted. I knelt down at her feet, like a lowly serf genuflecting in front of his empress. She took a small step forward, so that her khaki-covered pussy was close to my face. I reached down and ripped a tuft of grass out of the ground. "Yep, this is real good loam," I said, not looking at the scrap of turf in my hand, but leaning my head in toward the juncture of Mrs. Bouchet's legs and sniffing in the smell of her — the blend of perfumed soap and the damp earthiness of a hungry cunt — a combination that I was coming to think of as her signature.

"Good," she said. "Get started on that right now." She turned suddenly and walked away from me, leaving me squatting on the ground, a tuft of grass in my hand, my head angled toward where her pussy had been. "Yes, my horny little queen," I murmured.

So I went to my truck and got out the small rototiller. As I was trundling it up and down the patch of lawn, Mrs. Bouchet lay in one of the reclining deck chairs in the patio, wearing sunglasses so I couldn't tell if she was watching me. At one point she idly put her right hand to her crotch and rubbed herself for a few seconds, and I

almost rammed the rototiller into one of the retaining walls.

Finally it was done. The section of lawn was now a tilled-up patch of dirt, as soft and fluffy as a featherbed, just like I promised. Mrs. Bouchet came strolling over, looking as queenly and imperious as she ever had. She stood at the edge of the yard, surveying my work, visibly breathing in the smell of the freshly turned soil. "Very nice," she said, a hint of a tremor in her voice. After a pause she added, "You said something about hosing it down? Getting it...wet?" The corner of her mouth twitched, and her lips looked swollen.

"Yes Ma'am. Would you like me to do that?"

"Yes, of course!" She made it sound like I'd asked the world's stupidest question.

I went around to the side of the house where the nearest hose and spigot were. By the time I was back, dragging the hose behind me, there was no sign of her. I shrugged, and set about spraying water all over the little yard. Time passed, and just when I was starting to feel like a complete idiot for standing there and carefully irrigating a patch of bare dirt, I saw Mrs. Bouchet coming back along the path.

I don't remember turning off the hose or dropping it to the ground, but I guess I must have done both. What I do remember is her walking toward me, calm, composed, poised; a vision of grace and elegance. She was wearing an evening gown, sleeveless and strapless, with a bodice that fit so snugly it looked like she'd been stitched into it. It was snug over her hips as well, and then the skirt flared out and hung in soft folds to the ground, hiding her feet. And it was white. Transcendently white, luminescent and glowing in the sunlight. That dress made my Mrs. Bouchet look like something ethereal, otherworldly. An angel and a fairy queen and a sex goddess, all rolled into one.

Without even glancing at me, she walked past me and out onto the mud-patch. Like a man hypnotized, like a dog on a leash, I followed behind her until she stopped, standing in the dead center of the yard. The hem of her gown touched the ground, and I could see the water and dirt already starting to soak up into it. She turned and faced me, knowing that I'd followed her. Sunlight fell across her face

and flashed in her blonde hair. She smiled at me. “Do you like my dress, Jorge?” Her hand went to her stomach, slid down and across to her hip, then moved back in to linger over her pubis.

“It’s beautiful,” I said, “but I’m afraid it might get dirty.” I reached a hand out to one of her tits, just puckering beneath the fabric.

With effortless speed, her own hand came up and parried mine, knocking it away before I touched her. “It won’t get dirty if you don’t *touch* me, you pig!” She was still smiling at me, her eyes alight with laughter.

“But you *want* me to touch you, don’t you, Mrs. B.?” I said, more as a statement than a question. “You want me to grab you with my dirty hands and knock you down in this mud and roll you around so that dress of yours gets all filthy, and then you want me to climb on top of you and shove my dick into your sweet cunt and fuck you, right in the middle of all this mud.”

“There you go again, telling me what I want.” She turned her face away from me, looking off into the distance.

“But that *is* what you want, Mrs. B.,” I said, moving closer to her. My cock was throbbing in my pants, and my hands were twitching with the need to touch her, to hold her.

She turned back to me and arched her eyebrows dismissively. “Maybe I do, and maybe I don’t. Maybe I think you’ve touched me quite enough already. Maybe you’re just a stupid, dirty little man and I’m tired of you.”

I couldn’t think of a snappy comeback to that, so I just lunged at her, reaching out to grab her with both hands. But it was as if she was waiting for exactly that move, and knew to the millisecond when it was coming. Light as a kitten, she hopped back and to the side, and then she was grabbing my arm with both of her little hands and *yanking* with more strength than anyone her size should have, and somehow I was pitching forward and I couldn’t get my feet back under me soon enough and...

With a resounding splat, I landed in the mud, planting myself in it full-length, from feet to face. Little vixen must have taken Judo

or something, I thought to myself as I lifted my face out of the mud. When I had wiped some of the muck away from my eyes, I saw her laughing hysterically, hopping about, bending over and slapping both knees with both hands. “Ooh, *poor* Jorge!” she squealed. “Did you fall down in the mud? Did you get all dirty?” As she skipped and hopped around me, I could see that her feet were bare, could see the mud splashing up onto her legs. At one point she danced up to me and stepped over me, planting her foot on my butt as she did so. I just lay there and watched her for a while, marveling. She was a woman transformed, as if by magic. The stuck-up bitch persona was gone, and in its place was this frolicking nymph, this dancing wood sprite, this sexy little elf.

I wiped more mud off my face and grinned at her. “You’re gonna get it, you...” I said, climbing to my feet. I made a dive at her, but she flitted away and I missed again, landing myself back in the mud. This brought fresh peals of delighted laughter from her, and she danced and hopped some more. I got up again, and then the two of us were running in circles around the mud pit like a couple of crazed eight-year-olds, she shrieking, me roaring, both of us laughing insanely.

After many, many attempts, one of my flying tackles finally paid off. I caught her by the ankles and down she went in a face-first splat, just as I had many times before her. “Oh, my *dress!*” she squealed as she rolled over, still laughing. She sat up, pawing at the mud that covered her chest. “My beautiful, beautiful dress!” With her muddy hand she pulled down the front of the gown, baring her gorgeous little breasts and smearing more mud over them. I was lying chest-down at her feet where my last flying tackle had left me, holding myself up on my elbows. She looked at me, the breathless remnants of laughter still puffing out of her, and our eyes locked. She left off spreading mud onto her tits and began pulling up the front of her gown’s long skirt. Slowly, teasingly, she inched the soggy fabric up and up, showing me her shins, her knees, then her thighs, spreading her legs as the fabric inched higher and higher, finally revealing her pussy, the golden curls sparkling in the sunlight.

“Now I’ve got you,” I growled at her, grinning. “I’m going to climb on top of you and fuck you and pound your ass clear down to China!” I got up on my knees and started waddling up toward her, between her spread legs, opening my pants and pulling out my cock as I went. Grinning back at me, she watched me coming, her eyes flicking between my face and the hard cock that was leading the way for me, already aimed at its destination. She watched and waited, her cunt open and glistening wet.

And then with another laughing squeal she exploded up off the ground and flew at me. Her hands slammed into my shoulders, knocking me off balance, and once again I landed in the mud, on my back this time. “So now you’ve got me, eh?” she laughed, crouching over me with her hands still on my shoulders. “We’ll see who’s got who!” She sat down on my stomach and brought her legs forward, planting one foot in the mud on either side of my head. “Who’s got who? Huh?” she laughed, lifting her feet and slapping them down so the mud splattered up and onto my face.

I could have thrown her off me with little effort, but I didn’t want to. She was enjoying herself too much. Her next move was to grab her dress with both hands and lift it off over her head. “Ooh, my poor dress,” she lamented, holding the balled-up wad of muddy fabric in both hands and then throwing it aside. “You sure do have a knack for ruining my clothes, Jorge.” Before I could answer she had her hands on the front of my shirt, and with a quick yank she ripped it open, tearing off all the buttons. “Oops, I think I just ruined your shirt,” she giggled down at me, rubbing her muddy hands over my chest.

She shifted back then, folding her legs underneath her and sitting on me so my cock was laying up on my belly and the shaft was nestled between the spread lips of her cunt. The sensation was incredible and exquisite, but I wanted more. “Baby, I need to be inside you,” I begged. “I need to be inside that sweet pussy of yours.”

“But I’m on top, Jorge,” she said in a singsong voice. “If we fuck like this, I’ll pound your ass clear down to China!”

“Yes, please,” I moaned helplessly. She chuckled, and then

GARDENING DAYS

lifted up. My cock bobbed up from my belly, and without touching it, with slow and precise movements, she positioned herself so the head was just at her entrance. She stayed like that for a few seconds, the lips of her cunt delicately kissing the tip of my cock, and then she slid down onto me, engulfing me with one long stroke. When she finished taking me in, she was leaning low over me and our faces were close. We gasped and grunted together, then laughed together.

She began lifting and dropping her hips, slamming her cunt down on me, fucking me. I felt those incredible cunt-muscles of hers gripping me, stroking me, milking me, and I writhed underneath her, fireworks exploding in my brain. But that wasn't the most amazing thing; not by far. The most amazing thing came a moment later, when she leaned low over me, bringing her face close to mine again, and then closer still, until our lips were brushing together, and then our mouths were open and we were kissing frantically, passionately, clumsily, like new lovers. I felt her hands on my face, one on each cheek; hands that were wet and gritty with mud that she was smearing onto me. I reached down beside us to get fistfuls of mud myself, then brought my hands up to her back and spread it onto her, at the same time caressing her and holding her tight to me. I mumbled up at her, the words slurred by our kissing, "We're getting dirty," I said. "We're getting all dirty."

LACED



BY AMÉLIE HOPE

CHAPTER ONE

T h e B o o k i n g



I watched from the living room doorway as Ella stared at the frame in her hands, running a fingertip across the grooved edge of the cool silver. Such a heavy object, containing a photo of such a light and joyous moment in her life. In *their* lives. Their wedding day. She touched a fingertip to the ring that adorned her finger in the photograph, and she smiled at it: a ring of love, symbolising a connection with another for all eternity. She lifted a hand and fingered the ring that fell heavily from the chain around her neck. I wondered of which ring she was fondest; the one put so lovingly on her finger by the man of her dreams, or the one secured so tenderly in place by myself and Kobe — the people who owned her; heart, mind, body and soul.

“It really was a very special day.” I sat beside Ella on the sofa and handed her a glass of Veuve.

“I know,” Ella whispered, still looking down at the frame in her hands. “It brought you back to me, didn’t it?”

Brushing the hair from Ella’s eyes and tucking it behind her ear, I nodded, grateful that fate dealt a hand in my favour two years ago to the day. I hadn’t realised that there was something missing from my life until I walked into Ella’s again by sheer coincidence. And Kobe? Well, he was a very, very welcome addition indeed.

“Look at me,” I lifted Ella’s chin with my finger, forcing our eyes to meet. “The day Kobe hired me as your wedding planner was the day I was reunited with the woman who I fell for all those years ago. You, my perfect little kitten, were always the one that got away.”

Ella blushed, her cheeks flushing a light shade of pink as they always did when I lavished her with such praise.

“It was the most amazing day of my life, Joanne. Sometimes...” Ella looked back down at the photo in her hand, “I still can’t believe any of it happened. It seems too much like a movie.”

I chuckled softly and kissed Ella’s nose. “A blue movie?”

“Yes, a very, very, very blue movie.”

Sinking back into the sofa’s cushions, I hooked a finger through the large silver hoop that decorated the delicate chain around her neck, and pulled her to me. “You were such a perfect kitten, even back then before you gave yourself to me, so untainted...so pure.” I pressed my lips to hers firmly, my tongue commanding and possessive.

“Are you going to be a good kitten for me tonight?”

Nodding against my lips, Ella agreed, assuming the feline persona that I liked so much.

“Good girl.”



Two years and six months earlier

“Through here, kitten!” Kobe yelled as his fiancée entered the house and slammed the front door behind her.

Ella stopped short in the living room doorway, suddenly frozen to the spot, half in and half out of her coat. Our eyes locked and I stared back at her, my mug of tea midway to my mouth. I couldn’t move, couldn’t think. I just stared ahead at the woman who had emerged from the hallway.

Oblivious to it all, Kobe introduced us as if we were strangers, which of course we were. I hadn’t seen her for seven years, not since the day we graduated. Not since the day I tucked her hair behind her ear, kissed her one last time and bid her farewell. Sometimes I can still taste the salt from her tears seeping into my mouth through that kiss. She, begging me to stay with her forever. Me, knowing that I could never reciprocate the devotion she’d shown me, knowing that I could never make a vow to just one person, and knowing that I could

never break her heart. So instead, I broke mine. Seven long years of forced separation.

“Ella, this is Joanne, the wedding planner I was telling you about.” He stood and scooped Ella into his arms. “And this, Joanne, is my beautiful fiancée, Ella.”

Ella had done well. Kobe was tall and strong, ex-military with a commanding presence and an easy smile. He was also a besotted fool, head over heels in love. Love — such a dirty word. One of life’s great falsities. The bitterness I felt inside caused me to silently mock each couple as I beautified their special day. Didn’t they know that love doesn’t exist?

My heart raced and my throat grew dry. I watched Ella extend her hand to me as if in slow motion, her expression still one of shock. I shook it and instantly felt the same spark that had existed all those years ago.

“Nice to meet you.” Her smile was soft and genuine. My heart lurched and another spark flared. Or maybe it was nausea, I had been running a fever lately.

“You too. Your fiancé has been telling me all about how he proposed, very romantic indeed.” I returned her smile. God, she was beautiful. The last time I saw that smile was when we made love for the last time. It had been a mutual decision to call it quits, both of us leaving our Alma Mater and returning to the opposite ends of the country. I cherished the memory of that final time; the soft curves of her body as I skimmed her flesh, the weight of her on me as we kissed, the smell of her shampoo. As I rose from the chair and shook her hand, I smelt it again — still the same brand. My good, predictable Ella.

“Not that story again, Kobe. I wish you’d stop telling people.” She said through gritted teeth.

“What!? It’s a great story!”

“It’s a rude story!”

“Oh I don’t know, Ella,” I spoke softly, still holding her hand in mine. “I think your man proposing to you by placing a glinting Cartier rock in your kitty bowl, and watching you lap up all the milk

until you found it is a pretty *great* story.”

And there it was again, that rosy pink hue that dapples her cheeks whenever embarrassment comes knocking. I always did love to tease her, such an easy and loveable pastime. We sat around the coffee table in their shabby chic, two bed semi on the outskirts of town. Suburbia: a dark place full of sordid secrets that would make your head spin. That’s right, it may appear to be all window boxes and yummy mummies on the surface, but beneath that middle-class exterior lies a wealth of blackmail material, and it would seem that my old friend Ella and her husband-to-be are no exception to this rule.

“Kitten,” I whispered in her ear as I hugged her goodbye. “I like it. Suits you perfectly.”

“Thank you, Joey. It’s really great to see you again. I’m...I’m glad you’re here.”

“Me too.”

CHAPTER TWO

T h e A s s e s s m e n t



“I’ve seen the way you look at her, Ella,” Kobe whispered three weeks later as we were going through colour themes for the big day. Although he’d not whispered cautiously enough, and I heard the statement loud and clear.

“What do you mean?” Ella sounded nervous as he slipped his hand from her shoulder, along her torso and down to her bottom, where he rested a possessive palm on her left cheek.

“The colour your cheeks blush when you’re near her, the way you get flirtatious, but timid. The woman has you tongue-tied, Ella, and don’t even try and hide the fact that you’ve been as horny as fuck ever since we met her! Not that I’m complaining.” Kobe laughed and squeezed her ass.

I continued to flip through the pages of my notepad, checking off item after item on my to-do list. Preparations were coming along nicely, but there was still so much to do and I’m not sure Ella or Kobe really understood that. But then the happy couples never do, do they? That’s why they hire someone to do all the dirty work for them. At least I was making twice the going rate. Perhaps I should’ve felt guilty, but no. If anything, I deserved another hundred per hour for having to work so closely alongside Ella. Keeping my fingers to myself was proving difficult. Very difficult indeed.

“Earth to Joanne!” I swatted Kobe’s hand out of my face, annoyed that I’d let my mind wander. “I said, you think my fiancée here is pretty, don’t you?”

I looked from Ella to Kobe and back again. “Yes, very much

so.”

And there was that blush again, her cheeks flushing a rosy shade of pink as she stood silently next to her man.

“Show her.”

“*What?*” Ella and I sang in unison.

Kobe stood his ground, teasing us gently in the direction he wanted us to go. “Don’t be shy, Joanne. Come and show Ella how pretty she is.”

And like a moth to a flame I took the bait. “Oh I’m not shy.” I marched up to them and stood in front of Ella, shock and worry still twitching all over her delicate face. I curled a loose tendril of her long black hair around my finger before tucking it behind her ear. “Are you okay?”

She nodded silently, just like she did all those years ago when I took her by the hand and led her into a whole new world. Our first night together, another cherished memory. I stroked her cheek and sparks began to pop inside my pussy. *Damn that woman!* Her bottom lip trembled and I could tell she was terrified. “It’s okay, kitten,” I said softly and pressed my lips gently to hers.

She tensed and for a split second and I pulled back to give her a chance to put an end to the ridiculous charade that Kobe had started. Instead she gripped the back of my neck and pulled me to her, lips crushing against mine. She tasted divine, all mint and honey, a delicious mixture that made me hungry for more. The kiss grew deep, seeming so foreign and yet so familiar at the same time. A legacy of moments past. Tangling my fingers into her hair, I pulled her as tightly to me as I could, the world around me disappearing until the only thing that existed was Ella and the soft, sweet tongue that slid over my own.

“Joanne, fuck!” she breathed as we finally parted. She still looked scared, her big blue eyes wide and full of questions.

“Not now, kitten.” It wasn’t the time for revelations. Ella was my secret and I wanted to keep her for a bit longer.

Kobe clapped his hands loudly. “Bravo, Ella! Anyone would believe that this wasn’t the first time you’ve kissed a girl.”

He kissed her cheek, his eyes on me and a smirk on his lips. There was something about this man, and I knew that he had just manipulated us both, tricked us into starting something that neither of us would have the power to stop until it either burst into bloom... or burst into flame.

Wrapping a protective arm around Ella's waist, Kobe led her away from me and back towards the grand staircase that led up to the hotel suites, but not before winking and saying the words that would change things forever: "Chenonceau Suite, 9pm."



Oh dear god! I thought as I climbed the staircase that ascended to the Chenonceau Suite. The hotel was beautiful, a grand French Chateau-style building in picturesque English countryside. A fine venue for a wedding. We'd been there since nine o'clock in the morning, assessing the Grand Hall for its suitability for the ceremony and evening frivolity. We had tasted wines, supped champagnes, nibbled on canapés, feasted on a variety of delicious main courses and decadent desserts, and sampled the perfect wedding breakfast. But now, as I made my way along the never-ending corridor in my knee-length navy shift dress and elegant black heels, I was beginning to regret the day Kobe booked me as their wedding planner.

I stood outside the suite, staring at the golden plaque on the door. '*Chenonceau*'. I raised my fist to knock, waiting until the hand on my watch struck 9pm as Kobe had instructed. But I never made contact with the oak. The door swung open and Kobe greeted me with a smile on his face and a glass of champagne in his hand.

"For you, Miss Anderson," he said in his usual charming fashion as I took the glass and entered the room.

Instantly my gaze fell upon Ella. There she stood, in the centre of the room, dressed in black satin lingerie, high patent leather shoes, a silk blindfold and a thick black leather collar to which a heavy silver chain leash was attached. Her insubstantial and costly little thong barely covered anything at all. While her parted lips were painted in

a rich glossy plum lipstick, and every breath she exhaled was shaky and short.

Kobe watched me closely, studying the way I looked at his fiancée. My arousal was undeniable, my heart rate climbing and my pussy moistening as my eyes trailed over her body. A body that I had not touched for seven years. A body that I had hungered for those seven years since.

“Beautiful isn’t she?” he said, standing behind her and running his hands over the curves of her vulnerable body. “I’ve seen the way you look at her, Joanne, and I knew from the moment I met you that you would be perfect for her. For us.”

“Excuse me, I’m not entirely sure I understand what you’re alluding to?”

He smiled and I felt another piece of my resolve disappear. Soon there would be no semblance of the fierce tigress left and I would melt into a blithering idiot at the hands of this couple.

“I’ve long been looking for someone else, a playmate for my sweet little kitten here.”

I gulped, my legs trembling in anticipation of how the next moments would play out.

“Kneel,” he said to Ella, pushing her to her knees until she knelt at his feet. I watched Kobe ruffle her hair and whisper affectionately, “Good girl.”

My cunt twitched. There was something about them, the way they were best friends one moment, Ella independent and headstrong, then something in the air would change and she would become docile and subservient. And it was so hot to watch that switch take place. *So fucking hot!*

“Come,” he said. His voice was firm, loud and commanding. This was a man who enjoyed asserting his authority over others. But that was obvious really, considering his military background. Apparently, a near fatal injury on the front line five years ago had rendered him redundant. For a natural leader with no one to lead, it would appear that his relationship with Ella filled this void nicely.

“Now!”

I jumped, jerked back to the present by his disgruntled yell. *Shit!* He was talking to me. He smiled, enjoying the moment as recognition flitted across my face.

“Don’t be shy now, Joanne,” He said as he circled me slowly. “I know very well that you like this sort of thing.”

“This *‘sort of thing?’*”

He stopped behind me, his lips brushing my earlobe as he spoke the words that went straight to my pussy. “I know that this is your kink, having a delicious feline to play with.”

I opened my mouth to speak, but how was I meant to respond to that? My heart rate increased, each beat pounding in my chest, knocking on the bones of my rib cage in an attempt to burst free.

“There’s no need to speak,” he said as he handed me a photo.

It was a photograph of me. I smiled as I studied the picture for a moment. A friend had invited me as a guest to a party. A very different type of party. This wasn’t your usual celebratory shindig. This was an event of such grandiose frivolity that it had made my head spin. It was the moment I entered into a whole new world. A world of hedonism and debauchery. A world where deviance and promiscuity were welcomed and celebrated.

Kobe took the photo from me. “You look amazing in that photo...the shiny black latex, the dark eyes, the thigh high boots. The whip.”

I smirked. I knew what he was getting at. That photograph had captured me administering my first strike on a willing and eager playmate, her pale derrière fresh and unmarked. After that first strike I was sold — no going back. The fact that she was wearing cute kitten ears, a collar and the furriest tail-plug I’d set eyes upon made the moment that much sweeter.

“Do it,” he crooned into my ear as he slid a crop into my unsuspecting hand. The thumping in my chest subsided briefly as I turned the implement in my palms, running my fingers along its slender stem. The pounding in my cunt was strong, a vibrant throb that was unyielding against the sight of my beautiful friend as she crouched obediently on the floor, silently waiting for her master to

return. Her master who was currently telling me just what the bad kitty had done lately, what a naughty slut she had been and how she must be punished.

I looked from Ella to Kobe, disbelieving the situation I had walked into. Although she couldn't see through the blindfold, I could tell she was scared and Kobe confirmed my thoughts. "Of course she's nervous," he said. "I told her I had a surprise for her, though she doesn't know what...*or who*...it is."

I snapped the crop against my open palm, not hard enough to hurt me, but loud enough to make Ella's head snap up. I walked across the room, the heels of my stilettos clicking on the rustic stone floor as I approached. I bent down and ran my fingers along her spine, fingertips tickling her skin and covering her in a layer of goose bumps like I knew it would. This is a move she adored all those years ago, when we spent time making love as young women. It seems now, in her late-twenties, she still enjoyed it just as much.

She always did remind me of a cat, I mused as I ruffled her messy black hair before standing up and assuming a more authoritative role. I had a job to do, and that job was not to fawn over memories past. I retrieved a large purple cushion from the bed in the corner of the French chamber.

"Up you come..." I cooed.

At the sound of my voice, her lips parted and she gasped. It was a sound that went straight to my cunt and caused my nipples to peak in excitement.

I stroked her beneath her chin until she manoeuvred herself onto the cushion so that her knees and elbows were protected from the harsh stone floor. Once she was in position, I leant close to her ear and whispered, "Be a good kitten for me, won't you Ella, like you were back in my bedroom seven years ago." I delighted as her whole body shuddered in response.

"Earlier this month," Kobe began, "I came home early one day to find my kitten here laying on the sofa in nothing but an open silk robe, strumming her clit whilst watching porn. Lesbian porn. A punishable offence wouldn't you say, Miss Anderson?"

I tapped the end of the crop in my palm and pondered this revelation. “Well, I can certainly understand your predicament, Mr. Connors, but I cannot condemn the act of masturbation, nor of indulging the sense of sight by watching beautiful women tease and touch each other. What I don’t condone, however, is the fact that this little kitty committed the act of self-gratification with neither your presence nor your permission. Surely her pleasure would have been greater with a voyeur in her midst.”

His smile was genuine, eyes gleaming with a sexual mischief I hadn’t encountered for a while. “Quite so, and now she should learn the consequences of such misconduct. Five fearsome flicks of the whip should do the trick, wouldn’t you say?”

My pussy grew moist at the mere mention of such pervery. Positioning myself at her rear, I tapped the tip of the crop against Ella’s upturned bottom, dragging it along the seam of her pussy, her intimate flesh protected only by a thin strip of satin, her buttocks nearly bare. She mewled, and Kobe chastised her for the noise she made.

“I will remain silent unless spoken to, Sir,” she said quietly.

Lifting the crop from her sodden pussy to my nose, I inhaled her scent and licked the dampness from the end of the implement, my gaze fixed on Kobe. He was steadfast, staring at me with dark eyes that gave nothing away. The only evidence of his arousal was the growing bulge in his tight leather pants.

“You will count after each strike, is that understood?” I said, pulling the crop back and readying myself for the flick of the wrist.

“Yes, Mistress.”

The first strike was quick, allowing Ella no time to prepare herself for the sting. Her head bucked, but she remained mute, save for a short, sharp intake of breath.

“Good girl,” I said as I watched the stricken flesh redden and swell into an angry line. My cunt flooded at the sight.

“One. Thank you, Mistress.”

I smirked, drawing back my arm in preparation for the next strike, savouring the seconds that passed, knowing full well that for

Ella those seconds would seem like hours. That's what I liked the most, to watch them squirm in anticipation. I aimed the second strike just below the first, on the lower quarter of her derriere. This time she yelped.

"Ella!" Kobe shouted.

"I'm sorry, Sir! Two, thank you, Mistress."

If anything, the second strike bore better results than the first, the welt a glowing testament to the ferocity with which it had been so lovingly imparted. The angry marks lined her bottom, to be joined quickly by a further two.

"Three... Ah!!... F-four, thank you, Mistress."

"You're most welcome, kitten." I said softly, and I noticed her lips had begun to tremble in anticipation of the final strike. I knew that she would never say 'Stop'. She would never give up like that, and she would never give up on me. But a good mistress knows when her toy is winding down.

"Now, I have one last strike," I continued as I circled Ella, my heels clicking again on the hard stone floor. "But I'm not so sure you deserve it—"

"Oh, I don't know about that, Miss Anderson," Kobe cut in sharply. "As you've said, she was caught watching pornography with neither my presence *nor* my permission. Both offenses are punishable concurrently and completely. I'd thought you capable of carrying out the cause, but it seems I am mistaken."

I balked at his tone, but quickly recovered myself. I'd been in this position before. With two dominants and only one toy, one master often tested the resolve of the other. I would not be so easily dislodged.

Kobe pushed off the wall and walked towards us, his hand outstretched as he reached for the whip.

I clutched the whip to my chest. "No, Mr. Connors. You gave this whip to me, and it is now mine to do with as I see fit."

He eyed me up and down. Finally, after a moment of consideration, he nodded and resumed his observant position. Stepping back, I dropped my arm, letting the whip rest by my side for

a few moments as I gazed at Ella. Her ass was very red, her slender arms shook from holding herself in position, and tiny beads of sweat had begun to mist on her forehead. But now that I'd been tested, I would be unable to back down. And my test had become Ella's test.

"Please, Mistress..." she whispered.

Thwack!

"No talking!" I shouted as the crop cut through the air and cracked a sleek line across the centre of both cheeks.

"Fiiiiiiiive..." Ella wailed. "Thank you...Mistress," she panted.

Her eyes were covered, but I knew she was crying beneath the fabric. It made me wet, her tears of distress and of devotion. I dropped the whip and ripped off her blindfold as I knelt to the floor. I cupped her cheeks gently in my hands and pressed my lips to hers, the salt from her tears mingling in our mouths as I kissed her desperately.

"Thank you, Miss Anderson, you are free to go," Kobe said tersely, his pride still smarting. "We'll reconvene tomorrow morning in the breakfast room at 8:30am to go over the menu options and floral arrangements."

I was forced out of the room by Kobe, my cunt on fire and in desperate need of attention. I looked at Ella on the floor, still kneeling and staring at me with tearstained eyes, her pale bottom now rouge with the fruits of my labour. I hurried back to my room, stumbling down the stairs as I ran too fast in my heels. Once inside I closed my eyes and rested against the wall trying to make sense of what had just happened. I felt again that feeling in my heart. The same feeling I had for Ella seven years ago. The feeling that never really went away.

I made light work of getting ready for bed, wanting to hide under the duvet and fall asleep rather than replay the scene with Ella over and over in my mind. She was so irresistible — her perfect bottom presented for my pleasure, the slim strip of fabric nestled between two fleshy cheeks.

My bed was cold, the duvet mocking my loneliness in the solitude of the room. I closed my eyes, but couldn't escape the image

AMÉLIE HOPE

of Ella. Then it hit me — a pang of jealousy that told me everything I needed to know. I was still in love with her. Knowing she was with Kobe in that suite now, that it was his lips kissing her better, taking her pain away, pain that I had inflicted with the crop. It should've been me kissing her better, making her mew and purr as I stroked her body back to arousal.

She used to purr for me. The first night we spent together, Ella was so shy and nervous, biting her plump bottom lip until it nearly split and bled. I smoothed my hand across the flat of my stomach and down to the soft curls that covered my pussy, thinking of the first night we fucked.

CHAPTER THREE

T h e P l a n n i n g



The next morning couldn't come soon enough.

"How's your bottom?" I asked as I joined Ella and Kobe for breakfast at 8:30am as requested.

Ella smiled shyly, "Sore, thank you, Mistress."

"So sore in fact, that it needs some careful attention," Kobe smiled warmly as he spoke. "We thought that you might be able to help with that this morning. Once we've finished breakfast and gone over the flowers? Would that suit? Of course you'd be compensated suitably for the extra trouble."

Another invitation to play? The back of my neck tingled and the depths of my pussy convulsed at the very thought. I'd thought my challenge to Kobe's authority had rankled him, but this morning he seemed doubly charming and eager to please — and clearly eager to have me back...

For the next two hours we sifted through dozens of floral samples, carefully picking out the nicest scents and the most beautiful formations of bridal bouquets and table centrepieces. I thumbed the petals of roses and orchids, of lilies and peonies, my pussy moistening at their velvety softness, reminding me of the first time I slipped my fingers through Ella's warm folds.

"White lilies," Kobe said as he leaned over my shoulder, his warm breath tickling my neck. "Purity...virginity."

"Then it's perfect," I said. "A beautiful dichotomy that only we will understand."

"I'm so happy I found you, Joanne." He whispered before

kissing the tender skin just beneath my earlobe. I closed my eyes and succumbed to the unexpected pleasure that raced through my body, an image of Kobe's large prick sliding slowly into my wanton cunt, the heavy sack of his balls slapping against my clit with each hard thrust. His scent was intoxicating, the musky aroma filling my nostrils and causing moisture to pool between my thighs.

"I think it's time to tend to Ella's sore ass, don't you?"

I nodded mutely, too emblazoned with lust to verbalise a coherent sentence. He held out his hand and I took it, letting him pull me from the table and lead me over to Ella.

"Follow me, ladies."

We followed in silence, shoulders brushing as we walked side by side. There was a tension in the air, fear of the unknown; and excitement too. Kobe led us down a series of long corridors and two flights of stairs to a small bolted iron door. He turned the key and pulled open the heavy iron, leading us into darkness. Seeking out Ella's hand, I gripped it, feeling her pulse quicken beneath my thumb.

A burst of light appeared from across the room as Kobe lit a candle. He repeated this until eleven large candles set high on the wall illuminated the room below. I let go of Ella's hand and moved towards a bed in the centre of the room. It was large enough for seven or eight occupants and my imagination lit up with images of entwined limbs as people fucked on the dark red mattress.

I fingered the thick velvet quilt, satin cushions, silky tassels and feathered pillows that adorned the bed. Heavy tapestry curtains hung from posts at each corner, and I knew that something equally special and kinky was about to take place here. Elsewhere in the room, iron rings dotted the walls, some with chains attached, others with rope and ribbon. An ornate freestanding bathing tub sat to the left of the bed and, beside that, a small cabinet and a pile of fluffy towels.

Somewhere on the edge of consciousness, I heard Kobe tell Ella to fill the tub. But his instruction seemed distant and intangible through the fog of lust that clouded my brain. I walked to a chest that sat against the wall to my right, pulled it open and searched

through its contents: massage oils, ball gags, satin ribbon of varying lengths, rope, leather and steel cuffs, vibrators, dildos, chastity belts, harnesses, nipple clamps, collars, the list was endless.

Something caught my eye and I seized it immediately, pulling it close to my face for a better look.

“Just like the one in the photograph,” Kobe said, his lips dangerously close to my ear. He slid his hands around my waist and pulled me back into him, pressing his erection into the flesh of my ass. This was the first time Kobe had openly initiated any sexual contact and I was surprised by how much I wanted him to rip my flimsy undergarments from my body, bend me over and ram his cock into my aching cunt.

“I want you to lay the object in your hand on the bed, then go to the cabinet next to the tub. Empty the top shelf of its contents and put them on the bed as well. Will you do that, Joanne?” He asked in a way that indicated he still expected me to flee, to tell him that this wasn’t what I signed up for, that it was all too much and I wanted out.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Ella had filled the tub, the scent of lavender bathing salts wafting through the air. She sat on a stool beside the bath and smiled at me as I approached.

“Hey,” She said softly.

“Hey yourself.”

“The contents of the drawer, please, Miss Anderson.” Kobe said sternly from across the room. I liked being ‘Miss Anderson’, and I liked the fact that we were both prepared to take the business of pleasure quite seriously.

As requested, I emptied the drawer and aligned the contents on the bed: a black ball gag, a small steel pinwheel, two long strips of black satin, a fur lined leather collar, a set of cute black kitten ears, a vial of lube, a thick wooden dildo and a camera. These all sat next to the toy I’d first retrieved from the chest: a thick ebony plug attached to a long tail made of black faux fur.

“Strip, Ella.” Kobe issued the command as he covered the distance between us.

Behind me now, Kobe slid a hand between my thighs and ran a finger along the seam of my pussy, stroking me slowly as Ella removed her clothes.

“Good girl, now turn around for us and let us see your ravished ass.”

Slowly, she turned and bent over the stool, her legs parted to reveal her glistening pink pout as well as the angry red welts that graced her bottom. My pussy moistened, my clit growing fat as Kobe brushed it rhythmically with his thumb. Even through the fabric of my underwear and trousers, his touch drove me crazy.

“The pinwheel on the bed, Miss Anderson. I want you to roll it across Ella’s ass repeatedly, across the marks.”

I knew it would be uncomfortable for Ella, but I didn’t object. The thought of inflicting a bit more pain onto her already tarnished bottom only made me hotter.

“Be a good girl for me and remain quiet.” I pushed one hand into the small of her back, causing her rear to rise upwards as I slowly ran the pinwheel over her flesh, the spikes nicking the raw skin of each welt. She wriggled closer to me and I laughed. “You’re such a little pain slut.”

I spanked her with my hand, before telling her to get into the tub and soothe her sore flesh.

“And stay in the tub until I tell you to come out.” Kobe said as he crossed the room, pulling me into him again.

“Yes, Sir.”

“You like Ella, don’t you?” he asked, his hands on my waist and his lips on my neck. I nodded. “And you like dominating her, don’t you...inflicting a bit of pain?” I nodded again. “I like it too, watching you and her together.”

Taking my hand in his, he pressed it against his clothed cock to prove his point.

“Fuck me.”

It wasn’t a question. It wasn’t a command. It wasn’t anything other than acknowledgement of what we both knew was about to happen. For a second I froze. We hadn’t discussed the do’s and don’ts

of my services, we hadn't set any parameters. I don't know why I hadn't thought of it before. He turned me to face him and he kissed me. On the lips. Surely Ella wouldn't want this, to see Kobe kiss me. I became shy, my body tensing, not wanting to pull away, but not wanting to respond too readily either. I turned from him again, my back to his chest. He responded by cupping each swell of my breasts in his large palms, gently massaging them, making me squirm in delicious frustration as my eyes fluttered shut.

The warmth from his hands radiated into my chest and travelled through my body, down my thighs and into my cunt. He was good. Really good. His fingers deftly worked my nipples, teasing their tips again and again until I was shuddering uncontrollably from his touch. Somewhere in the back of my mind I heard him talking in a low voice. "I'm just touching the tips of her nipples very, very gently...slowly...she seems to like it. She's more like you than I realised." Ella was out of the bath and somewhere on the bed, but I couldn't see. He must have told her she could get out of the tub, but I hadn't heard. I was too far gone, half conscious but not really aware.

His kneading continued. His touch became harsher than I'd ever permitted before, squeezing my rosy buds with savage fingers, pinching and rolling, pulling and twisting. It hurt a lot, and with every extra pinch and extra tug a jolt of electrifying pleasure surged through my cunt. I was on fire. The heat of my own lust seemed strong enough to set me alight and in that moment I wanted nothing more than to trade places with Ella, to switch and be Kobe's submissive. To be Ella's obedient little pain slut. But Ella had needs of her own.

Kobe had pushed the ball gag into my hand and, in a daze, I attached the strap around Ella's head, securing the black ball firmly in place as it pushed her lips apart and pressed down on her tongue. I kissed the side of her mouth where the gag stretched her open, kissing away the dribble that leaked from the corner of her lips. With Kobe's help, I pushed her onto her hands and knees in the centre of the bed, pawing at her presented rear. I pulled apart her cheeks and gazed at her, her tightly puckered asshole winking at me seductively.

"Go ahead, kiss her."

And so I did. I leant forward and licked the length of her pussy, my tongue dipping between her folds and licking in a straight line up to her anus. I flicked affectionately around her little ring, the forbidden flesh taut and textured beneath my tongue.

“That’s it, Miss Anderson, make her nice and wet,” Kobe said somewhere in the distance.

I continued my devotion to Ella’s ass, slipping my tongue over and around her flexing aperture. After a time, I pushed deeply into her and breached her snug entrance, the debauchery and the intimacy making my pussy ache for something, *someone*.

“Plug her.”

I was in a trance, following Kobe’s instructions with obedience and finesse. Taking hold of the plug, I ran my fingers through the long fur of the black tail. It was so soft, a contrast to the hard, smooth wooden plug to which it was attached. I opened the vial of lube and coated the wood generously before running it between Ella’s cunt lips and right up to her anus. Primed with insistent tongue, devout salivation, and lashings of lube, Ella did not need me to be tender with her. I pushed against her firmly, the hard plug stretching her. She gasped and resisted briefly before succumbing to the intrusion and sucking the plug into her ass.

“Wow, it’s beautiful.”

“It certainly is,” Kobe agreed as we admired her from behind. “Now fuck her.”

I stared at the wooden cock laying on the bed. It was big and inflexible, it would hurt if used too harshly. Briefly I stood to remove the rest of my clothes. My nether lips were already puffy and parted with arousal, my swollen clit protruding and pulsing in the cool air. Naked, I circled Ella before laying down on the bed and opening my legs to her. I lifted the dildo, the wood heavy and smooth to my touch. Kobe’s eyes met mine as I coated the device with my saliva then slowly withdrew it from my mouth. Equally slowly, I lowered the dildo and rubbed the thick wooden nub against my aching slit.

“Joanne...” Kobe warned, but I knew he wouldn’t stop me.

“What, Kobe? Don’t you like this, watching me fuck myself

in front of you?”

As I dipped the tip of the dildo between my folds and into my cunt, Kobe pulled his cock from his trousers and began to stroke himself. I stared at him, his cock thick and smooth, mocha coloured and patterned with thick, pulsating veins. I wanted him.

“Fuck my throat.”

It was the only invitation required and Kobe grabbed the back of my head, twisting me to him, forcing himself deep into my mouth, the head of his cock pressing into the back of my throat. I fought the urge to gag, yet enjoyed the stifling sensation at the same time. I glanced at Ella, our gazes locked as her fiancé thrust into my mouth over and over and over again. Spittle dribbled from her mouth, landing on my splayed cunt as I continued to fuck the dildo. I had to have her.

Withdrawing his dick from my mouth, Kobe reached for the camera.

“Fuck her now, Joanne,” he said calmly. “She’s yours.”

I pondered the meaning of his statement. *She’s mine*, what did that mean!?

“She’s just as much your pet as she is mine, Joanne. Now fuck her...or must I tell you again?”

I crawled along the bed and settled behind our pet, reaching for the dildo and pushing it inside her pussy as I had done my own only moments before. I made love to Ella again that night, with Kobe watching from the sidelines. I fucked her from behind with a cock made of wood before gently taking the gag from her mouth, easing her onto her back and soothing her with soft strokes and featherlike kisses. All the while, the click and flash of the camera thrummed throughout the room.

“This ladies, is going to make for one very special wedding album.”

CHAPTER FOUR

T h e F i t t i n g



We stood in the private fitting chamber; Ella dressed only in the elegant lingerie she would wear beneath her wedding dress, and both of us watching her reflection in the freestanding mirrors.

Ella looked terrified.

“What’s wrong?”

“Oh...nothing...”

“It’s not nothing if you’re looking like that.” I put my hands on her shoulders. “You’re shaking.”

She shook her head and closed her eyes, “It’s okay. I’m just feeling a little...you know...*ugly*.”

“Ugly!? Dear god, woman, have you seen yourself? You are the kind of bride that makes men want to bend you over and sneak beneath your train. The kind that makes women want to claw your eyes out!”

Ella looked at me and smiled, but there was doubt in her eyes. In my career, I’d witnessed many a bride-to-be grapple with all manner of uncertainty as their wedding day approached. But I also knew that this bride-to-be was strong and beautiful and brave and she had absolutely nothing to worry about.

“You don’t see what we see when you look in the mirror,” I said quietly, fixing a stray tendril of hair back into place within Ella’s loose chignon. “You see ugliness? An undesirable person?”

Ella nodded mutely, unable to look at me.

“Well, we see beauty. We see an amazing woman who is already the object of so many people’s desires. Don’t you know how

many people want you? Don't you know *how much* they want you?"

Ella shook her head, but remained silent.

"Don't you know how much *I* want you?"

And I did. I wanted her so much. I wanted to wipe away her tears of sadness, to brush the hair from her face, tucking it behind her ear so she couldn't hide anymore, to run my fingertips over her lips before leaning in to kiss them sweetly. Looking at Ella standing there, so vulnerable and full of doubt, I longed to clasp her hand, to hold it tightly as I brushed my lips to hers, to show her how worthy of affection and adoration she was.

"Look up."

I stood behind her, my heart breaking at the struggle I saw on her face as she was unable to look in the glass. Moving closer, I rested my hands on her hips and placed my lips to her ear. "Breathe," I whispered. "Breathe...breathe...breathe."

Ella slowly lifted her head and opened her eyes. I rubbed her shoulders lightly, trying to comfort her. Bringing my hands down to her waist again, I rested them on her hips, slipping my fingers beneath the band of her lingerie. Her skin was warm and she shuddered just a little as I touched her. To see herself so exposed and from every angle was unnerving for Ella, and all I wanted to do was to soothe her doubt and quell her fear.

I ran my hands slowly upwards, over the cups of her cream satin balconette bra. "Look," I said and she fixed her gaze upon her reflection. "Watch."

I trailed my fingers across her back, paying attention to the marks from previous play-dates. I unclasped her bra and eased it from her body. She closed her eyes again, defying my orders. "I told you to watch. Look at yourself." I kissed her earlobe, then her shoulder. It's habit, it's how I used to kiss her when we were students.

"Tell me what you see."

I ran my fingers through the hair at the back of her head, before suddenly grabbing hold of her chignon and forcing her gaze to the glass. Her eyes grew wide with surprise and her body stiffened, but she remained mute.

“I’ll tell you what I see,” I continued. “I see a beautiful woman, with the most adorable feline face that perfectly matches her sleek black hair, blue eyes and loyal personality.”

Her expression softened and she laughed shyly. I loosened my grip and kissed her shoulder gently, just a peck, whilst meeting her eyes in the mirror. “I see large breasts with deep pink nipples, so ripe and inviting. Look at them.”

She did. Together we watched as her nipples hardened in arousal. I moved closer, my clothed chest flush to her naked back. A kiss to her neck and she shuddered again, this time with pleasure, as I whispered, “Are you okay?”

She nodded.

Sliding my hands along the curve of her torso, I reached round to cup her tits, the large cushiony globes filling my palms easily. I rested there, wanting her to feel everything, the pleasure that her glorious, sacred body can bring. I began to knead her chest, caressing her soft breasts, rolling her nipples between my fingers and pinching firmly.

Her eyes drifted closed and this time I allowed her some reprieve, a minute to herself in the darkness to just to feel. Just to be. She was so insecure in that moment, it didn’t seem like her. But I know that she’s not insecure. She’s confident. It takes a brave person to submit so completely to another. She could never do the things she’d done with Kobe and me if she was truly insecure or frightened. Why couldn’t she see that? Losing myself in the moment, my own need to simultaneously caress and possess caused me to nip her neck with my teeth, and I pulled back immediately as she yelped. My turn to blush.

“Sorry.”

“Don’t be.”

We stilled, our gazes locked on one other for what felt like an eternity. *Are we ready to do this? Are we ready to tip the balance and experience each other in a way we never thought we would again?* I thought solemnly. The last time we’d allowed ourselves to do this — a lifetime ago — the result had been broken hearts. And one of those hearts still

remained broken...

I pushed her forward, even closer to the mirror, freeing her breasts and running my hands down her belly, stopping at the waistband of her panties again. I dared a touch and cupped her mound through the fabric with my palm, squeezing firmly. She needed to see this, to see herself through the eyes of others, through the eyes of those who find her so incredibly irresistible.

“And now what do you see?”

She shook her head, a look of wide-eyed dismay on her face.

“I’ll tell you what I see.”

Déjà Vu.

“I see a beautiful woman, with curves where curves should be, a chest that I am desperate to get my hands on and a hidden treasure,” I tapped her pussy lightly, “that I am aching to find.”

She laughed.

“That’s right, I have more clichés if you need them!” And I laughed too.

My hand remained at her cunt, cupping it and squeezing, the heat from my skin seeping through the silken material of her underwear. Her breath hitched and I decided to push her further. Hooking my fingers into her panties, I pulled them slowly down her legs, smirking inwardly at the moisture that had already begun to soak the fabric.

I stood again and teased her hips with my fingernails. “Tell me what you see,” I said for the third time. Still she remained silent. “I see a figure of lust. And object of beauty. A woman of desire.” Trailing fingers across her stomach, I rested my palm flat against her. “I see my friend who I care for greatly, with whom I have formed a bond that will take a lot to break. Someone who I once held close in my bed, providing comfort as I hope I am now. I see breasts I want to worship and a cunt...” I rested the tips of my fingers at the top of her mound, “...that I want to devour.” I kissed her shoulder again and gazed at her reflection. “And all this is because you are beautiful,” I whispered, “Inside and out.”

Unable to hold back anymore, I slipped my fingers lower,

dipping them between her lips and grazing her flesh tentatively.

“Watch.”

Ella focused on my fingers, on the way they danced across her body, her hips bucking to the easy rhythm of my hand.

“Watch.”

I knelt in front of her, gazing up at her with wide eyes full of adoration.

“Watch.”

I kissed her pussy and caressed her inner thighs before parting her labia with my thumbs to reveal her glistening pout. No more secrets. I blew gently onto her flesh, marvelling at the way she contracted and bloomed under my breath. I licked the length of her slit, careful to pay attention to those sweet spots that a woman loves so much. I nibbled one plump lip, then the next before settling at her clit, flicking my tongue across the swelling bud and teasing her with my tip, slow but insistent movements aimed solely to induce pleasure. Glancing up, I saw her eyes focussed on her reflection. *Good girl*, I thought proudly.

Easing a finger, and then two, through her tight opening, I buried myself deeply inside, slowly fucking her as I lapped at her cunt. She’s so fuckin’ hot and so fuckin’ tight and I wanted to slam her against the wall and grind against her shamelessly. But it wasn’t about me, it was about making her realise how worthy she is.

I continued to suck on her clit and thrust into her, slow but firm — a long build up and (hopefully) a long, drawn out orgasm. *Will she cum?* I thought. I didn’t know, but I remained there, on bended knee, doing all that I could to please her.

Her legs began to tremble and she looked down at me, snaking her hands into my thick messy tresses, fists tightening as her clit began to pulse beneath my lips.

“Please, please, please, please, please...”

Her orgasm did come, and she screamed with the force of it, clutching my cheeks and forcing my face closer to her cunt. I drank eagerly, swallowing her cum as she went rigid, convulsing and squirting into my mouth. Orgasm subsiding, she fell to the floor in

front of me and grabbed my face, her expression full of need and desperation.

“Please don’t leave me, Joanne,” she begged breathlessly. “I don’t think I can do this without you.”

“Do what without me?”

“This, any of it — the ceremony, the reception,” she blushed again. “My wedding night. Life. I don’t want to be without you again.”

She held my hand to her cheek and nuzzled against me as I made her a promise that I didn’t know how to keep. She had Kobe now. And, although we had played and kissed and fucked in the most beautiful ways, it had only been a glimpse into the past. It was Kobe and Ella who would pledge their lives to each other now, and I could not pretend otherwise.

“I’ll be here, kitten. I’m not going anywhere,” I told her. But now it was my gaze that could no longer meet hers.

CHAPTER FIVE

T h e W e d d i n g



I watched in silence as the music started and Ella made her entrance. She was more beautiful than I had ever seen her before. Tiny white roses nestled snugly in her long, wavy hair, giving her a heavenly look. She was living up to her ethereal style with such poise and grace — a cunning and stunning contrast to the debauchery of which I knew she was capable.

Her dress was classical and elegant, a white satin sweetheart bodice that flared out into a long train of crystal and Chantilly lace. Just beautiful.

She looked nervous, but happy, just as every bride does on her wedding day. Glancing up and surveying the crowd, she finally settled her gaze on me and visibly relaxed, shoulders dropping and eyes gleaming. A hushed silence ensued as the ceremony began and I couldn't ignore the lump that had formed in my throat. It grew thick and heavy, and I felt dizzy as if I would surely faint at any moment if I didn't get some air. I backed out of the room just as the vicar began his sermon, my outstretched arm supporting me on a nearby wall as I dry heaved for all my life's worth.

Something wasn't right and I knew exactly what it was. Heartbreak. Again. I felt as though my heart had shattered upon seeing Ella looking so radiant and happy walking down the aisle towards the love of her life. Towards Kobe. I hadn't seen it coming, and this blow had cracked and split my heart into a thousand jagged little pieces, each one jostling around inside my chest cutting me to shreds and making me nauseous.

LACED: THE WEDDING

Damn Kobe to hell. This was all his fault. He knew all along about Ella and me, and he'd used our past to serve his own perversions while making me fall in love with her all over again. Whilst planning their wedding. Asshole.

I returned to the back of the church just in time to hear, "*I pronounce you man and wife. You may now kiss the bride.*" I backed away again, reaching into my pocket to retrieve my emergency stash of Marlboro's reserved especially for situations like this. Leaning against the cold stone wall of the ancient building, I closed my eyes and inhaled deeply, letting the nicotine penetrate my lungs and calm my nerves. I was rattled by my reaction, the stark reality of letting go of the person who held my heart had hit me like a freight train.

"Miss Anderson, just because the ceremony has finished, doesn't mean you are done with your duties. I am not paying you to smoke cigarettes and loll about out here in the cemetery."

"You hired me as your wedding planner, Kobe, which I think you'll agree I planned perfectly. Now, I am having a break before I oversee your wedding breakfast, conclude the day, pack up and leave."

Kobe looked startled, and I realised it was the first time I'd seen him genuinely surprised.

He straightened and shook his head. "No, you're not leaving. I am paying you for your services and they are required tonight. Leave now and you won't be paid at all." Then he turned and left, slipping an arm around the waist of his new wife who was already being snapped by the photographers.

I cursed myself at how vulnerable I had become; and now, although desperate to leave, I wouldn't be able to until Kobe was satisfied.



My heart thrummed in my chest as Ella tightened her grip on my wrist, pulling me blindly along the dark corridor in hot pursuit of the groom. Bumping into his back, I yelped as we suddenly stopped.

I couldn't see anything through the darkness that shrouded us, but I could feel the tension that hung in the air around the three of us.

Kobe battled with the door, jostling the heavy bolt before finally pushing it open and flicking the light switch to reveal the most lavish suite in the castle. The honeymoon suite. He grabbed my arm and pulled me away from Ella.

Securing a black sash tightly around Ella's head, he rendered her temporarily blind as he told her in no uncertain terms, "Make sure you keep this on until I instruct otherwise." It looked brutal and harsh against the white of her gown, but there was such a sweetness to her vulnerability that I ached to touch her.

"I've watched you fuck my wife countless times, Miss Anderson. But I am yet to sample your goods. Now, the time has come for me to experience the service for which I am paying you for."

Kobe undressed until he stood naked in the centre of the room. Despite my pride, my body betrayed me with a twinge of longing and a sharp intake of breath at the sight of his naked form. "Do you believe in love, Miss Anderson?" Approaching slowly, he cupped my face with his hands and I met his gaze, startled by his question.

"Do you believe it's possible to be in love with more than one person?"

No, because there is no such thing as love. "Y-yes," I stammered. *Because I love Ella and I love you too.* I felt confused, conflicted emotions running through my mind. I wanted so much to believe that love did not exist, but what else could explain the way I felt about Ella and Kobe?

"I love my wife, Joanne," he whispered against my lips. "But I also love you...and so does she."

He kissed me fiercely and I melted against him, one body meshing with another as I relaxed and let him do what he would. Let him do what *I wanted* him to. First removing my clothes so that I stood as naked as he. Then kissing and caressing until every vestige of pride and doubt had been stripped from me. And finally fucking, slow and deep, as Ella stood silent and solitary in the corner, a sightless beauty

in her wedding dress as she listened to the sounds I made as her new husband thrust into me repeatedly. I glanced at her, watching her painted lips part, tongue darting out to moisten them. So fucking hot.

“I want her to watch,” I panted as Kobe rolled me onto my back. He towered above me, positioning his cock at my entrance. “I want her to watch as you slide into me.”

“Kitten, take off your blindfold and come here.”

Ella obeyed immediately, standing at the edge of the bed. I gazed into her eyes as Kobe thrust forward, breaching my aching core and sliding deep into my heat. Leaning forward, she kissed me. A kiss like no other. This wasn't the same as the kisses we had shared over the previous weeks in the run up to the wedding. No, this was something else, something more, something special. Something deeper. She was telling me something and I responded with just as much fervour.

I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you!

I screamed the words silently and alone in my head as I came, but Kobe said them aloud through raspy breaths as he came with a grunt, his seed warming my insides, as his wife's tongue brought a similarly delicious warmth to my mouth. I smiled up at her lazily and pulled her down onto the mattress. I had to have her.

There she was, a vision of beauty beneath me. I straddled her waist and gazed down at her chest, two heavy tits that begged for my attention. I bent down, my thighs wide, parted to reward Kobe with a glimpse of my innermost secrets. I kissed each breast, sucking on Ella's nipples, nipping gently and tugging with my teeth. She likes nipple play, usually begging for those nipples to be clamped, each teat squashed tightly out of shape, as she grits her teeth against the pinch and is forced to endure that fine line between pleasure and pain.

Slinking along her form, I kissed my way from her neck to her mouth, pressing my lips to hers. Soft kisses. Hungry kisses. Lazy kisses. Desperate kisses. I wanted her and I wanted her to experience just how deep the lust was within me.

Kobe's hands pressed into my lower back, his touch warm

and thick. He caressed my skin, hands splayed wide and I moaned into Ella's mouth at his touch, eager for more. She began to move as I kissed her, barely noticeable at first, but I soon realised what was happening. Kobe's grip on my hips tightened, using me for leverage as he fucked his new bride. I pushed back, pressing closer to him, imagining he was fucking us both, his strong cock slamming into my depths as I kissed the object of my desires. Absolutely amazing.



"Tonight we shall conduct another ceremony where Ella and I will exchange another set of vows. Some alternative vows, and you, Miss Anderson, will be quite interested in staying and hearing what we have to say."

Ella timidly began to recite the vows that she had spent the last five weeks memorising to perfection, her voice threatening to break as she turned her gaze from Kobe and looked straight into my eyes.

"In stolen moments of quietness I long for you. I long for your hand twisted around my hair, pulling it taut. I long for your breath on my lips in the torturously long moment before you kiss me. I long for your grip around my throat, holding me in place and reminding me that you want me, that I am yours. I long for your warm flesh to sear itself onto me as you press your body to mine. I long for the sting of your palm as it rains down onto my eager ass."

She faltered and glanced away.

"Go on, kitten," Kobe encouraged her.

"I long for the way you pinch and pull at my chest, twisting and clamping each nipple painfully. I long for the stretch and pull as you invade my ass, plugging me with the object you see fit. I long for your fingers inside my mouth, allowing me to lick and suckle and be your perfect pet. Your perfect friend. Your perfect lover. I long for you, Joanne. I have done ever since we graduated, since the day you told me I would be better off without you. Well I won't. I want you here with me. With me and Kobe."

She reached out and ran her fingers down my cheek. I felt dizzy, my head was swimming with a torrent of emotions.

LACED: THE WEDDING

“So...is this is a marriage of three...rather than two?” I asked.

Kobe stood forward, slipping his arm around Ella’s waist as he pulled her close. “It is if you want it to be.”

And then I said those two little words that would bind me to Ella and Kobe forever.

“I do.”

SAFEKEEPING

BY ANNABETH LEONG



I fell in love with Michael Stone the first time I slept between his sheets. Back then, insomnia stuck to me almost always, gumming my eyelids open and filling my brain like a thick, dreary paste. My first night watching his house, I stayed up late enjoying his premium channels until the advancing hands of the clock cornered me into giving sleep a go. I didn't expect much out of lying down, but I stripped and climbed into his king-sized bed anyway, pulled his puffy white duvet over my naked body, and thumped the foot of the bed until his dog, Sasha, leapt up and draped herself over my lower legs.

A strange sense of relaxation spread through my body right away. The room was silent except for the dog's breathing. I imagined Michael Stone lying in this very spot, his head making the pillow dip in exactly the same way as mine, and the image pained me with its intimacy.

We knew each other only slightly when he asked me to house-sit for him. A friend of my former architecture professor's, he apparently traveled some 150 days a year, supervising engineering projects in Egypt and other exotic places. Despite the punishing schedule, he somehow managed to have the world's nicest, most well-trained dog and a pleasant home. I'd been over once before he left so he could detail my duties, and he'd been reserved and practical,

his blue eyes cold and guarded behind gold-rimmed spectacles. Small for a man and light on his feet, he'd inspired no flash of attraction or even interest when I'd been in the same room with him. So I surprised myself when I lifted my head, peeled back the pillowcase, and began to scrape my fingertips over the pillow beneath, in search of stray hairs.

I caught one in seconds, short and delicate, glittering a little in the room's half-light when I held it up to my eyes to examine it. I'd never felt so close to a man before.

He'd told me I should change the linens before sleeping in his bed, but, out of laziness, I hadn't. As my body heated the area around me, his scent began to rise from the sheets and I was glad I'd taken that shortcut. I didn't know much about men's cologne, so I breathed in the soft, soapy smell of him and ran through names I'd seen advertised, looking for a match. That pop star's brand, *Sport?* Or something for an older, more sophisticated man, such as the designer fragrance *Ink?* After a few minutes rejecting ideas, the name of the cologne hit me as conclusively as its scent enveloped me: *Infatuation*.

I whispered the word into the quiet room, and the dog snuffled in response. I said, "Infatuation," again, then sampled the taste of his name. I tried moaning it. By then, my body had begun to respond. Every inch of my skin felt fuzzy but awake, the duvet smoother than I thought possible.

His limbs had been warmed exactly this way. Half the nights out of the year, Michael Stone climbed into this bed and allowed himself to melt and sink into sleep. Maybe he jerked off in bed like this, with the dog curled up at his feet, alone but not lonely.

I slipped one hand under the covers and felt the underside, fascinated by the possibility of finding a spot of his dried cum. If he'd been beside me, I would have wanted him then, no matter how he looked. Needing to claim a piece of him, I laid the hair I'd found on the tip of my tongue and drew it slowly into my mouth.

If it had been his tongue, his finger, or even his cock, it couldn't have caused a greater rush of arousal. It caught on the edge of my tongue and pulled with a piercing little pinch. I tugged the hair

free and swallowed it, then froze except for my panting breath and pounding heart. He was inside me now. My trembling hand crept onto my naked belly, where I now contained him.

From there, it was only natural to slide my hand further down. My cunt ached like a secret buried for far too long. Pubic hair, already sticky with arousal, curled around my fingers as I parted my lips and tracked my wetness up and down their inner surfaces. My nipples hardened against the duvet. I helped them along with darting squeezes.

Applying firm pressure to my clit, my back arched, then my body jackknifed in the opposite direction, my abs tightening as I gasped. Michael Stone had been in the same spot, doing the same thing. The more I touched myself, the more certain I felt. More and more, I needed to cum where he had cum, to drip onto the sheets beneath me the way he had done.

I dipped one finger into my cunt, which clenched and gripped me restlessly. Unable to resist a few strokes of my fluttering walls, my body jerked again, making the dog grunt and seek out a new position on the floor beside the bed. I took the opportunity to kick and groan and writhe, to roll my face back and forth across his pillow and lick it in search of the taste of him.

Imagining Michael Stone's arms rolling me, I flipped over. My hips ground against a bed which could have been his body. I spread my legs as wide as I could and rubbed, wanting to mark the sheets. Inspiration gripped me and I grabbed the pillow and shuttled it down beneath my body to the crux of my legs.

I knew he had touched that pillow because that's where I'd found his hair. I forced it against my cunt as hard as I could, wadding up the corners of the pillowcase and shoving them into my hole so I could soak them with my juices.

My face turned to the side, mouth open, I rode the pillow, thinking of Michael Stone beneath me, his cock driving up into me in counterpoint with my downward drops. I pictured my cunt juice soaking through the pillowcase and staining the pillow beneath, mixing in with the stuffing. The next time he lay in this bed, his body

heat could release the scent of my arousal. The smell of my pussy could make his cock hard, or make him dream of sex.

A tight, warm sensation spread through my pelvis. The part of my clit rubbing against that pillow was only the tip of the iceberg, only the visible part of a large, subterranean thing that transmitted pleasure all the way down to the depth of me. I hoarded it there, squeezing my cunt as if I could shut the sensations up inside myself, as if I could save them up for Michael Stone and return them to him along with his healthy, happy dog and the clean, white surfaces of his home.

The edges of my thoughts became smooth, polished, and bright. The scent of him was everywhere now, so forceful in the room that my sides shivered as if he touched me. I barely needed to move on the pillow. Every little rock of my hips telegraphed much larger jolts of pleasure into my body. My fingers found my nipples and I dug my nails in.

I called out his name as I came, then wondered how many times he'd heard those syllables echoing through this room after bursting from a woman's throat. The idea simultaneously aroused and horrified me. I had to make my orgasm matter compared with other women he'd been with. I needed to cum more than once, to prove this wasn't a fluke.

For the next hour and a half, that's what I did, cumming for him until his name became a chanted whisper lying always on my tongue, invoked along with God and Jesus and a whole pantheon of holy things. The dog paced the floor restlessly, and I wondered how much she'd seen of him. I came all over his pillow. Sweat from my back soaked into his duvet.

Finally, I dropped flat onto the bed, exhausted. Gingerly working the pillow out from between my legs, I dragged it up to my head. It smelled of sex. Resting my cheek in the heat of the wet spot I'd made on it, I breathed a contented sigh. My scent mixed with his, summoning an image of the two of us sated and intertwined.

Normally, at home in my own apartment, I would lie in one position trying to sleep with mind and heart racing, until I got

absolutely sick of the futile attempt. Then I would flip to the other side for the same experience, finally giving up to spend the rest of the night playing online word games. I'd grown used to my regular struggles with sleep's teasing mercilessness.

That night, in Michael Stone's house, in his bed, breathing the smell of us, with his dog snoring on the floor nearby, everything changed. Sleep came to me sweetly, like a blessing. His bed reached the perfect temperature. I had never been so comfortable in my life. No man had ever set me so at ease.



I don't need to explain how carefully I cared for his things after that. I cherished them. I abandoned his premium television channels. With Sasha at my side, I spent my free time dusting and polishing. Every drawer and closet contained items personal to him that needed to be touched, examined, adored, and then replaced in exactly the way he had left them.

A statue he must have brought back from another country. A drawer full of foreign coins. A jade chess set. And more mundane things too. Toothbrushes, hair gel, deodorant. Socks. Underwear. I needed to know everything about him. I wanted real love, not just a fantasy, and so I learned to enjoy the smell of his feet, and found the secret corners of his house where he piled up the things he couldn't quite deal with. Unopened letters from a woman with the same last name as his — Michael Stone could not have concealed a wife from me, so they must have been written by a sister. Piles of old photographs, showing him younger, with friends undoubtedly lost to him by now. I recognized the squint of his blue eyes, and I studied that smoother version of his forehead with fascination.

For the rest of my time at his house, I focused entirely on him, his home, and his dog. I made everything perfect for his return. The morning before he came back, I washed and changed his sheets, which by then were adorned with big patches of my dried fluids. The pillowcases too had to be cleaned. Before I could leave, though, I had

to lie in the bed one last time and test what happened when my head heated the pillow. The subtle traces of that mingled smell tickled my nose, and I knew this was forever.

He asked me back. Of course he did. What had sprung up between us was too immediately wonderful for him to want anyone else. Six months after my first time at Michael Stone's house, I slept there two weeks out of every month. He left money on the kitchen table for me, small piles of cash that slowly increased as I proved my worth. He wrote me little notes. They mostly concerned domestic matters, but I had no trouble interpreting the affection that rose from every line.

Sasha greeted me as a beloved mistress. My feet knew the shapes and turns of the hallways so that when I woke in the night, I no longer needed to turn on a light.

I passed my time at his home in a manner easily recognizable to anyone who has reveled in the thrill of a new love affair. Long, sensual hours spent between the sheets. Ambling walks with the dog through every hidden corner of the city, a blissful, idiotic smile spread over my face. Idle time lingering at the kitchen table, licking my spoon suggestively or allowing fruit juice to drip from the side of my mouth, all with an eye toward how Michael might respond.

Sometimes, he left a few dishes for me to wash, and I admit I'd be a little naughty, sucking the tines of the fork that he had eaten with or running the flat of his knife over my nipples to feel its cool sting. The first time I found a spoon, I could not look at its bowl without envisioning my Michael's lips shaping themselves around its contours. Its very surface was only once removed from the caress of his tongue. I stripped naked in the kitchen and explored the curves of my body with it, cupping each of my breasts in turn in its shallow hollow as if I could offer myself to him that way.

I imagined feeding myself to Michael by the spoonful, and how I would press the utensil between my legs to catch a taste of my abundant juices, then slip the anointed metal between his lips. Excited by this fantasy, I spread my legs and slid the bowl of the spoon up and down between my labia, collecting the evidence of my

arousal. I ate from the spoon as Michael would have done, my own tang lingering on my tongue. Then, hungry for more, I rested my ass against the cool metal edge of the sink and eased the wider part of the spoon up into my cunt.

Michael had put this in his mouth. His tongue had stroked its every surface. Shuddering, I shoved it harder, higher, needing as much of him as I could get, needing to hold him inside me. I licked my finger, then slid its moistened tip back and forth across my clit. Moving with the pleasure, my spine banged hard against the sink's faucet. The pain didn't stop me from arching further into the sensation, manipulating the handle of the spoon to push it against one of my inner walls and then another, and rocking my hips for all I was worth.

When my orgasm had nearly arrived, I jerked the spoon from between my legs and shoved it so far down my throat I nearly gagged. The thin, salty taste of fluid from the deepest parts of my cunt melted around my tongue. I moaned around the spoon and came, searching for the taste of Michael's saliva mingled somewhere with my own.

After regaining my breath, I still did not want to let him go. I returned the spoon to my cunt, handle first this time, and stepped into my panties with it clutched inside me. For the rest of the day, it poked me with every step, so that I never stopped thinking of Michael and the pleasure he could bring me.

Of course, he occupied my mind even when I wasn't at his home. In addition to my house-sitting, I maintained a part-time job handling spreadsheets at an architecture office — the closest I could get to my chosen field upon graduating from college. The hours at that desk, brief as they were, began to chafe. I watched the clock, longing for the time when I could return to my own little piece of paradise in the glowing warmth of Michael Stone's bed.

But, like all good things I suppose, that blissful, innocent time had to come to an end eventually. For me, that moment came the night I peeked into the wastebasket beside the bed, having just arrived for another week with Sasha, and saw three used condoms

coiled atop a bed of discarded tissues.

My heart stopped, reactions warring in my chest. First, this meant he had another woman, that someone else had lain in his bed and moaned for him. The thought crushed me. It destroyed me. I think I went a little mad from the picture of an unknown beauty with her legs spread, her hips curling up toward Michael's fingers, her hands on her breasts perhaps, her bright pink tongue just visible through parted lips.

And he had fucked her. Three times! He'd fucked her until she ached. He'd fucked her so she'd feel it the next day, a little bruise at the base of her belly that would make her remember the head of his battering cock. I didn't know whether to feel pride for my Michael's prowess or chagrin that he could betray me so many times so easily.

Still, I loved him too much to focus on my resentment. The condoms in the wastebasket presented an opportunity I could not bear to miss. They offered me a chance to finally taste him. For once, I wouldn't have to seek Michael out through layers of associations. I could place him straight on my tongue. A shiver passed through me, then settled in my cunt. My inner walls quivered for him. Almost, I could convince myself he'd left the condoms as a gift, that he'd understood what I needed from him.

I pulled the first one out of the wastebasket, then sat on the edge of the bed, cradling it in my lap. Would he think I was pathetic if he knew about this? Would she? I imagined the woman he'd been with, smirking at the extent of my desperation for the man I loved. She would pity me if she knew I went through the trash for him, that I treated any little thing that had come from his body as holy. She hadn't wanted him the way that I did, hadn't been with him skin to skin.

My heart convulsed with a virtuous ache. The goodness and sincerity of what I felt for him became as clear as my passion. I knew I could not doubt or hesitate. Michael needed to know how utterly I craved him.

I lifted the condom slowly but with purpose. Her scent leapt to my nose, and I had to choke down my jealousy. This bit of latex

had been wrapped around Michael's cock. I soothed myself with that knowledge. I stretched it out and stroked its length, as my cunt wept with desire. In the reservoir at the tip of the condom, I saw my prize, a milky pearl of pure Michael.

When I was ready, I raised the condom to my lips. With my tongue, I parted the rubber ring at the base and delved inside, feasting on stale salt and musk that gave me precious hints of how they would have been when fresh. A sob rose from my throat. I wanted him all to myself.

Soon, the condom sheathed my tongue. I coaxed it with my fingers to I could reach ever deeper inside, needing to taste that pearl. Finally, the point of my tongue made contact with Michael's cum. Before I could control myself, I recoiled at the bitter, thick, room-temperature substance I encountered. Then I reminded myself what it was, and the purity of my love turned the flavour into something sweet. The dried residue revived when it joined with my saliva, melting over my tongue as if it had spurting from his cock just moments before.

I closed my eyes and groaned my ecstasy. Imagining he could see me, I dropped to my knees beside the bed. If his cock were in my mouth, he would want me there on the floor like that.

Growing bolder, I turned the condom inside out into my mouth, slurping and sucking. If not for the other woman, I would have put one of the condoms inside my cunt. Instead, I contented myself with slipping my hand into the waistband of my skirt and down inside my panties. Too impatient to bother with finesse, I forced a thick mass of fingers into the entrance of my cunt, the material and the awkward angle preventing me from getting as deep as I would have liked, but the blunt stimulation doing the job nonetheless.

I frigged myself, grunting harshly around my precious mouthful. As my orgasm neared, I cared less and less about whoever he'd fucked. I just needed more of him. My teeth ground into the little wad of latex in my mouth, but I wanted more.

Frantic with impending pleasure, I scabbled for the wastebasket with my free hand. In the other room, the dog's trimmed

claws tapped against the wooden floor, probably in response to the way I was crashing around the bedroom. I paid no mind to anything but my prizes. Two other condoms, filled with Michael. He'd tied these at the base. I popped them into my mouth, wincing at the sour taste of the other woman.

Somehow, I had to make him want only me. My cunt spread wider at the thought, admitting a little more of my hand. I bit down into the condoms and they burst inside my mouth, releasing a gush of Michael.

I swallowed for him, the liquid heating inside me as it traveled down my throat and into my stomach. With the palm of my hand, I cupped my belly, treasuring it for holding him.

Then I redoubled my efforts, fucking myself so hard I collapsed to the floor face-first, panting. When the orgasm came, it almost hurt. Pleasure stabbed my brain like a migraine. I lay dazed, chewing latex. Now that my need had been sated, I could taste spermicide too, and bitter clarity filled me.

The parts of Michael that I'd just swallowed had lain inert for days, like every other bit of him I'd managed to claim. It didn't matter how intimately I knew his home and his life. It didn't matter that he trusted me to care for his dog. The truth was, he'd given much more to that other woman. He'd given his vibrant, living self. He'd given her the heat of his hand, his breath in her ear, his hot cum surging straight from his balls.

I had to have that too. I'd thought I could be content with what I was getting, but because of her I now knew that wasn't enough. Somehow, I had to find a way to let Michael know I needed more.

For the rest of the week, I pondered how to send the right message to Michael. Any time a woman wants to take a relationship to the next level, it's a quandary to tell the man without inciting resistance. Ominous hints of my insomnia resurfaced. Sasha and I went on extra walks to think about it. Days dragged on, and I thought of how soon I would have to return to my own bare apartment, possibly making way for the other woman to sleep beside Michael

again. I didn't want to leave, and my reluctance became inspiration.



The last day before Michael's arrival, I gathered a small box of my possessions from my apartment and brought them to his place. They weren't hard to carry, and there weren't many of them, but they'd taken hours to select and I planned to be just as careful when I found homes for them among Michael's things.

Some things, like the toothbrush, were obvious choices. No claim on a man can count without that universally recognized domestic symbol. Once I'd ensconced it beside Michael's toothbrush in the holder in the master bedroom, I knew the other woman would think twice if she came over again. Other items, such as a bag of my favorite potato chips, would serve as more subtle but equally powerful avatars of my presence during the times I was away. Michael might not discover or think about all of them, but his subconscious would notice.

Eventually, my modest box of possessions contained only one last item: the black vibrator I'd had since college. I'd thought long and hard about whether I should bring it to Michael's house. After all, my mother warned me a long time ago that, much as a man might enjoy a whore in the bedroom, he wants a lady everywhere else. I worried that leaving my vibrator for him to find would be too aggressive for him, or that it would give him the wrong idea about me.

In the end though, my desire to bring it had won out over my misgivings. If Michael felt like I did, he'd want to touch something that had been inside my cunt. Nothing in the world had spent more hours stuffed into my pussy than this vibrator — no other sex toy, certainly not any lover, and probably not even my own fingers. I needed to give this to him.

What's more, this was a man who'd fucked that other woman three times in what appeared to have been a single encounter. He clearly loved sex. I wasn't about to make the mistake of acting too proper.

The remaining question, however, would occupy me for the remainder of the afternoon: Where and how to leave it for him?

I decided I could slip it into a drawer in the nightstand. That would be the most natural place, where a woman who lived with him would leave it. The nightstand drawer squeaked when I eased it open. Inside, I saw only a penny and some dust, and this made me frown. If Michael never used this drawer, how would he know what I'd left there for him? Of course, I could go home and enjoy the knowledge that he slept beside my vibrator every night, but if I were really going to be honest with myself, I had to admit I wanted Michael to know what I'd done for him. I wanted him to handle my things — and this thing most of all.

Certainty settled into me. I gathered my carriage. If I wanted to make a statement to Michael about how I felt, I couldn't afford to be shy about it, no matter what my mother said. I'd already made up his bed. It stood serenely in the center of the room, blue and unruffled as a still pond.

The fabric of the quilt rippled around me when I settled my ass onto the edge of the bed, then scrunched into messy patches when I hiked up my skirt and flung myself backward onto its surface. Shirt up, bra cups down, nipples pinched until they stood at attention. Panties shoved down to my thighs, then kicked off altogether when they prevented my legs from spreading.

At Michael's house, I seemed to be wet all the time, so the tip of the black vibrator slipped easily between my lips and into the entrance of my pussy. I flicked it on and just lay like that for a minute, until my muscles began to squeeze around it involuntarily.

Something was missing, though. I bit my lip and considered, as I lazily worked the vibrator further into myself to keep things interesting.

It didn't take long to hit upon the solution. Michael needed to be more involved. This wasn't supposed to be a run-of-the-mill masturbation session like I would have had at home. Anything that took place in his house needed to be special. It needed to be about him.

I set the vibrator on the bed and ran into the living room. Beside the couch, Michael had a few framed pictures of himself. I rejected the ones that showed him with friends or family and settled on one in which he posed before a bridge — probably one he'd built. How different he looked to me now after all we'd shared! How had I ever found him uninteresting? At our first meeting, I'd completely missed the nobility of his forehead, the sensual line of his upper lip. Perhaps that explained why he didn't know my feelings for him. The only time we'd interacted in person, I'd been cold and unimpressed.

Regret washed through me, but I didn't allow that to distract me from fixing my mistake. I snatched up the photo and returned to the bed.

The vibrator, still switched on, had traveled across the mattress, leaving a long, clear stain in its wake. I froze at the sight of my cunt juices soaked so obviously into his quilt. I didn't have time to clean that up and restore the bed to its usual condition before he returned.

The knowledge made me feel naked. On the wake of this realization, arousal pulsed through my pussy again, slow and emphatic. Perhaps the obvious, indelible mark was a sign that I should carry out my original plan.

Michael's bed embraced me readily when I returned to it. I gazed at his picture as I ran the vibrator up and down through my folds, soaking it with yet more evidence of my condition. My fingers sped over the familiar controls, turning up its intensity and setting it to pulse with an odd, varied rhythm.

From the photo, Michael gazed into my eyes as I worked my cunt. Remembering the guarded precision of his expression, I told myself it would have been no different if he were in the room with me. Michael would watch me fuck myself with the vibrator with an impassive face, withholding judgment or approval until after I made myself cum for him. Maybe he would pay only distracted attention, I fantasized, getting up to feed the dog in the middle of my desperate exhibition. Knowing my cunt's boundless enthusiasm for him, maybe he would think of me the way he thought of Sasha, present for his

amusement when he desired it, well-trained and easy to ignore when he wished time to himself, but cared for at all times in either case.

Suddenly, I saw myself sleeping curled at his feet, free to stay in his house every night. Would it even matter if he saw that other woman? As long as I could remain safe and cozy in Michael's bedroom, it didn't seem like I would care.

He would stroke my breast absently when he came home at the end of the day, maybe finger me casually as he read a book.

I shuddered and groaned and came, overcome by pangs of longing that accompanied the pleasure spreading through my body. When I finished moaning and quivering, I pulled the vibrator out of my cunt and dropped it on top of the quilt, right beside the stain. With exquisite care, I placed the photo of him beside it.

Stepping back, I surveyed what I'd done to his bed. No way could Michael ignore what I'd left for him, or fail to guess what I'd done on his bed. My heart pounded, and I gathered my things and locked the house up quickly before I could lose my nerve.



The rest of the day, I braced for a call that didn't come. It wasn't until late that night, as I rolled over and over in bed, that my cellphone rang.

"Michael?" I said his name without checking the screen.

For a few moments, I heard only his rapid breaths, made harsh by the phone's low-quality speaker. Then he cleared his throat. "You...um...forgot some things at my house."

I bit my lip, thinking I should have put the vibrator in the drawer after all. He kept his house so neat. He probably hadn't liked that I'd left a mess. Still, I couldn't change what I'd done. "I actually wanted to talk to you about that."

"I imagine you want this back," Michael said. His voice sounded dry and precise, but my heart leaped at the word "this." He had to be touching my vibrator! At the very least, he must be looking at it. My hand slipped into my panties of its own volition. The idea

of my pussy juices on his hand at that very moment made it very easy to pretend my fingers were his.

“Not necessarily...” I purred, gasping a little as I slipped two fingers up into my slick pussy. “I thought, since I’m there so often, you might let me keep a few things there.”

“I saw the toothbrush,” he said.

“Mmm.” My head lifted off my pillow. I dragged my fingertips from within and ran them over my clit. It was hard to hold the phone steady when I wanted to roll my neck from side to side with pleasure.

“Listen, you’ve been doing a great job so far,” he said, clearing his throat again.

“That won’t change,” I assured him. I should have known he’d be concerned about losing what we already had.

“I’m not sure about—” I accidentally slid the hood back from my clit and touched it directly, causing an involuntary moan. Michael’s sentence cut off abruptly, and I thought his breath came even faster in my ear. Could he be touching himself too? At that very same moment? I sighed out loud at the thought.

“What are you doing?” Michael spoke in a strangled voice.

“Talking to you,” I answered, and no one could have mistaken the dreamy tone to my words. I allowed my pleasure to become more audible. I wondered if he could hear the squelching sounds my fingers made at the entrance to my pussy.

He made a tiny noise of his own then, no more than a catch at the back of his throat. I would have missed it if I hadn’t been so exquisitely tuned to him. “I’ll e-mail you my next itinerary,” he said quickly, then hung up. I smiled into the darkness of my room and kept the phone pressed to my ear until I came.



I only had to wait a week for my next opportunity to stay at Michael’s house. Letting myself in, I began my now familiar routine, looking in on Sasha, then checking each room for changes.

As usual, he’d left my pay on the table. I picked it up, then

paused and stared at it more closely. The pile of bills seemed larger than they should have been. I counted it, and discovered he'd paid me for an extra day. Was this a raise or a mistake?

I checked the trash in every room. It didn't look like he'd cleared it before my arrival, but I couldn't find any more condoms. He hadn't seen the other woman, but there was no telling what that meant.

Allowing myself to collapse on the bed, something hard poked into the small of my back. I fished out the object and found my vibrator, clean and smelling of soap. My chest and neck heated, and my pulse sped. Not only had he touched it, he'd washed it for me. He'd done it to care for me, then left the vibrator where I'd be sure to find it.

I ran into the dining room to look closely at the note he'd left. Michael had to have used it to give me a clue or a sign. That late-night phone call had confirmed our feelings were mutual. It only remained to discern what he wanted from me.

Underneath the money he'd left for me, a slightly curled piece of paper bore his handwriting. Michael always pressed hard when he wrote, and this paper still hadn't recovered. I skimmed mundane phrases. The only unusual detail was that he'd bought a new collar for the dog, and he told me where to find the old one in case she suffered any chafing.

Frustrated, I picked up the note and peered at it more closely. "Is this all you're giving me, Michael?" I whispered. Hadn't he understood? I wanted more. That's what I'd been trying to tell him.

I ran my fingers over the imprints his pen had made, then stiffened, feeling lines where he hadn't made marks. This page bore the grooves of a previous effort. Burning with curiosity, I looked closer, tracing the shapes of the letters. If it had said anything else, surely I would have struggled to follow its meaning. Instead, it leapt off the page and straight into my heart.

Michael had written my name, over and over. At the bottom of the paper, I found a large question mark. I bit my lip. I wanted to answer any questions he had — or would ever have.

I reread the note carefully, forwards and backwards, word by word. Then it clicked. He mentioned he'd bought a new collar for the dog, but was she really likely to need the old one as a backup? Clearly, that was a gift for me.

It waited in the kitchen cabinet, and I wasted no time going to retrieve it.

The worn red reinforced cloth smelled sharp and animal. It had been around Sasha's neck for as long as I'd known Michael, and probably much longer. With trembling fingers, I unbuckled it and wrapped it around my own neck.

I've heard of women thrilling to the sensation of a ring sliding onto a finger, but the moment I put on the collar seemed so much more intense. That was the moment I understood the truth: I wanted him to possess me the way he possessed Sasha, to keep me safe in his home along with the rest of his things.

It didn't matter that he traveled half the year. I felt his presence even in his absence. I would gladly wait for his return for as long as necessary, whenever necessary.

Wanting to be seen in my new role, I called Sasha to me, getting her leash down from its hook by the door. How had I never noticed before that there were two in that spot? It occurred to me that Michael might have set his intentions about me at the time of our first meeting.

Sasha leapt around my legs, and I envisioned myself in her place, scrabbling eagerly at Michael's pants, begging for whatever treat he would deign to give me.

Once I clipped the leash to Sasha's collar and led her outside, I felt a little disappointed. People could see the red collar around my neck if they looked, but how much did it mean without being connected to a stern hand at the other end of a leash?

I wanted to be home at the same time as Michael so that he could play with me and train me as well as he'd trained Sasha. For the rest of the walk, and indeed the rest of my time in Michael's house, I regretted having to act as the human when she and I were out together. Every time I pictured myself on all fours beside her,

pleasure thrilled through my body. Unfortunately, I could only hope and pray that he would see fit to claim what I offered.

I agonized about how to show Michael I'd followed his wishes. I considered leaving the dog collar on the bed, but worried he'd take that as a rejection. Finally, I opted to fish out the digital camera I'd found when I went through his desk drawers and take pictures of myself playing my role as his new pet. Nothing could replace direct ocular evidence, I reasoned.

Fingers shaking, I stripped naked except for his dog collar. Then I called Sasha into the room. Setting the camera's timer, I posed with her, mimicking her movements. I curled on the floor to show him I could wait in his bedroom just as well as she could.

Then I sent her out of the room and began to pose more intimately. I arched my body and stretched in a way that showed my pussy to the camera. I curled myself up as small as I could and spread my legs, straining to get my tongue as close to my own clit as possible. I was nowhere near flexible enough to actually lick myself, but I could suggest the concept with my pose.

When I finished, I reviewed the photos I'd taken, shuddering a little at how explicit they were and how vulnerable they made me. For just a moment, I worried I'd misinterpreted Michael's intentions. Then I pushed the thought out of my mind, remembering the way he'd breathed during that late-night phone call. I left the digital camera on the bed for him to find.



“Do you think this is going too far?” Michael said. He sounded shaken. I checked the clock on my apartment wall. 3 a.m.

I sighed. “Do you?”

“I don't think we should... I mean, I shouldn't...” He sounded as if he'd just run a marathon.

Cold fear stabbed into my heart. “You don't have to do anything, Michael. I can take care of everything. You go on your

trips. You can rest easy knowing I'm taking good care of Sasha and everything else while you're gone."

"I can't in good conscience allow you to—"

"What are you saying?"

He took a deep breath into the phone, and his voice shook when he spoke. "I'm going to have to ask you to put the house keys in the mailbox, I'm afraid. Much as I'm loathe to do this, I'm going to have to hire another house-sitter."

Michael went on explaining and apologizing for some time, but I could barely listen to him. He was firing me? After I'd done everything he wanted? When he was so clearly aroused by what I'd done for him?

I couldn't let him destroy what we had together. I allowed Michael to finish what he was saying. I gave him my most polite responses. But I knew his schedule, and I still had his keys, no matter where he wanted me to leave them. I wouldn't let him just replace me. I'd show him what it could be like for us. In the meantime, I'd show myself.



I waited across the street from Michael's house until I saw him leave in an airport taxi. Then I let myself into his house, my mind frantic with plans. How could I tell the other house-sitter Michael didn't actually need her? I knew he wasn't available by phone when he traveled — Michael had never invested in a WorldPhone or any such. When I'd started, he'd told me not to send him e-mails for anything short of an outright emergency. So, I needed to avoid making my replacement decide we had an emergency situation. I should be able to do that.

There was still no sign of the other woman. My toothbrush remained beside his, so, although he'd fired me, he hadn't actually gotten rid of me. I found my vibrator in the nightstand, and the digital camera beside it. Turning it on quickly, I saw he hadn't deleted the pictures I'd left for him. I laid it on the bed, aroused even by the

thumbnail previews attached to the photos.

I sat at the kitchen table, forcing myself to take deep, calming breaths. Sasha seemed to think this meant we were going out. She scabbled at the door, rattling the chain of her leash, which hung beside.

With that, Sasha again provided me the inspiration I needed. Taking a deep breath, I found the collar in its hiding place in the kitchen cabinet, then restored it to its place around my neck. I stripped off my clothes and stashed them, along with my purse, at the bottom of the closet in the spare room. Then I curled up on the living room floor to wait.

It didn't take long.

"What. The. Hell." A strident female voice spoke from the doorway. It was much too late to defend myself with innocence, so I played my roll to the hilt, jumping up on all fours and running to the door with a growl. She was a stranger, so I treated her as such, though I was surprised to find I didn't hate her as much as I'd expected I would. She was pretty and brown, with hard edges to her face and lines at the corners of her eyes. She looked like she could use some sleep, but otherwise I liked her a lot.

Sasha followed my lead, approaching from the stranger's other side.

"Whoa, girl," the newcomer said, holding up one hand as she shut and locked the door behind her. I couldn't tell which of us she addressed her words to.

Then, she turned toward Sasha, giving her behind-the-ear scratches until she seemed to soften up. Once Sasha's growling subsided, the newcomer turned her attention to me.

"I'm Leah," she said with apparent coolness. Still, I was enough of an observer of people to see that she feigned calm. Her widened eyes showed surprise, her parted lips arousal, and the way she backed against the newly closed door suggested she feared that whatever I had was contagious. I had to suppress a laugh.

"Who the hell are you?" Leah prompted after a few minutes.

This was the key moment. I could have tried to explain with

words, but I didn't trust myself there. It would be all too easy to trip over my tongue at exactly the wrong time.

Instead, I led Leah to the bedroom where the digital camera waited, Sasha right behind me, her claws tapping, as always, on the floor.

Leah picked up the camera and flipped through the photos of me as Michael's dog, letting out a low whistle as she did. "You'd think he would have warned a girl," she said, and though there was more debate to come from her, I knew at that moment that she'd do things my way eventually.

I stepped closer and rubbed my head against the side of her leg. She reached down and patted me absently, still staring at the photos and shaking her head. She seemed to notice the significance of the gesture about the same time I did, and narrowed her eyes in my direction.

"You're good at this game," she said. "You've already got me treating you like a puppy, and I'm still not even sure if I'm willing to take care of his human pet along with his dog. He certainly didn't mention you."

I rubbed my head against her more vigorously, hoping the gesture would be persuasive. I was pretty caught up in the dog role already, enough that the character of my human thoughts had begun to change. At the same time, I wondered about Leah. She was complaining about the situation, but fundamentally she seemed to accept it. The relative placidity of her face as she stroked behind my ears told a complicated story. I dared to hope.

Leah continued to scratch me, and I continued to behave like an attention-seeking dog. She sighed loudly and drummed her fingers against the bedspread. "As hard as I try to keep the past a secret..." she said finally, her voice exasperated. "It's like he knows what I used to do for a living. I never did puppy play, but close enough, I guess. I'm probably the only house-sitter in the city who'd still be sitting here right now."

I broke the game enough to smile at her. She gave a little growl of her own, then patted the bed beside her. I jumped up, knowing I

was home free. Her hands roamed casually over my body, brushing my nipples, and finding their way into my mouth.

The last morning of Leah's stay followed the routine we'd established in our time alone in Michael's house together. I woke first, muscles stiff and aching from the night spent sleeping on the floor beside the bed. The discomfort only served to remind me of my situation. The resulting excitement and anticipation jolted me wide awake, and I leapt onto the bed, pawing at Leah's breasts and nudging her cheek with my nose.

She appeared asleep, but I saw the little smile that tugged at the corners of her lips as I began to lick the side of her face, working my way down the side of her neck. Slyly, I massaged her breasts under the guise of haphazard excitement, making sure to pluck at her nipples until they hardened.

When Leah remained still, I snatched the blanket off the bed and poked my face between her legs. Her cunt wet the tip of my nose, its strong smell filling my senses and making me sigh. As Michael's stand-in, she'd been beautiful to me, but I could not help imagining how this might be with him lying in her place, his cock hardening in response to my enthusiastic morning greeting.

I pressed the side of my face against her belly, then nuzzled her cunt again. Leah sighed. "You are such a bad dog," she groaned. "You can't ever let me sleep. I don't know why you expect me to put up with this. I'm sure your master doesn't."

I jumped up onto the bed more fully, wiggling my ass, allowing myself to remain blissfully oblivious to her words.

"Bad. Dog." Leah repeated the words firmly, accompanying each with a hard slap to my naked ass. I let out a puppy whimper and leapt off the bed, huddling in the corner. "There we go," Leah said sternly. "You stay over there until I'm ready to pay attention to you. Be a good girl."

She rolled onto her side and closed her eyes, leaving me in the corner trembling with desire and the sting of her blows. Every second that passed stoked the fire inside me even more. I needed

attention, and my cunt needed even more.

Whimpering as softly as I could, I brought my hand between my legs, longing to give my clit a little relief.

Leah's eyes snapped open. "I know Michael's pretty dog isn't about to make one of her messes in the corner while I get a little sleep." She shook her head and sighed theatrically. "I swear, she makes her sticky little messes every time she gets left alone for five minutes."

Her eyes closed again, decisively, but I knew I had to obey. Reluctantly, and as slowly as I dared, I pulled my hand away from my clit. Ironically, her refusal to allow me stimulation had turned me on even more. My hips rolled helplessly into the empty air, my pussy needing everything Leah refused to give.

A grunt from the bed tipped me off that she'd been observing my state of arousal. "Pretty puppy. You just won't be happy until you get some attention, will you?"

I gave a little bark of joy when Leah patted a spot on the bed beside her, then ran to her. She scratched behind my ears, then rubbed my head firmly, but before long her hands roamed to more sexual places. Hooking her fingers in my collar to hold me still, she scraped her fingernails over my inner thighs, then cupped my pussy in the palm of her hand.

"Is that what Michael's little dog wants?" She cooed in a condescending voice that left me helpless with arousal. "Why don't you kiss me to show me what you want?" I didn't need to be asked twice. With the flat of my tongue, I administered one big, sloppy dog kiss after another. I slobbered on each of her nipples, then wriggled and hopped on the bed and switched to the place we both wanted me to reach.

Her cunt had become even wetter in the time we'd been playing our game. She parted her legs just enough for me to fit my face between them, but I pushed them further apart with the force of my ardor for her juices.

I didn't try to lick her pussy with skill. Instead, I went after her with the wild, abundant enthusiasm anyone would expect from

a dog. I scooped big dollops of her wetness up with my tongue. I licked her outer lips as much as I licked her clit. I fastened my teeth on her upper thigh before returning to Leah's pussy to lap at her a little more.

She rewarded my efforts with fingers stroking the inside of my cunt and the other hand patting my ass. We had time to spare, and no reason to rush to orgasm. The luxury of it again made me fantasize about how things would be with Michael.

"I have to leave this afternoon, puppy," Leah said. "I hope Michael will have me back, but in the meantime, I'll miss you." Her voice dropped to a whisper. "I bought you something special. I hope he won't mind."

From the near-empty drawer in the nightstand, she produced a short length of fur. I stared at it, trepidation and arousal curling through my belly. I whimpered uncertainly.

Leah placed a soothing hand on the top of my head and smiled gently. She held the furry thing up beside my face. "It matches your hair perfectly. Now turn around."

She stroked and coaxed me until I did what she wanted. A bottle pumped, and Leah touched cold, lubricated fingers to my ass. I swallowed hard, thrown off and nearly knocked out of the world I'd created for myself. I almost opened my mouth to speak, to stop her, to tell her the truth before she put the tip of that furry thing into my butt.

"There's a good girl," she said in a cutesy voice. She repeated variations of the phrase as she eased whatever-it-was into my tightest hole. I'd never had anything in there before, had never even thought of it, honestly, but refusing would have meant giving up the game, and so I gritted my teeth and took it, trying my best to relax the way she told me to.

It ventured ever deeper. It hadn't looked large in her hand, but it created an excruciating, stretching tension in my ass that I wasn't sure I could endure. I whined constantly now, but still Leah soothed me and pressed it in.

I didn't want it inside me, and yet the more Leah forced the

issue, the more my cunt dripped. I dreamed of being an animal, of belonging to Michael. All I had to do was imagine his hand administering this sensation, and my body could surrender utterly.

The thing popped through my resistance, and I let out a startled yelp. I allowed myself to tremble and wriggle on the bed, moving as if I thought I could get away from the intruder.

“You’ll get used to it, sweet puppy,” Leah said. “Wait until you see how pretty it is.”

Taking hold of my collar, she tugged me into the bathroom. Every time I shifted my body to crawl, the thing shifted inside me, so that I ended up moaning, growling, and begging the entire way to the bathroom.

We stopped before the floor to ceiling mirror, and Leah carefully positioned me so I could see the reflection of my ass. Protruding from my rear was the softest, silkiest furry little tail I’d ever seen. It wiggled every time my anal muscles fluttered. It took my breath away to look at it, to see a concrete sign of how far my life had come since I’d fallen in love with Michael.

“I hope he’ll like that surprise,” she said softly. “Seeing his little puppy so well-dressed for him. Maybe he’ll invite me back.” Leah sighed and yanked my face against her cunt. My mouth opened in surprise, which turned into a lick when she thrust her pelvis hard against my face.

I liked this house-sitter. Things with her had gone better than I ever could have dreamed. Still, I wanted to try out my new role with Michael, the man I loved. I closed my eyes and delved into her pussy, my tongue moving in firm circles over her clit, the way I’d learned she liked. I heard Sasha in the bedroom, nails clicking against the floor.

Leah was right. The tail was pretty.

I couldn’t wait to see the smile of satisfaction on Michael’s face when he arrived home to a job well done: both his dogs well-fed, well-groomed, and waiting for him.

L. A. ARMOIRE

BY B.Z.R.VUKOVINA



“Take a breath. A deep one. Take it now.”

“Why?”

“Because, my dear, it’s the last breath you’ll take for a while.”



His mouth tastes vaguely of last night’s illegal scotch; hers mostly of his. Their sex sounds like a clapping seal. “Oh, walrus tusks! Bee’s knees!” he exclaims between thrusts. The sweat-wet tips of his dark bangs tap and cling against his creased forehead. Saline pomade irritates his young bull’s eyes, flows through the hairs of his scraggly moustache. “Cat’s meow.” He moans, the seal slaps, she leans back, her pussy slurps his cock, as their two still-smoking cigarettes cuddle in a glass ashtray by the window whose angled venetian blinds make flickering prison stripes out of the Sunday morning light.

She kicks out her legs — and knocks over an urn.

His grandmother gave him that one, but it wasn’t filled with anyone’s ashes. He’ll care about it later.

He groans.

“Panther’s paws!”

The animal interjections are a staple of his when he gets

excited. She accepts it as a silly constant.

He tries spreading his feet to lower his hips, to get at her from a different angle, but the trousers round his ankles spoil that plan, and all he does manage to do is to trip and stumble forward, stabbing into her so deeply that—“By the buffalo’s horns!”—her hand resting on the mahogany table fists up to the tune of the crackle-and-crunch of the Los Angeles Times underneath: last Friday’s edition. When the shock passes, the rhythm of the fucking returns, the fist opens, and the front page uncrumples to the bespectacled face of a young Tennessee teacher. “Monkey’s pelvis.”

She draws her fingertips across a nearly hairless chest. The chest leans in and pushes against her breasts.

“Ungh...Edi,” he says.

It’s what he always says. It’s *all* he *ever* says.

Outside, a streetcar rings its bell and she imagines the warm, broken silence of palm trees and old Mexican churches. It’s not that she doesn’t enjoy him. It’s just that she doesn’t think she loves him. Somewhere, police are smashing whisky bottles and arresting bootleggers. He tenses up. She touches his exposed shoulder blades and feels the weight of his body on hers, the desperation that takes over as he gets closer and closer to orgasm.

The phone rings.

He gets off her and like an automaton scrambles, still desperate, to the receiver. Sex pulls him in one direction, responsibility in another; his trousers drag along the carpeted floor. She just revels in her unexpected feeling of emptiness. As she fixates on his erect cock vibrating in the California air, he brings the receiver to his ear. “Gilbert speaking,” he says between expectant breaths. Then his expression droops and he snorts. He holds out the receiver. “For you.”

She walks to him, takes the mouthpiece, and immediately recognizes the silence on the other side. “Edith,” she says. The line crackles. A man’s voice says, “I’ve got a job for you.”

Gilbert leans against an expensive armoire, watching her. She knows she should feel more self-consciously naked than she does, but before she can think too much about it, the voice on the other side

of the telephone barks: "Meet me at the usual joint within the hour." There's no question in the accent. It's pure command. It goes on a sentence more. "I'll fill you in when you get here."

The line goes dead. Edith replaces the receiver.

"Who was that?" Gilbert pulls open the venetian blinds, letting in a blast of bright sunlight.

"My boss," she says. The light hurts her eyes and she squints. She imagines Gilbert is being deliberately figurative, exposing her to the light. He may be a buffoon, but he's not stupid — though she has been feeding him wooden nickels since the first time they met.

"A dame reporter," he snorts before she can say anything else. "That's as fine a sign as any the world's going mad." His fingers twitch, hungry for a cigarette that doesn't exist. "Thank God there aren't any dames working at the bank. That's the truth. Some work is simply man's work. It's a man's world."

She detects more than ideological resentment in the words. His erection is drooping.

"I'm sorry," she says. "I have to keep in contact. The news doesn't wait, even on Sundays. A girl's got to stay available or she'll never get a promotion." She bats her eyelashes before adding, "In your man's world."

She hopes for a smile, but it doesn't appear. Instead, Gilbert crosses the room to where their clothes sit in a single pile on the bed and starts rifling through them.

"Next time, you should ask before you tell your boss you're spending Sunday morning at my apartment. We need to be careful. You know how yellow those jackals are. The scent of a scandal can ruin a perfectly respectable career." He looks in her direction and she sees the unbounded ambition burning in his eyes. "We're fine for now, but once I— once we have money — and I'm a name big enough for the presses, they'll be spitting over themselves to try and raise that scent."

She figures he's about to talk marriage again, so she tries to head him off with a kiss, but he won't have it. "Marry me, Edith," he says after their lips part. "In five years, we'll have so much dough

we won't know what to do with it. We'll travel. We'll dine out every night. You won't have to crawl around the city with your camera and your typewriter under your arm, writing about scum. You'll be able to stay at home and make our beautiful house." The fire in his eyes burns somewhere between ambition and delusions of grandeur. "It's all figured out," he says, "That's the best part. Banking, the stock market, the whole money system, it's a science and I'm on the verge of getting a key to the vault."

The metaphor doesn't hold. Edith knows that if she had an editor, if she actually *was* a reporter, he'd chomp down on his cigar, angle his bushy eyebrows and chew her out for a turn of phrase like that.

Gilbert merely puts a hand on her naked ass and squeezes: one last boyish attempt to get her to stay. But she can't stay. *Within the hour*, she'd been told, *at the usual joint*. As Gilbert's fingers lose their grip, she unrolls the map of Los Angeles she keeps inside her head, and does a calculation. Answer: she has to leave soon. Gilbert's apartment is too deep in the better part of the city, too far away from where real life takes place.

She gives him another kiss and puts on her brassiere, her rayon stockings, her shoes, her dress, her hat. "I'm sorry," she says again. "I'll make it up to you, twice." Although she very much doubts that, what else can she say: *I don't love you and I never will?*

His penis now soft, Gilbert's mind reverts to its usual interests. He picks up the Friday edition of the Los Angeles Times and scans the pages. It's amazing, Edith muses, how arousal changes a man's character and sophistication.

"What do you think of this Mussolini fellow?" he asks.

But Edith's already out the door.

Which she slams shut.

In the hallway, she jogs the distance from Gilbert's door to the elevator, waits, and makes instead for the stairs, down which she step-hop-scotches to the main floor, where she pushes through heavy double doors, rushes past an older couple who breathe, "Flapper," under their hairy noses, shaking their heads, as she bursts out through

the building's front doors into:

Los Angeles, 1925. The bustle, the grime, the heat and the wild and noisy and endless possibilities of one million people all chasing the same dream.

A streetcar rumbles past.

Edith closes her eyes and inhales air that tastes of the metropolitan stench she both loves and detests. She feels her heart beating inside her chest. It beats in tune with the motors of the automobiles on the street: lines of them, a hundred engines turning to the same rhythm; to which, on the sidewalk, under pristine American flags snapping at the wind, men in suits cock their hats and push past women in long and short dresses, in bonnets held to their heads and blown-about bobs, thin- and full-bodied, whose curves catch the eyes of a group of black-haired, burnt-skinned youths sitting on a corner. One of them whittles away at a block of wood with a knife no less sharp than his stare.

Edith looks away and joins the stream of pedestrians.

It's no time for people watching.

But just as she makes that realization, above her a window opens and a woman leans across its sill. The woman sways. Her hands are delicately thin and pale, and the angle makes her face look intriguingly unnatural. The window belongs to a ritzy hotel called *The International*. Europe's rich and famous émigrés have taken a liking to staying in it and Edith plays a silent guessing game with the woman's identity, when a man's hand appears and starts to caress the woman's breasts through the thin layer of her silk slip. The woman pays no notice, sucking absentmindedly at the cigarette dangling from her lips until the cigarette turns to ash and the ash falls to the pavement beneath.

Edith steps over it.

As someone yells, and someone else screams, and a man in a pinstripe suit with a long, crooked nose bursts out into the middle of the street. Edith makes out the masked shape of a revolver nestled into his pocket, which he pats, sweat gathering on his forehead, thinking about pulling the gun, his pupils narrow to pinpoints, but he

thinks better of it, and disappears into the crowd on the other side of the street. Two men chase after but Edith knows they won't find him. He's not the type to be found — unless it's facedown in the Los Angeles River.

Danger having passed, the air howls a brief eulogy and everything is instant amnesia. Routines continue. That's the beauty of the city: Anonymity. And permission. The flags whip loudly overhead. Vices remain quietly hidden. Edith exhales and quickens her pace. She still has miles to go before she sleeps.

Ahead, the swirling wind steals a policeman's cap and lifts a girl's innocent white dress, revealing a pair of scanty panties. Immediately, all pairs of masculine eyes converge. Edith's too. And the policeman's, who forgets about his cap, which rolls across the street like a tumbleweed.

The girl grabs at the ends of her dress and stands at attention. Her cheeks turn as red as stop signs. Around her, predatory mouths gape and the flow of saliva thickens.

Edith is suddenly aware of her own dress, which the wind is also tugging at, aware of her *lack* of panties, which are still somewhere in the tangle of clothes on Gilbert's bed. She feels sympathy, sisterhood and shared shame — and feels jealous, for not being the centre of attention, and aroused, for wanting to touch and taste the girl's pussy as much as any of the filthy minds around her. She feels like a woman and man at the same time. She feels this is wrong. She feels wet.

She feels Los Angeles.

By the time she arrives at the *usual joint*, the wind has withered away to stillness and her wetness has dried. The streets are darker and less raucous here. People walk with their heads down, for to look up is to risk seeing the wrong person at the wrong time and paying a harsh price for it. Automobiles too, are less social. Their tires tread more carefully.

Edith rounds a corner, walks past a red-bricked light bulb factory, and descends a set of cement stairs at the end of which stands a solid-looking wooden door whose sole distinguishing feature

is a thin slit. The slit is closed.

She knocks five times, waits, knocks once more.

The slit opens.

An eye appears behind it.

“Leland McCauley’s Molly,” she says.

The slit closes and the door swings open. Edith walks through. The door closes behind her.

Inside, the stench hits her like a Jack Dempsey haymaker.

Although it’s difficult to identify each of its pungent components, sweat, sex and booze play dominant roles. A mix of cheap perfumes make up the base; and blood, cum and vomit are frequent highlights, but it depends on the roll of the dice. Some nights see gambling brawls, others devolve into orgies. Together, the elements combine into as uniquely off-putting an odour as any Edith’s ever experienced. Each time she visits the speakeasy, it shocks her anew, and she can’t imagine how anyone can spend more than an hour in here without coming up for fresh air.

This morning, the smell lingers despite the fact that the speakeasy is empty save for the goon guarding the door, the waitress cleaning tables and a few sad sacks sleeping off their Saturday night fun in the company of their collective snores.

“I’m here to see Leland,” Edith says to the waitress, who says back without looking up, “And I’d like to see more coin for the work I do. They pay me to wait on tables, I wait on tables. They pay me to wipe ‘em down, I wipe ‘em down. If they want me to play secretary, they better pay me for that too.”

Everybody’s got lip here, even the Sunday morning staff.

Edith takes a seat on a stool by the bar.

“My my, look what the cat’s meow dragged in. My favorite doll!” she hears — and knows it’s Leland McCauley even before seeing him emerge from a back room holding a crate marked *Iris Inc.* He’s got a peculiar way of talking, like he swallows his words before spitting them out with the force of a Thompson gun. Then again, there’s much peculiar about Leland McCauley, not least of which is the way his Irish persona clashes with his Latino features.

After putting down the crate, Leland smoothes the pomaded tips of his black moustache and takes a seat next to Edith. As usual, he wastes no time getting to the point. His hand is halfway up Edith's thigh as he says, "Ever heard of Virgil Kronberg?"

"The movie producer, sure." She beats his hand away.

Leland growls, "I got odds you ain't ever seen him, though. Not many have. A real secretive egg, and for good reason. Just oozes slime and perversion. Cracked in the head. Got a pretty wife, two kids, spends his nights partaking in the darker pleasures, as they say. Not a pleasant fellow. Not, say, like me." Leland's fingers drop onto Edith's lap and spider across her pussy. She squirms. "But I got me on presidential authority that dirty Kronberg's attending a certain swanky high class party in a few nights. Up in the hills. I got the address and an in. I want you to take your sweet doll's face and get me the scoop on the unspeakable things that go on."

Edith is letting Leland finger-fuck her, while she thinks about the girl in the white dress.

"What's your angle with the motion picture business?" she asks.

"None," he lies. "It's insurance."

"Insurance?"

His fingers fuck deeper.

"You know how it is with men who get money. One day they decide to become politicians. So, someone needs to keep politics pure, to keep out the freaks. It's a public service. Like shooting a Hun. You get me the dirt and I hold on to it for its future persuasive value."

Edith supposes the true motive doesn't matter. These are the sacrifices one makes as an employee. When she's good enough, when she's got her own detective agency, that's when she can decide what jobs to take and which people to spy on.

"What's the address, what's the in?" she asks.

"Birte Lund."

Edith waits for an explanation that doesn't arrive. Finally, she has to ask, "The Danish cinema star?"

"For answers like that, you gotta get on your knees, doll.

There's a reason I give you my best leads, and it ain't only 'cause you're a half decent dick."

The waitress watches them from the corner of her eye and mumbles under her breath.

"She's seen a lot worse," Leland assures. "Done worse too. And them—" he points at the sleeping drunks, "you don't even wanna know what goes on in those hooch dream heads of theirs."

Edith slides off the stool, onto her knees, and unzips the fly of Leland's trousers. Life is full of sacrifices, she tells herself as she takes out his cock and wraps her lips around it, and nine of ten times nobody gives a dime how you got where you get.

Leland groans. Edith feels the weight of the waitress' gaze on her back, followed by the weight of Leland's palm on her head. The goon at the door shifts in his chair but otherwise doesn't seem to care one way or another.

Still, Edith closes her eyes and thinks about the things she always thinks about while doing this: dancing girls and Hollywood starlets, owning a business, the beach, serene forests of giant sequoias, Gilbert, and the taste of her own arousal, which must taste like other women's arousal. What she doesn't think about is what's actually occupying her mouth: Leland's expanding cock. And only vaguely is she aware that her sucking and her tongue are what's making it expand. She doesn't care. She could just as well be sucking the butt end of a tennis racket.

When Leland cums, Edith swallows him only because she feels bad for the waitress. If she were to spit it onto the floor, would the waitress have to clean it up?

Going down her throat, the cum leaves a metallic aftertaste.

Leland pats her on the head, fits his cock back into his trousers and zips up his fly. "Birte Lund throws the biggest parties in Los Angeles," he says before Edith has had time to get back onto her stool. "Though most regular citizens don't know that. Her parties aren't for the proles. She also owes a small fortune to the tax authorities in Denmark."

Edith wipes her mouth, props her elbows on the bar and leans

her head on her hand. “I don’t understand,” she says.

“Otto Felsing.”

Edith repeats the name.

“Bravo. Not just a pretty face. She talks! Ain’t that the future of the motion picture.” Leland puts his hand on Edith’s and lowers his voice like he’s divulging national secrets. “Otto Felsing is a fellow collector of persuasive information. Operates out of Berlin and has got bins full of dirt on anyone who’s anyone in Europe, including a few on Birte Lund. She knows he knows. And, now, I know and you know.”

The plan comes into focus. “Let me see if I understand,” Edith says. “I visit Birte Lund, blackmail her with this Felsing to get invited to her party, which I attend in order to gather information about Virgil Kronberg?”

Leland applauds so loudly that one of the drunks lifts his head, blinks, and falls back asleep with a thud.

“Attagirl! Address is 1 Bolivar Terrace. It’s lovely, you’ll enjoy it, and remember to write down all the sordid details.” He pulls out a fat wallet and hands several bills to Edith. They’re too crisp to be clean. “Buy yourself something spiffy to wear. Fit in. Show off your gams, be a dumb Dora, get invited into the sinister rooms.” He grins. “Then report back and get more to spend however you want, doll.”

As she gets up to leave he lands such hard slap across her backside that Edith jumps.

In the sticky back seat of a taxi, whose disinterested Armenian driver spins the wheel without saying a word, she wonders if he speaks English. A novel bounces in the passenger’s seat, but Edith can’t get a read on the title or language. Otherwise, she gazes through the window and feels every bump in the road, which runs rougher than she’s used to. As if by instinct, she massages her much smoother stockinged legs.

The road zigs and zags, and the driver breaks, hand-over-hands and guides the taxi into a sharp turn. Edith hugs the car door. The driver taps the accelerator. The seat snuggles against her back.

When the taxi finally comes to a stop, she's happy to be on her feet again. She pays, the driver tips his cap, and he's gone. And she stands, alone, by a small plaque that says, simply: 1 Bolivar Terrace.

Whatever exists beyond the plaque is hidden from the road by a wall of tall, thick evergreens. Their impenetrability is disturbed by a single gap that opens onto a narrow path lined with cobblestones.

Edith's shoes echo along all the way to the front door of an imposing, three-storey mansion.

She knocks.

Within seconds, the door opens and the distinctive, brooding face of Birte Lund appears. It's as minor an entrance as a movie star's ever had, but Edith still nearly gasps. Birte's dark eyes and thin lips have greater presence than most people whole. She backs away. The eyes blink, bored. "Yes, dear?" Birte Lund asks in a deep, accented voice, "Who are you and what do you want?"

"I hear you throw parties," Edith says, and is immediately aware of the quivering of her own throat. She's gone toe-to-toe with thugs and held her own against gangsters, but today she feels like a novice nun about to be berated by mother superior. She bites her lip just so the jolt of pain will remind her that she's the one with the upper hand.

"Parties," Birte Lund repeats, making the syllables neither statement nor question but a slithering tongue. "Perhaps in past times."

"And Otto Felsing?"

Birte Lund steps forward. Even wrapped in a silk robe, she looks elegant, but if the name's pricked a nerve she doesn't show it. She puts a hand on her hip. For an instant, Edith doubts Leland's information. For an instant, she's sure he's made a mistake and Birte is on the verge of laughter. Then:

"Otto" she purrs. "Except you are not government, which means you want to negotiate. Speak up, dear. Tell me your terms. What is it you desire?"

The wind ripples her robe.

"I want an invitation," Edith says.

“To a party.”

“To the next party.”

With no warning and no great change in her expression, Birte pulls loose the knot holding in place the two sides of her robe, which spreads open, revealing a sliver of skin and sex from her neck all the way to her pubic hair.

Edith looks away, as her mouth fills with warm moisture.

“I suspect you have an interest in one of my guests,” Birte says. “Do not worry, I care not which or why. But, my dear, such obvious reactions will not do. They will smell you like wolves do a lamb.” She reaches out and strokes Edith’s cheek and her voice softens. “Tell me. Who are you, *truly*, child?”

“I am...”

And hardens: “Unprepared, my dear!”

She slaps Edith’s cheek.

As Edith is rubbing the shock and sting out of it, Birte says, “Are you sure you want this? My parties are not for the faint and uninitiated.”

Edith thinks about serene forests of giant sequoias, Gilbert, and the slickness of arousal. She remembers casting a vote in the presidential election last year. She fantasizes about owning her own detective agency. “I’m sure,” she says.

Feeling returns to her cheek.

“Very well. Come with me.” And Birte pulls her by the hand, around the corner of the mansion, across pathways, gardens and immaculately kept yards to the very edge of the world — where the panorama steals Edith’s excited breath away.

1 Bolivar Terrace sits, Olympian, atop a hill seismically sliced by a long, steep cliff. Below, the sprawling endlessness of Los Angeles spreads out and flickers, seethes, rumbles, tortures and fucks its inhabitants like so many insignificant playthings: the girl with the red cheeks and white dress; and Leland’s moustache; Gilbert; the dangerous man with the long, crooked nose and the dregs snoozing away their days on the smeared tabletops of speakeasies. Cops, robbers, serial dreamers and rapists — all down there, right now,

plotting, replicating and subsisting.

“You’ve experienced existence at the bottom of the cauldron,” Birte says. “Are you prepared to bubble at the top?”

Edith barely hears her.

The rampaging wind is too loud. The view is too loud. There’s too much of both.

Her balance plays devilish tricks on her.

“Strip,” Birte says.

Edith does.

And the air caresses her body.

And Los Angeles stares up at her no less fascinated than she’d stared up at the woman on the balcony of *The International*.

“Spread your arms.”

“Spin.”

“Scream!”

She feels directed, exhilarated, elevated.

“And, now, stop.”

Her legs drop out from under her as everything else continues in motion, and she falls to the ground. The city is replaced by the sky. The sun blinds her. The sun is overcome by the blurred shape of Birte’s head and shoulders. Two dark eyes come into patient focus.

“Friday at sundown,” Birte says, licking her lips, blinking her eyes, and tying together the loose sides of her robe. “Come prepared to serve. Serve well, and you will get whatever it is you have come for. I can offer no more. The risk remains yours.”

The sun sets on Sunday.

Monday lingers like an anxious first date. On Tuesday, Edith spends Leland’s cash on an expensive dress, new stockings and a pair of shoes. Wednesday is hiding — from Gilbert, from herself. “Work,” she explains over the telephone. “I’m all typed up about a real caper and can’t tear myself away.” Really, her fingers flip the pages of a Leonard Merrick novel she’s not paying enough attention to. Every few flips, they explore elsewhere and she reads until nightfall. When she wakes on Thursday, her lungs are heavy and her panties wet. Her sheets are crumpled. She goes for a walk. On Friday, she eats a late

restaurant breakfast and flirts with the waiter before going home to change into Tuesday's outfit. Spiffy, she regards herself in the mirror. She likes what she sees. She takes a taxi to 1 Bolivar Terrace.

The hour's early but she makes directly for the gap in the evergreens and advances along the cobbled path toward the front door. Already a few bodies are milling about, but they're too ordinary to be guests. They must be the help — men carrying tables and crates, women in plain clothes. They pay no attention to Edith, who decides the mansion is less alien today. She can barely believe what happened here on Sunday, but she's daydreaming about it when one of the plainly-dressed women looks up and smiles, and Edith feels the acid of jealousy. She's not the only one. Tonight, she won't be special. The door opens before she can knock and Birte Lund appears. Immediately, Edith looks plain too. "My dear," Birte purrs from behind black, style and gold. "You are early."

Edith chokes on her words.

"No matter. Follow me and I will show you the rooms."

They step into the mansion, whose interior is actually interconnected interiors, which are like no other place in Los Angeles. The only adjective that does them all justice is *rich*. Edith wants to scribble notes and take photographs. She imagines the plots of exotic films unfolding before her eyes, each new room a mysterious continent, each continent a studio set overflowing with props and the aura of history and fame. Important and unspeakable things have happened here. Edith knows this through her pores and by the tingling of the tiny hairs rising on her neck.

"I thought I could be a visiting philanthropist's daughter," she says to Birte when they are alone.

"Whatever do you mean?"

"I need a story, to fit in with the other guests. That could be it. Or," she says, excited, stuttering, "maybe the wife of a foreign dignitary, a count of a faraway country."

Birte stops. They're in a room whose walls are adorned with African shields, weapons and artifacts. A life-sized statue of an aroused Maasai warrior stands proudly in the corner. Its bent arm,

angled backward, threatens with a wooden spear. A wreath hangs on its erect penis. Edith wonders how many pussies have fucked it.

“You will never fit in,” Birte says.

The sentence echoes round the room like the death rattle of a wounded antelope.

“You would only make a fool of yourself. It would raise suspicions. You would not achieve your goal.” She toys with the golden necklace around her neck. “And that is not in my interest. My interest is for you to remain undetected, find what it is that you are searching for, and not to speak of Otto Felsing to anyone.”

Edith isn’t sure whether that’s pure reason or a threat but, before she can formulate a proper question, Birte says, “That is why I have arranged for you to attend tonight’s party as my freshest serving girl.”

“What will I serve?”

“Whom, my dear. The better question is whom.”

Birte takes Edith by the hand for the second time in her life and guides her to an unremarkable door beside the Maasai. “Through there you will find the preparation room. The guests will begin arriving soon. I have informed Rebecca of your arrival. She is my finest server. She will take care of you.”

Edith reaches for the intricately-carved ebony doorknob.

Before the knob is fully turned, Birte puts a hand on her shoulder. Edith hears without looking back:

“Take a breath. A deep one. Take it now.”

“Why?”

“Because, my dear, it’s the last breath you’ll take for a while.”

The mechanism clicks, the door opens, the Maasai shivers. Birte’s hand slides down from Edith’s shoulder to the small of her back, and pushes a girl into a room full of women.

Streams of light reflect violently in mirrors. The room’s a tizzy of tables and chairs, garish cosmetics, breasts, thighs and cunts, and the bodies to which they belong, sitting and standing, pacing and yelling gossip in voices sweet and hoarse and, for an instant, no one pays attention to Edith standing silently in the entrance with her arms

fallen to her sides. But the instant passes; they all pay attention — a dozen activities interrupted, a dozen heads staring at once. The room is a hydra. Edith's fingers curl into fists. A woman speaks, "She must be the new one." The others blink, several smile. Makeup brushes sweep back into action. A chair leg screeches against the floor. Chaos returns. Chaos — the defining characteristic of life.

"Hello," a voice says.

It belongs to a short-haired woman with such vibrant freckles on her cheeks that no amount of powder could cover them up. She's wearing crimson stockings, a string of brilliant pearls and an ostrich feather in her hair. Her bush is the fiery color of red brick.

"I'm Rebecca," she yells over the din. "Mistress Lund said you would be joining us. Is it your first time?"

One of the other women cackles and claps with delight.

Edith nods.

"No need to be bashful. We're all friends here — though first names only. Tell me yours, then take off your dress and we'll get you a feather."

"Edith," says Edith and starts to strip.

Rebecca imparts the rules: "By the feather is how the guests tell us apart. We serve food and drinks, and we also *serve*. The only commandment is that you can't decline. Tastes and perversions range, so if there's a game you don't want to play, don't put yourself in a situation to be asked."

So much for pretty clothes. Edith sighs, and places her folded dress on a vacant chair. She takes off her brassiere and slides off her panties. Her breasts perk up. Her lips glisten. If she wasn't so nervous, she'd already be writhing. So many beautiful nude women in one place!

Rebecca fastens a feathered headband around her head. It shines and sparkles. The feather floats. "If you recognize a guest, pretend you don't. If a guest offers you any scratch — or anything else — take it. Never ask for a name. Never tell more than your first. If a guest or one of us girls tells you to do something, obey. Now do a loop, honey."

Edith does, showing off her body, from slender neck to slender ankles.

“Opinions, ladies?”

“I wouldn’t mind chewin’ on it for a night or two,” the cackling one squawks. Another whistles. “Swell face, long pins,” coos a third. “Can I drag ‘em home to mama, can I?”

“As close to acceptance as this crowd gets.” Rebecca flashes her teeth. “But don’t let their tongues fool you. Us girls are a pack. If you ever find trouble, you come and you tell.”

Edith wonders what kind of trouble exactly, and how she can find Virgil Kronberg instead. “Who are the usual guests?” she asks.

“Ones with all the kale. If they’re rich, they’re here. Don’t worry, though. They don’t expect refinement of manners. They have that in spades at home. Along with coldness. So sit, relax, and let Lydia paint your face till you look like the keenest little pro skirt Hollywood’s ever seen.”

Lydia, Edith soon discovers, is a bosomy chipmunk of a woman and an absolute ace with the brushes and colors. In no time at all, Edith’s eyes are darker, lips fuller, and cheeks just rosy enough to make her look adorably deviant. She barely recognizes her own face in the mirror.

“Sheba?” Lydia asks.

“Sheba.”

Lydia opens her mouth to say something more, but a gong sounds from behind the buzz of the preparation room — transforming the buzz into a hush — followed by the sing-song cry of a cuckoo clock’s cuckoo: *cuck-oooh, cuck-oooh, cock...*

Lydia shuts her mouth. The atmosphere changes. What was raucous becomes palpably expectant. “Five minutes,” Rebecca announces as the clatter of dropped dishes erupts from a nearby room. (Faintly: “Aw, applesauce!”) Rebecca says, “You all know your starting roles, girls. As for you...” She lowers her voice to Edith, “You’ll start on orders and drinks. Stay in the main room when you can. Don’t linger, don’t attract attention unless you know you can handle it, and never lose track of where you are. You’ll see things

tonight you've never even imagined, but keep an open mind and your wits and you'll do fine."

Edith half expects a kiss or a slap on the bum, but gets neither. *Virgil Kronberg*, she reminds herself, and lets the rush of ostrich feathers and naked bodies carry her through the open doors.

The main room of 1 Bolivar Terrace is spacious, opulent and windowless. A row of heavy chandeliers illuminates the sweet smoke that hovers in the air, mingling with the taste of food and alcohol. Men in suits and women in the latest flapper fashions walk and talk and sit on leather sofas. Cups clink against glass tables. A cook dressed in spotless white rushes past, apologizing profusely to the room itself. He disappears into what Edith supposes must be the kitchen. "Darling," a woman, somewhere, says, "you simply must try the..." but her voice fades away before finishing. One of the serving girls brushes against Edith's body and Edith freezes, reminded that she too is naked. The feather on her head flaps. But nobody seems to mind. Nakedness mingles with clothing as if that were the most natural pairing in the world. Edith starts moving again, keeping away from the guests, their eyes, observing their faces. Some she recognizes, others are new. Awareness caterpillars down her spine. All are influential.

She steps unexpectedly onto a section of glass floor, looks down — and nearly screams. Below, a naked female body twists in pleasure, rubbing its pussy. She steps onto tile again and scans the floor in front. There is more glass. There must be more bodies. It seems excessive, wasteful. No one watches. The women are just *there*, performing for no audience.

To the left, a heavy-set woman holds a wine glass in one hand while groping a serving girl with the other. To the right, a feathered head bobs between a seated man's spread legs. Between groans, he rails against the government of Belgium while the erect younger man beside him nods in approval. The feathered head moves from one cock to the other.

The emergence of a stage rips Edith's attention away.

A second ago, it wasn't there. Now it is. Society may not be

mobile, but at least the walls are.

A dozen musicians are ushered onto it — led like children by the hand — to their waiting instruments. Seated, the drummer fumbles for and picks up his sticks and starts tapping on the high-hat. The bass kicks in, followed by the brass — trumpets, trombones and a saxophone. The music spills out. The musicians stare blankly ahead. Their fingers and lips are nimble, their eyes blind. *Don't see, don't tell*, Edith imagines.

Fingers snap.

Edith spins, trying to locate their source. She hopes they aren't snapping for her. She steps onto another glass plate. Below, another masturbating body.

The fingers snap again. "Dolly-girl, over here!"

A man is motioning her closer. He looks harmless enough, so she obeys. Up close, he smells like almonds. "Be a dolly and spread yer fan for me," he says. She can only guess what he means, but puts two fingers on her pussy and pushes aside skin until the pink is visible. "Virgil?" she attempts to say, but it comes out too soft, incomprehensible. "Virgin," the man repeats and laughs. "I doubt it, no doubt about it." Before she can react, he sticks a finger up into her fan and twists; takes it out and sucks the juices off. "Filthy but good." She tightens her jaw. "Get me a drink, will ya?" he says. "Yes," she says. "A Woodrow Wilson on ice," he says.

She breaks away and tries to find the kitchen. She tries to remember where the cook disappeared to.

The room feels like plasticine, tilting and expanding.

She feels hot lips touch her back.

She locates the kitchen door and ducks inside.

The kitchen is as chaotic as the preparation room. Cans, pans and platters crash into each other as bodies attempt not to. Smells overpower. Bottles line one of the walls, and Edith pinballs toward them. "Excuse me. Pardon me. I'm sorry," she mouths along the way. A square block in a ridiculous straw hat bows before her. "What do you need, lady?" he asks. "A Woodrow Wilson," she says. "On ice." The square performs magic with bottles and shakers and before

she's caught her breath hands her a glass three-quarters full of pale blue liquid. He drops — one, two, three — cubes into it: *plop-op-p*. "As ordered by the lady, one W. Wilson on ice. Appropriately self-important and bland."

In the main room, she tries locating the harmless-looking man, but he's vanished. In his chair, two people are fucking. Men, women? She can't tell. She doesn't try. She merely holds the drink, feels the urge to drink it, is about to raise it to her lips when she sees a harmless body fit through a harmless door, and follows.

A man on all fours nearly knocks her over. She sidesteps and calls out, "Woodrow Wilson on ice!" The man crawls away, snorting like a pig. Two women giggle and kiss. One of them rises, struggles for balance, and saunters unsteadily toward the pig-man. She mounts his back. "Onward, little piggie!" she slurs. He starts. "Go west, young man!" He crawls obediently in a circle on the Turkish rug as his rider waves a handkerchief and *hee-haws*.

"Over here, pinky."

Edith recognizes the voice.

The harmless-looking man sticks out a hand. Edith hands him the drink. He hands it back. All over her face. She growls and makes fists — but remembers Rebecca's instructions, thinks better of it, and wipes her face rather than his.

Two women dressed in men's suits walk in. The pig-man oinks. The women are followed by a man wearing stockings, lipstick and a dress. Edith recognizes him from a newspaper photo, but can't put a name to the face. All she remembers is that he's military.

"Do you like pretty things?" one of the women asks him in an exaggeratedly deep voice.

"Oh, yes," the military man squeaks. "I like pretty things. I like soft things. I'm a good little girl. May I have a lolly, daddy?"

"Later," the second woman says. She lights up a cigarette.

"Aren't you going to get mad?" the harmless-looking man asks Edith. He's desperate for her attention. But when she looks at him, his gaze droops. "I got president all over yer face."

"It's alright," Edith says. "Do you know Virgil Kronberg?"

“I do if you get mad.”

“Next,” the pig-man snorts. His rider has fallen off his back and is kicking her feet and laughing on the rug.

“Fine. I’m mad.”

“Show me,” the harmless-looking man says. “I’ve been unfaithful. I’ve been a lecherous little weasel. My thoughts are bad. Show me how mad you are. Show me. Slap me. Slap me to show me!”

Edith taps him on the cheek.

“Harder.”

Edith taps him harder on the cheek.

“Harder!”

Edith slaps him.

The harmless-looking man’s head whips to the side and he moans. “Nigel Formberg is elsewhere,” he says through clenched teeth and closes his eyes, anticipating another slap.

But Edith walks away.

In the main room, the blind band is playing a bouncy dance tune. The number of guests has swelled. Conversations collide and overlap, making the air is so thick that Edith feels like she’s carving through it. She can’t concentrate. She has to find Virgil Kronberg. Her head inflates and pounds with the music. She wonders where Birte Lund is. She sees the first pleasant face she’s seen in a while:

“Headache?” Lydia asks.

Teeth marks are fading from her ample breasts.

“It’s that obvious?”

“You look like you got conked by the cuckoo bird and can’t tell your arms from wings.” Lydia puckers her lips. “But, honest, I’ve been lookin’ for you. There’s someone who wants to see you. He’s a generous gent, but shy, and because of that he won’t say it, but there’s nothing he likes more than an American girl he’s never met before.” She waits for a second, then adds, “And it’ll get you out of the hustle and bustle.”

“I could use a little quiet,” Edith says, hoping she’ll be able to trade a favor for a favor.

Lydia leads her from the main room through halls and

corridors to what must be the edge of the mansion, otherwise it would stretch on forever. With every step, Edith dreams about seeing a window again.

Her dream comes true. The room in which they arrive is criss-crossed with moonlight, but otherwise so gaudy that it straddles the border between Rococo and bad taste. All the decorative flourishes squeeze Edith's brain and almost force her to focus on the silhouette of the thin man sitting in a wooden chair by a high double bed next to an antique armoire. Closely-cropped black hair sprouts thick on his head, which is too large for his frail body. He has the contemplative air of a doctor or philosopher. As he turns, he says, "Ah, *mademoiselle*," and Edith finds herself shocked that the man is Asian.

"We don't know his name is, so we call him the Professor," Lydia says. "He likes that. He doesn't speak English and Rebecca says he's from Indochina or some such place, but it's none of my beeswax, so I don't inquire."

The Professor takes Edith's hand and plants a delicate kiss on her knuckles. "*La belle de jour*," he says.

"This is Edith," Lydia says.

The Professor repeats the name, which sounds more sophisticated rolling off his tongue than hers.

"The Professor has a box," Lydia says. Though a complete sentence, it's not a complete thought, so she tries again: "The Professor has a certain fetish." Again, she stops. This time, she bites her plump lower lip and blows air through her nostrils. "Just have a seat on the bed. He's a funny old bird, but it's safe."

The Professor opens the armoire doors.

Edith climbs onto the double mattress, and watches him take a wooden box in his palms and place it, carefully, on the bed beside her.

"Now lie down."

Edith hesitates. The box resonates and drones. "I've done it before," Lydia assures her. "It's swell."

When Edith is horizontal, the Professor's lips form a lovesick smile, he bends over her and kisses her tummy. Lydia licks her breasts.

The two sets of mouths feel so good Edith closes her eyes — the box’s buzzing intensifies. She feels the lips kiss her again, higher; and feels the tongue drag itself down between her thighs. The kisses dissolve into air. Her pussy tastes tongue.

“Don’t open your eyes,” Lydia says. “Enjoy it.”

And Edith feels Lydia’s mouth open and surround her pussy, the sensation warm, suction, she feels Lydia’s quiet breath warm her skin and tickle her hairs as hands caress and explore her body, first four, then two, then she hears the box slide across the mattress, and the roots of fingers pinch the flesh above her pussy as Lydia’s tongue pushes inside, and Edith moans, her back arches, moonbeams pass, cool, underneath, or so Edith imagines, her body sensitive, her mind hovering somewhere below the high ceiling in the gaudy Rococo room, out-of-body, melted, dripping...

Her arch collapses through the moonbeams.

She feels mattress all along her back.

She feels wood on her tummy.

She no longer feels tongue or lips or warm breath on her pussy.

Buzzing.

She opens her eyes:

To see the Professor’s hands slide the box across her skin, her bellybutton, come to rest on her wet mound.

“This is the best part,” Lydia whispers, kneeling beside the bed, lips wet, smiling, hands stroking Edith’s hair like only her best friend had ever stroked her hair.

She feels secure. She feels scared.

With his left hand, the Professor pushes down hard on the box. Something clicks. With his right, he pulls away its bottom layer and Edith feels space where previously there was a solid wooden surface.

The space is air, and the air is hot, and the heat swirls.

Sweat breaks out on the Professor’s forehead, he struggles to keep the box still. He presses harder. Incessant buzzing consumes the room.

And:

A thousand pinpricks assault Edith's pussy.

She screams or moans or tries to rip her body from the mattress, but she can't because she doesn't want to because the pins are impossibly sharp and her head is hot, feverish and numb under Lydia's palm, and all she feels is her pussy and the pins and it's not only her head that's numb but everything around it including the tips of her fingers and time, which stands, stagnant, like a pool of rainwater, like the beads of sweat dripping off the Professor's brow, onto her skin as, screaming-and-moaning, she can do nothing — *wants* nothing — but to surrender and let the pins bring her to orgasm.

The box clicks.

The Professor replaces its bottom and Lydia takes her palm off Edith's head.

The buzzing is gone. *How much time is gone?*

Edith feels wetness in her hair, between her legs and under her back. She rolls over onto drier sheets.

She sits up and looks down, expecting her pussy to be a swollen patchwork of hives and blisters, but sees nothing out of the ordinary. Everything is healthy.

"I don't understand it, either," Lydia says. "But, boy, if it isn't a ducky and a half."

The Professor puts the box back in the armoire, from which he retrieves two small porcelain containers. A unique flower pattern is painted on each. He hands one to Lydia, the other to Edith, and bows. "*Mesdemoiselles.*"

As soon as they're in the corridor, Edith asks, "So what's in here?" and shakes the container.

Lydia stays her hand. Her joyful face turns grave.

"The Orient."

Edith eyes the unseen opium. "I need a favor," she says. "I'm looking for someone. He's a motion picture producer by the name of Virgil Kronberg."

"We ain't supposed to use last names."

Edith spins the container in her hand, watching Lydia's eyes spin with it. "I met him earlier tonight. I promised him something.

Then we lost each other in the crowd. I was looking for him when you bumped into me and asked me about my headache. It's only fair I try to find him again, don't you agree? It's not polite to make promises and not keep them."

Manipulation never feels good, but Edith is adept at it. Besides, Lydia had used her to get her hands on some genuine Chinese junk. Edith is merely giving her more of what she craves.

"Name doesn't ring my bells, but if he's in the motion pictures, he might be in the projection room. The Hollywood set like it in there."

Edith lets Lydia's fingers grasp the container without actually letting her have it.

"And which direction is the projection room?"

Lydia licks her lips and points with her chin. "Down that way, all the way to the velvet wall."

Edith's fingers slip away. Lydia tightens her grip, grabs the container and smiles. Her gloom passes. Both her hands now hold her beloved opium. Joy returns to her face. "You're the cat's pajamas, Edith, you really are. I hope you find your Virgil!"

The corridor is long and uninterrupted by doors, and the further Edith walks the more trapped she feels. Her only companion is the faint sound of music that penetrates even here, the mansion's deepest corners. The band is playing a European number. She's heard it before. She nods her head to the muted beat.

The wall, when she reaches it, is indeed velvet — padded and blue. A thin strip of black metal frames the door.

She puts her hand on it—

Bang!

She jumps back, ripping her hand away.

And watches the veins on her palm pulsate with the blood that her heart is pumping twice as quickly, imagining it spilling onto the floor. As from the other side of the blue velvet door, a woman cries, "Oh, Charles, you've killed my secret lover!" and a booming voice answers, "And, Diana, my wife, I shall kill them all, one by one!"

Both voices are desperate, passionate.

Edith presses her ear to the door. The velvet cushions her lobe. She wants to eavesdrop further, to hear better. But, before she even realizes that the door has no knob, only a pair of freshly-oiled two-way hinges, it's too late, her weight forces the hinges to swing, the door opens, and she tumbles inside.

"I'm sorry," she says even before orienting herself.

She sees darkness.

She hears: "Fuck a dog. Cut, cut. *Cut!*"

Dull lights start to give dimension to the darkness. Edith gets to her knees, to her feet, to...face-to-rifle-barrel with a Confederate infantryman.

But she only has time to gasp before something much larger pushes both rifle and infantryman aside and she finds herself staring up at two small but furiously bespectacled eyes. "And just who the fuck are you?"

"I'm—"

"You are nothing!"

The cross-eyed golem takes off his glasses, rubs them furiously with a chamois, then sticks them, theatrically, back on the bridge of his bulbous nose. "But I am Kaiser Pandor and you have ruined my best take."

Edith peeks behind Pandor's wide shoulders.

A woman in torn clothes and a man in blackface lean against a wall, watching her. Actors, she presumes.

"You should have kept rolling," Edith says.

"I should roll *you*."

Perhaps that means something. If so, Edith doesn't know what. But it's a goonish thing to say and she does know goons. She says, "I'm sorry, Mr. Pandor. Is this the projection room?"

Pandor scoffs, looks around, and spreads his massive arms with great indignation. "Does it look like a projection room? Do you see a *fucking projector*?"

He's right, Edith notes. There is no projector. There is, however, a bulky camera locked in what looks like a glass box. "She does not see a projector yet recognizes the recording equipment. I

predict she will share with us a deduction,” Pandor hisses.

“I see a camera in a jar.”

He growls. “It’s not a *fucking* jar. It’s a sound shield.”

“Can you *please* show me the way to the projection room?”

“Can you please give me back my take?”

“It’s important that I find the projection room.”

“It’s *more* important that I complete my take so that I can continue creating *the greatest historical fucking epic of American history the cinema has ever seen!*”

Edith’s not sure if he’s being serious or sarcastic.

“With sound-on-film,” he adds. “Yes, the cinema, *no longer mute*, no longer silent. Imagine it: The Civil War,” he spreads his wings again. “A righteous Confederate soldier fighting valiantly while his unfaithful wife romances and beds *seven dirty negroes!*” The man in blackface coughs. “Then an interlude. The war is over. Our hero returns to his plantation, but it’s been burned to the ground. *Devastated*. His life is in shambles. And yet, out of this destruction, rises a phoenix, rises *the Klan!*” Pandor struts across the floor. “The Klan rises and it *rides*, our hooded hero among them, hunting down, one by one, his sinful wife’s seven negro lovers, taking negroes for themselves, casting them aside, thundering over the tops of mountains with the force of rightness and history!”

His chest heaves.

The woman in rags spits on the floor.

“Until we come to the end. The lovers are no more. The wife has fled. Our hero pursues. Yes, *a chase!* But a chase unlike any other, across swamps and ice floes and deserts, to the very edge of the American continent. *Manifest Destiny*. You hear the beating of the hooves, hear the physical exertions, hear the screams. And, finally, he’s cornered her. Where? *At the very site of his destroyed plantation!*” Pandor stomps his foot, spluttering, knocking his words one into another. “She pleads with him, begs for forgiveness. But that he cannot offer. He has been wronged, and, thus, he takes her. There, then, wearing his pride and his hood and nothing else, a human symbol. And he takes her with, *with...*” Pandor struggles to find the perfect phrase,

“...with the force of rightness and history!

“Hear the wetness of her sex. Hear the thrusting of his marauding manhood. See his hood flowing in the wind. His manhood too, is hooded. And despite the furious desperation with which she fights and struggles against it, she loves it, and, when he is done, she clings to his firm, outstretched leg and begs again — this time, for him to take her back. Having bedded slaves, she will be a slave, anything, so long as she can be with him, the man she loves, the true American hero!

“Alas, he cannot accept her.” Pandor sighs a thespian’s sigh. “The last shot is a long one. The hero, having reconquered what is his, walks away to his faithful band of Klan members, his new family and his bright future, as the crickets chirp ever louder and the wife, naked, sobs inside the skeletal remains of the plantation.” In a hush, “Where she will sob *forever*.”

By the end, Pandor’s voice is hoarse. Upon finishing, he swallows a mouthful of soothing saliva and soaks in the pathos of his own creation.

“You were saying?” he asks Edith.

“I was saying I need to find the projection room.”

“It’s through there.” Pandor points into a darkness even the studio lights can’t reach, before falling to his knees and letting out a bestial cry of his own, “But tell me, why didn’t she remain faithful to him when he was away? *Why!* He was *fighting*. Fighting *for the Confederacy!*”

Edith circumnavigates Pandor, keeping her distance.

His glasses fall to the floor. His sobs rock his heavy body. “I need...” he says between wiping away tears and snot, “...to fuck.”

The velvet door swings open and closed; the confederate soldier is gone. The man in blackface looks at the woman in torn clothes. “Me?” they both say at once.

“I don’t *fucking care*.”

Edith sprints towards the darkness where Pandor’s finger had pointed. She doesn’t look back. She’s three, two, one step away when—

She wakes up sprawled out on a wide bed under a Rococo ceiling. Wetness spreads in her hair, between her legs, and under her back. She rolls onto drier sheets and sits up. “I don’t understand it, either,” Lydia says. “But, boy, if it isn’t a ducky and a half.”

The Professor puts the box back in the armoire, from which he retrieves two small porcelain containers. A unique flower pattern is painted on each. He hands one to Lydia, the other to Edith, and bows. “*Mesdemoiselles.*”

As soon as they’re in the corridor, Edith asks, “So what’s in here?” and shakes the container.

“Open it,” Lydia says.

Edith flips off the lid. The inside is a fine, dark dust.

“Go ahead, try it,” Lydia urges. “Get some stuck on your baby finger, lick, and then tell me it ain’t the best Dutch cocoa you ever tasted.”

Edith sniffs at the powder. It sure smells like cocoa. She licks her finger and rubs it along the side of the container, coating her skin ever-so-lightly. She puts the finger in her mouth and lets the taste dissolve onto her tongue. It is delicious.

“I told you. Didn’t I tell you? A girl like me doesn’t get this figure by eating carrots. When it comes to the sweeter side, I’ll tell you right now you don’t have no one better to trust.”

Edith hands her the container. “Listen,” she says, still figuring out what’s real and what’s not, “I need to find a room. The one where Hollywood goes.”

“The projection room?”

“Bingo.”

When Edith comes to it, the wall is not covered in thick blue velvet, but flat white paint. She knocks, but there is no answer. She opens the door a crack and puts her eye to the opening, but sees nothing except emptiness. She opens the door fully and crosses the threshold. In this room (in this time?), she is not met with the sad majesty of Pandor. Rather, she sees a man in a grey suit sitting alone on a stool, brooding.

“That was quick,” he says. “I’m impressed.”

She pretends to know what he’s talking about and draws toward him — feels herself drawn toward him — and his dark eyes, which squint and then relax as he says, “I don’t think we’ve made each other’s acquaintance. You must be new. What’s your name?”

“Edith.”

“Edith,” he says, “please call me Virgil.”

A film screen looms to the left, but other than the screen, the stool and Virgil, the room is void. “I’ve taken the liberty of removing all the chairs,” Virgil says. “I don’t like inanimate furniture.”

It can’t be a coincidence, Edith thinks. Virgil is not a popular name. But she needs to be sure. She needs to test him somehow. She blurts out, “I’ve seen all your movies,” blushes, and says in as innocent a way as she can, “I apologize. I know I’m not supposed to know who you are, but it’s just that...”

She leaves the sentence hanging in the air, unfinished, hoping Virgil will grab hold of it.

He does. “No need to apologize, Edith. As long as you liked them, that is.” The words are pleasant, good-humored, but Virgil’s delivery is awkward. He’s not at ease speaking to a woman.

“The food is in the other room,” he says, more formally. “The girls brought it by only a few minutes ago. We can bring it out together if you like, and then I’ll prepare you. The leathers are in the other room too.”

Edith can’t begin to imagine what he means, but it sounds sinister and sinister is precisely what Leland wanted.

The other room is a dining room connected to the projection room by a short hallway. The food set out on its tables would more properly be called a feast. “They always make so much,” Virgil says. “I’ll have the steak and maybe some of the mashed potatoes. And a side of creamed corn. I hope the rest doesn’t go to waste.” There’s an accent of boyishness in the way he talks, his muted excitement. *This might just be a cakewalk.*

“When I walked in,” Edith says, and feigns innocence again, “you looked sad. Is everything dandy? I know it’s not my business,

not my business at all, but I just can't help to see a sad face and not try to make it better."

Virgil grabs the bowl of mashed potatoes. Edith follows suit by taking the corn and steak. He says, "I'm having specific difficulties."

"I'm so sorry. Sometimes marriages can really get you in a lather," Edith coos.

She follows Virgil through the hallway, back to the projection room.

"It's not that kind of difficulty. Perhaps thankfully. It's more of a technological one." He sets the bowl of potatoes on the floor and turns for the hallway. "I'm not married," he says.

Edith places her plates beside Virgil's bowl and tries to remember: Leland did say that Virgil is married, or is her memory shooting sparks? Either way, she concludes, someone is lying.

Virgil returns carrying two aromatic leather straps.

"Motion pictures technology?" she asks. Her eyes remain fixed on the straps, which make the insides of her head do a little jig. Telling fantasy from reality has become such a thankless chore that she supposes she may as well throw out an equally outlandish proposition: "Like sound-on-film?"

The straps drop to the floor. Virgil slides the stool closer and sits on it. She's piqued his interest. "You know about sound-on-film?"

"Only a little." Maybe she's read about it. Maybe she's heard about it. Maybe she's imagined it. This place does not help her to remember which.

He suddenly doesn't seem like such a boy anymore. He seems astute, calculating, disarming, deceptively brilliant.

"And what do you think, Edith, do you think there's a future for that? Sound, I mean. In the movies."

Edith weighs all the different lies she could weave, but can't weigh their outcomes. She wants to tell Virgil what he wants to hear, but *what does he want to hear?* "No," she finally says. "It's just a gimmick. Nobody goes to the movies to hear people yap. And it's not like they're silent now anyhow. I like it with the music and the audience and the pictures moving in the dark."

It's such an honest answer that even Edith is surprised.

"On your stomach, please," Virgil says in his awkward voice, before adding in his brilliant one, "That's what I think too. I think motion pictures are about just that — pictures."

He gently folds one of Edith's legs together until the inside of her calf is touching her thigh, wraps a strap around both, and pulls tight to bind.

"Edith, you seem like a good person. I would like to know your opinion about something. Except it's a secret. Can I ask about a secret and have your word that you won't tell anyone?"

He folds Edith's other leg.

She feels discomfort without being uncomfortable. Her knee shakes as Virgil tightens the second strap. "Yes, you have my word," she says without knowing whether she means it.

"Color," he says.

Color?

"The world, as beautiful and true as it actually is, on the screen. No more black and white, no longer an approximation but red as red and blue as blue. Not sound, but color. That's the future of motion pictures to me. That's what I'm gambling on. That's what I want your opinion about."

Virgil helps Edith twist onto her hands and knees. "Straighten, please." She does, and feels immobilized, which she assumes is the point. Immobilized and vulnerable. Virgil disappears behind her—

But only to pick up a steak and place it on her back.

It's hot.

Ouch. Edith says, "I don't know."

"Is it too hard to imagine?" Virgil asks, adding a serving of mashed potatoes next to the steak. He finishes with the bowl of creamed corn, which is heavy but manageable, and pulls the stool closer. "Can you see the screen from your position?"

"Yes," Edith says.

"After I eat, I will show you something."

Edith has never been a table. She finds it a challenge to keep her shape. Her body loses and regains feeling in the oddest places.

Numbness and supersensitivity play teeter-totter. Her knees begin to hurt. But her pussy also begins to flow. She isn't sure whether that's caused by the feeling of entrapment, danger or simply novelty, but she is unsure about much at the moment, as the weight on her back evaporates, bite-by-bite.

When he has finished eating, Virgil disappears — and Edith is gripped by the paranoia that she will stay like this for the rest of her life — and reappears with a warm, wet towel, which he uses to sensually, carefully, wipe Edith clean.

“How do you feel?” he asks. “Physically. First times can become painful after a while.”

“It's nothing I can't handle,” she says. It's dishonest, but Edith's pride prevents her from admitting anything resembling defeat. If others have done it, she can do it too.

“Then it is time for a demonstration.”

He disappears again, for longer this time, and hasn't returned when the lights dim and Edith recognizes the whirr of a projector, which blasts its stream of light at the screen, transforming into a silent, colorful moving image of Berlin, and Rome, and Paris, and Los Angeles as seen from the cliffs at 1 Bolivar Terrace.

The images are beautiful, deeply saturated and sharp.

They are poetry.

“The first color motion pictures not painted by hand,” Virgil says. Although Edith hasn't heard him return, she does now feel his cool hand on her back, the outside of her thigh, stroking her, petting her.

The landscapes turn to cityscapes, to trains and racetracks and parades. The parades swim past. The cities are mechanisms. A train speeds across a Midwestern landscape and into a gaping pussy.

The pussy is moist and fills the screen. Its bush is a deep, profound red. Fingers play with the pussy's lips — a woman's fingers, a man's fingers. The picture cuts away.

Now, Edith sees breasts. Their nipples are hard. The background is green. The footage must have been shot outdoors. The camera moves back, the breasts shrink, a neck appears, a string of

pearls appears around that neck, followed by a face. A pretty face. Rebecca's face.

Edith feels a thick cock slide across her ass.

"What do you think?" Virgil asks. His voice is husky, breath labored.

A cock appears on the screen.

"Amazing."

The cock enters Rebecca's mouth, leaves, enters again, leaves again, trailing a single fat thread of translucent saliva.

Virgil's body descends on Edith's.

She feels the tension in it, feels the desperation she usually feels with men, with Gilbert, their desperation — to have her. Virgil kisses, then bites, her shoulder. Unexpected, it makes her moan. His cock makes her moan, entering her. Her knees spread wider on the floor. Virgil pushes down on her back with his chest.

On the screen, men are fucking Rebecca. Young men, old men, white men, black men, all colors of men. They're fucking her vaginally, anally, orally.

Virgil's cock pushes into Edith's pussy.

Rebecca's mouth is gaping, chest heaving, she's gasping and screaming as the men roar from between her legs, devouring each of her holes. But their sex is silent, there is no sound-on-film, no yapping, only moving pictures in brilliant color.

Edith gasps. Virgil's body pounds against hers, causing her to shuffle forward on her bound knees.

"Are you mine?" he grunts through tight jaws.

Edith closes her eyes and opens them to Rebecca receiving cum from two cocks onto her red lips.

She licks them clean, never taking her eyes off the camera, off Edith and off Virgil, who says, "Say you're mine, Rebecca. Say you're mine."

And Virgil cums.

And the movie finishes.

And the projector casts its empty beam of light on the screen.

"I'm sorry," Virgil says after taking the straps off Edith's legs.

She sits on the floor, massaging her knees. He watches her in silence for a while. "I'm a fool. That's what you think. Perhaps you are right. What is life without sound? What is it? It is nothing."

You are nothing! Pandor had shouted at her.

"I don't understand the difficulties you're having," Edith says.

"I *am* married," Virgil says. "I'm ashamed of myself."

She ignores the revelation. It no longer means anything to her. "The color technology works, does it not?"

"The problem is not the technology itself," he says. "It is the business of technology. I have gambled on color. Others have gambled on sound. The stakes are high, and there are no ethics in business. There is a company, one that is developing sound. It is called *Iris Inc.*" The name taps into Edith's spine. "They will use any means to destroy what I have developed. They send spies, attempt to steal my plans. They use lawyers to patent parts of machines I need to bring color to the theatres."

"Virgil," Edith interrupts him, "do you plan on becoming a politician?"

For the first time, Virgil laughs — a real, heartfelt laugh. "What a question! Me, a politician? You do know how to make a person feel better, Edith. I can't even imagine it. No, not even in a movie, not even in black and white." He stares at the ceiling. "What a question!"

Edith stands. "Excuse me," she says, "but is there a bathroom nearby? I need to wash myself."

"Of course," Virgil says, still shaking his head and smiling to himself. "Out through the dining room and follow the windows."

Edith exits the dining room but doesn't follow the windows. Instead, she opens the first one she comes across and crawls through it, landing on the grass below. She does not enjoy being misled. She wants to give Leland a piece of her mind. At the same time, she knows that it's his detective agency and his clients and as she stomps along the mansion wall, searching for the cobbled path that will take her to the road, she doesn't yet know what she wants, or what she will do.

Something else moves. Something shines. *A flashlight?*

Does someone suspect an intruder?

She ducks and hugs the wall.

“Out for a stroll, dear?”

The voice is unmistakably Birte Lund’s, whose dark, elegant figure Edith soon makes out through the night air. Her golden necklace catches the moonlight.

Edith gets out of the flowerbed she realizes she’s trampled.

“They are flowers. They will grow again,” Birte says. “Wash your feet in the fountain if you wish. But, if you are strolling, let us stroll together and do so properly. The world is large, and so with the gardens. Let us make use of them.”

They walk in silence.

They arrive at the cliff overlooking Los Angeles.

The view is no less breathtaking than it was during the day, and the darkness lives. Below, the sparkling lights of Los Angeles are as visible and unreachable as the stars in the sky. They belong to other people, other species.

Birte lights a cigarette, takes a drag, and passes it to Edith. She blows smoke that falls over the city like fog.

“You believe we are freaks and degenerates,” Birte says.

The tip of the cigarette burns bright as Edith sucks on it — perhaps it too looks like a star to someone — but she says nothing. The warm air gives her chills.

“It is not an accusation, my dear.” Birte considers the city lights the way another woman might consider a crossword. “Down there, they admire and despise us. They are envious of our abnormalities, our talents, our abilities, our power, yet despise that we are different than they are. Is it not insanity to idolize and hate the same thing? Or, I suppose it is just naming. Name one abnormality a talent, name another a perversion. One is good, the other bad.”

Edith takes a seat on the rocky ground, letting her legs dangle into the abyss. She looks up at the aging movie star the way she used to look up at her from the front rows of movie theatres. “Why are you out here and not in there?” she asks.

The cigarette falls and tumbles down the cliff side.

“Everybody needs a stroll. Even the freaks.”

Birte shivers and it shocks Edith. Such elegance susceptible to the same weaknesses as other humans — hot, cold, doubt.

“Democracy is a useful concept, but to understand the world is to realize that freaks rule, whatever system is in place. Freaks will always outperform. Outperforming is what makes them freaks. And once you accept that as truth, you must ask what will happen to a world run by freaks when there are no more parties like mine.”

She lowers herself onto the ground beside Edith. Her bones creak. The moonlight collapses her cheeks. “Tell me, dear, do you want to marry? To love the same man every night in the same position for forty years and then die?” she asks.

Edith doesn’t know the answer.

“Because that is sick. It is sick to want it and sick to want it for others.”

And Birte, who never smiles, who always moves so elegantly, now an organism with creaking bones and shivering skin, alone, every day forgotten by one dying person more, throwing parties because it is too late to do anything else, says, “Make love to me.”

Only the moon sees their bodies come together.

The moon and Los Angeles.

In the afternoon, Edith wakes in her own bed in the same part of the city she’s always woken in. The same Tennessee teacher’s face stares up from the front page of the Los Angeles Times as stared out last week, and Gilbert telephones at the same time he always telephones on a Saturday: 5:20 p.m.

She agrees to meet him in his apartment.

Along the way, she skips down the stairs of the red-bricked light bulb factory, knock-knocks, says, “Leland McCauley’s Molly,” to an eye in a slit in a door, and is hit by the putrid smell of the speakeasy, before finding Leland moving boxes in a backroom.

“And?” he asks, his slimy hand already trying to find the bottom edge of Edith’s dress. “What filth did your little pussy find

for me?”

“It’s over,” she says.

“What’s over?”

“Our relationship,” she tells Gilbert, who still can’t figure out how to wipe the quizzical expression off his face five minutes later. “But I’ll have dough. We’ll get married. I’ll buy you a house. Do you want me to start telling people we’re together? is that it?”

It’s not it.

There is no it. But neither Leland, who calls after Edith as she leaves, “How much they givin’ you, I’ll double it!” nor Gilbert, who merely sulks and whimpers, can understand that. Nothing is wrong. There simply isn’t enough that’s right.

“Bye,” she says to the taxi driver, who pockets her tip, tips his cap, and leaves her alone at 1 Bolivar Terrace, where the cobbled path leads to the front door of an imposing three-story mansion whose interiors she hasn’t yet begun to discover.

She knocks.

Birte Lund steps out.

She’s wearing a black silk robe, closed tightly this time, and not one trace of surprise. “My dear,” she says, “you have come to bargain again?”

“I’ve come because I want work. You throw parties. I want to serve.”

It’s the truth, but it’s not the whole truth. What Edith truly wants, more than anything, is to have her own agency, be her own detective. But that requires money. This pays money. More, it pays experience. For there are many hidden truths at 1 Bolivar Terrace, and Edith has just discovered the first: She is brave enough to uncover them all.

The door closes behind them both.



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