



TRAINED IN THE HAREM

Mark Stewart

CHAPTER 1.

Captain John Macklay stood on the poop deck and looked around with a stern expression on his face. The Northwesterly wind filled the sails sending the ship scudding smoothly over the sea, bound for Australia. He looked up at the sky where a weak autumn sun shone through the thin layer of clouds. He was in his element. The sea had been his life since he had first enlisted as a cabin boy at the age of fourteen. That had been some thirty years ago and, by hard work and diligence, he had worked his way up the promotion ladder until he had, at an early age, achieved his ambition and been rewarded with his Master's Certificate.

He should have been very happy, instead of which he was disgruntled and angry.

He had only been in port for a fortnight, when the Owners had sent for him. There had been some difficulty in obtaining a cargo for his next voyage to India. Since his ship was due for a refit, they had pressed him into taking over from the present captain of this boat, who had suddenly gone down with a serious illness. On being told the destination and nature of the cargo, he had tried to decline the appointment, but they had used strong pressures to which he had finally succumbed. Fortunately he had found that the new crew under his command were sound and experienced sailors. Especially the bo'sun, Jack Noakes, who, whilst being strict with the crew, was a fair and likeable fellow.

The cargo, the cause of his displeasure, was convicts, eighty male and twenty five female. Silently he cursed the owners for forcing him to undertake the voyage, and the previous captain for falling ill just at the wrong time. The transportation of convicts was not the most favoured job for any captain, since it could be relied on that there would be trouble aboard during the long voyage. That the truth of this had been borne out so early into the voyage was the cause of the anger at present seething within him. He looked down onto the well of the ship where the convicts, heavily chained, had been gathered under the armed surveillance of those members of the crew who could be spared from duty.

John Macklay had been at sea long enough to know that discipline on board ship was essential. He prided himself on being a fair man but had never hesitated to implement this when necessary. He had seen, and ordered, men flogged during his time at sea and accepted this as part of the seaman's way of life. He had never felt squeamish until now. He was well aware that trouble with the convicts was likely at some time during the voyage and had to be stamped upon immediately, but had not expected it to raise its ugly head so soon into the voyage. His thoughts were interrupted as two of the crew emerged from the door beneath the deck where he stood. Between them, they were holding one of the female convicts, who was struggling to escape their grasp.

She was the cause of the captain's disquiet. He had been told that one of the women had started a fight below decks and he had, reluctantly, given the order for what was about to be done. With over a hundred convicts on board, it was essential to show them that bad conduct would not be tolerated. The bo'sun had advocated setting an example and he had agreed. He looked down on the trio standing below him. He was taken aback when he saw that the woman was, in fact, young and, beneath the grime, clearly very attractive. The shabby dress which she wore did little to disguise the shapely body beneath. A pair of green eyes, set in a pretty face framed in a cascade of long blonde hair, stared back at him defiantly. He turned his glance to his left, where the bo'sun stood, stripped to the waist, and noticed the sack he was holding.

"I don't think the cat-o-nine tails should be used on a female," he whispered. "Use a rope's end instead, Mr Noakes, and on her backside, not her back. Over the

cannon I think would be best."

"Aye, aye Sir," the bo'sun answered, unable to hide the relief in his voice, and dropped the sack to the deck. He picked up a length of thick hemp rope and descended to the main deck.

Tanya Crawley, the younger daughter of a successful merchant, struggled in the hands of the two seamen. She was not used to being handled so roughly. All through her childhood and adolescence she had been pampered, having been born to her parents late in their lives. At the tender age of eighteen, she was terrified at the predicament she had been deposited in during the last month and her terror had fuelled the repugnance which she felt, at that moment, for her fellow creatures. She looked at the rope in the bo'sun's hands and defiance seethed through her small frame. He was going to flog her. She, who had never had a hand raised against her before!

The captain cleared his throat. "Tanya Crawley. You are guilty of causing a serious disturbance. Such behaviour will not be tolerated on my ship. I trust that the punishment you are about to receive will be a lesson to you, and all the others, and that the rest of the voyage will proceed without further incident." He looked at the bo'sun. "Two dozen lashes, Mr Noakes. Proceed."

Under the bo'sun's orders, the two escorts dragged the struggling young woman to one of the ship's cannons. They forced her to bend over the breach and lashed her ankles and wrists to the cold metal and stood back. The bo'sun approached and lifted the woman's skirts high over her back and pulled down her drawers to her ankles. John Macklay, watching from the poop deck, saw a pair of long shapely legs and a delicious behind revealed. The woman turned her head and looked at the bo'sun, who had moved to her side, in time to see him raise his muscular arm high in the air. The look of defiance that unexpectedly burned in her eyes was not missed, either by the bo'sun or the captain.

An expectant hush fell over the ship, broken only by the rattle of the convicts' chains as they edged forward to get a better view of the woman's ordeal. If they had expected her to scream for mercy, they were to be disappointed. She had already made up her mind that, no matter what was done to her, she would not give them that satisfaction.

Thwack.

The end of the rough rope seared across the pale buttocks, making the woman's body jerk and a loud hissing sound escape through her clenched teeth.

Thwack.

Thwack.

Rhythmically, the bo'sun's arm rose and fell, laying the rope across the woman's buttocks. Her body jumped with each impact as thick red lines were etched over her white skin. But apart from a loud hiss each time the rope struck, she had not made a sound!

Thwack.

"Aaaaaarrrrgggh!" A long drawn out cry of pain and distress echoed over the ship as the rope burned another path across her shuddering cheeks and the accumulated pain weakened her control.

Thwack

Thwack.

Thwack.

Three more loud thuds followed by agonised cries. The woman had now taken seven strokes and the captain was amazed at her fortitude. He had expected her to scream her head off and yell for mercy on the first stroke!

Thwack.

The rope lashed the squirming buttocks, and a loud scream followed each.

Thwack.

Thwack.

Two more screams followed the sound made by the rope on her flesh as she struggled violently against her bonds.

Thwack.

Thwack.

The bos'un continued to lay on the strokes, wringing more screams from the woman. From his close position, he could see the tears streaming down her face and the sweat beginning to glisten on the part of her body that was exposed. She was now half way through her punishment. Her buttocks were badly bruised and, on her thighs, grazes were beginning to appear where the rough rope had rubbed.

Thwack.

Thwack.

Thwack.

John Macklay, on the upper deck, watched as the punishment he had ordered was carried out. He could see the woman's body writhing against her bonds and hear her screams of pain rending the air. It was the first time he had seen a woman flogged but, as he watched, he had no qualms at having ordered such a severe punishment. An example had to be set!

Thwack.

Thwack.

Thwack.

As the rope burned across her bottom for the eighteenth stroke, the woman's body arched rigid against the restraining bonds and a shrill scream followed the dull thud of the impact. Then her body slowly sank against the cannon, not moving when the rope again lashed across her swollen buttocks.

The bo'sun stepped back and looked up towards his captain. He expected to see the signal for a bucket of cold water to be thrown over the woman's head, to revive her before the rest of the flogging was applied. John Macklay hesitated for a moment. The wench deserved to be punished, but he was no sadist. He signalled for the bo'sun to continue. Understanding his captain's charitable act, Jack Noakes quickly lashed the rope across the immobile buttocks for the final five lashes of the sentence.

"Mr Noakes, have the woman taken to the sick bay and call for the surgeon to attend to her. Then return the prisoners below." He turned away, breathing a sigh of relief that the matter was now over and hoping fervently that it would not be necessary to repeat the performance ever again.

It was some time later that Tanya Crawley gradually surfaced through the blackness into which the shock and pain of the flogging had deposited her. Tentatively, she tried to move her limbs and found that they were no longer tied to the cannon. She knew she was lying on something soft, on her stomach. Her bottom felt as if it were immersed in boiling oil. For a moment she didn't realise where she was or what had been done to her. Then memory gradually returned. She opened her eyes, looked round and, as they focused, saw that she was lying on a cot in a large cabin. A kindly looking man, wearing a white surgeon's smock, walked across the cabin to the cot.

"Lie still," he said gently. "I have put some salve on your behind and it will reduce the swelling and pain. Fortunately the rope does not cause permanent damage and you should make a full recovery soon."

"Thank you, Sir," Tanya answered. She shook her head, wondering for a moment why her bottom hurt so much. Then her memory returned in full. The fight in the

hold, where the convicts were detained, to get her fair share of the food that had been thrown in for them - never enough for them all. Of being dragged off to, and shut in a large cupboard, before being taken up on deck. She recalled the indignity and humiliation of being tied down over the cannon, her behind bared, and then the terrible pain of the thrashing with the rope. The first time anyone had hurt her! She tried to turn on to her side to get a better view of the man standing beside the cot.

"Best to remain on your stomach for a while," he said.

Tanya did as she was told and drifted off into a merciful sleep. When she awoke, the pain in her bottom had reduced considerably and she turned to her side as she heard two men talking. She opened her eyes and saw the captain and surgeon standing a few feet away, discussing her condition. They were talking quietly and she could not distinguish the words but, since they looked across at her occasionally, she guessed it was her they were discussing.

John Macklay was not, by nature, inhumane. The woman had offended seriously and had to be punished. But he was concerned at her condition. Men, he knew, seemed to be able to withstand floggings and usually recovered fairly quickly. But, since this was his first voyage on a convict ship, he had no knowledge of how a female would survive such an ordeal. He had eventually descended to the sick bay to see for himself. He had looked closely at the sleeping woman and lifted her skirts and examined her buttocks. His first surprise was that the damage was nowhere as bad as he had expected. The surgeon, seeing his reaction, explained that, although softer, a woman's body was just as capable of surviving a flogging as a man's. His second surprise was to find that, now that she had been cleaned up, she was a lot younger than he had at first thought. Much younger and prettier!

"When she has recovered sufficiently to be moved," he said, turning to the surgeon, "have her sent up to my cabin. I must decide what to do with her. If she is returned to the hold, the others will no doubt set about her again, and there will be even more trouble to contend with."

Being so early on in the voyage, there was little or no illness aboard and Tanya remained the only casualty needing the surgeon's attention. For two days he made her relax on the cot, tending to her backside regularly, until she was strong enough to get up and walk around. Having little work to do, he spent a lot of time chatting to her and found her to be an intelligent creature and enjoyed having her company. It was with reluctance, therefore, that after two days he deemed her fit to go up to the captain's cabin. He didn't trust the crew not to molest her on the way and decided to escort her himself.

Reclining in a comfortable chair in his cabin, with Tanya sitting opposite to him, John Macklay looked at her closely. During her sojourn in the sick bay the surgeon had cleaned her up and she now, apart from the dress that once was of

good quality, but which was now torn and shabby, presented a very delightful picture. The thing that struck him most, however, was the lack of defiance in her eyes.

"I am sorry it was necessary to have you flogged," he said quietly. "I hope you have recovered."

"My behind is still quite sore," Tanya replied sourly. She was confused. This man, who had ordered her publicly flogged, was enquiring after her health.

"The surgeon informs me that you have healed quickly and soon there will be no physical evidence. I regret it was necessary but I was well informed that you started the fight and, not only had you to be punished, an example had to be made to discourage any further trouble."

Tanya was silent for a moment. He seemed basically a good man but clearly did not understand the way the convicts had to fight for survival in the hold. It had not been right to have her flogged for trying to survive. The other, coarser, women would have let her starve if she hadn't stood her ground. She recalled one of the women yelling at her 'I hope they whip the skin off your back with the 'cat' as she was dragged from the hold. The captain had not ordered the cat-o-nine tails so, it would appear, had let her off lightly! She decided her best course was to hide her true feelings and, at least, appear to have learned her lesson and act submissively towards him.

"I quite understand," Tanya admitted softly. "Thank you for not having had me whipped across my back," she reluctantly added.

"Despite what you may have heard, all men are not savages," he said, leaning towards her. "Suppose you tell me all about yourself and how you ended up on this ship, while I decide what to do with you."

Tanya, hypnotised by his kindly attitude, decided to comply. She told him that her name was Tanya Crawley and that she was the younger daughter of a merchant. She was eighteen years old. She had run away from home when her father had insisted she marry another merchant, much older than herself, just because her father wanted the two businesses to merge. Her prospective husband was in poor health and his life expectancy was short; her father wanted to own both businesses. All this was despite telling him that she was in love with the local squire's youngest son. She had ended up in Bristol, cold, tired and hungry. She had tried to get work but no one would employ her. When the hunger had become too much, she had tried to steal some food from one of the port inns. She had been caught and the magistrate had sentenced her to transportation for twenty years. She had hoped that before she was put on board a convict ship, her lover would rescue her but, unfortunately, no rescue had occurred.

John Macklay heard her out in silence. As her tale progressed, he came to realise

that she was a very well spoken and intelligent young girl, as well as being very attractive. She had a narrow waist below full and firm breasts and, as he had already seen for himself, a luscious behind. He was reluctant to send her back to the hold to be at the mercy of the rough harridans there. He had an idea! It would solve the problem and, if she was willing, make the remainder of the voyage much pleasanter than he had expected.

"That is a very sad story," he said eventually. "Whilst I still feel fully justified in having had you punished, I am reluctant to send you back to the hold with the others. If you are agreeable, you can stay here with me, until we dock in Australia. Conditions and food are much better here than below decks. You would, of course, have to keep away from the rest of the crew and only go on deck when I accompany you. You may think about it for a while, if you wish to."

Tanya was silent for a few minutes. She was no virgin, and had no doubts in her mind as to how he would expect to be rewarded for his consideration. She had not failed to see the desire in his eyes as he had appraised her when she had entered the cabin. On the other hand, she dreaded being sent back to that hold with those dreadful women. After today, they would make her life a misery and, before long, would get her into trouble again. She looked at the captain. Despite his age, he was still quite handsome and, after all, he couldn't take something from her that she hadn't already lost.

"I will stay here with you, if that is what you want," she replied, choosing the lesser of the two evils.

"Good," John Macklay smiled at her. "That's settled then." He paused for a moment. "To keep the crew quiet, I will tell them that you are, for the time of the voyage, my bond maid. I will, of course, expect you to behave yourself and obey my orders."

"I agree," Tanya replied. Really she had no choice.

John Macklay rose from his chair and opened a cupboard. Tanya gasped as he withdrew his hand holding a long thin cane.

"This is similar to that with which the young midshipmen are punished - it would not be seemly for a junior officer to be strapped to the grating and flogged with the 'cat'. If you give me cause to be displeased with you, I will expect you to submit willingly to a punishment with it. Do you still wish to stay?"

Tanya's bottom was still throbbing from the earlier thrashing with the rope and the thought of having to submit to a caning whenever he thought she deserved it was daunting. Yet, if she was returned to the hold, she had no doubt the other women would somehow get her into serious trouble again and, next time, the captain might well be forced to have her flogged with the 'cat'. She decided she was willing to agree to anything rather than risk her soft back being permanently

marked by the whip.

"I agree, Sir," she answered respectfully, looking at the cane with trepidation. "I will try and ensure that a caning will not be necessary."

The captain returned to his watch on the upper deck, leaving Tanya to ruminate on this latest development. She found some soap and water and washed her dress and herself. When, sometime later, the bo'sun brought her some food, she was feeling much better and tucked into the first decent meal she had eaten for some time. The ship's surgeon came to the cabin once to check the state of her buttocks and expressed satisfaction on the progress of her healing. Before leaving, he thoughtfully gave her some potion to 'stop her falling' as he put it and applied fresh liniment to her behind. Remembering what she had said to the captain earlier, she determined to start off on the right foot. Anything to avoid her soft behind receiving attentions from that horrid cane! Since she was to be at his disposal for the remainder of the voyage, it would be better, she hoped, if she appeared to be willing. Prostitute her body and give him the satisfaction most men sought and thus avoid another thrashing! When she thought it was nearly time for him to return to the cabin, she removed her underwear and waited patiently, going over in her mind how she intended to greet him when he appeared.

John Macklay watched the crew going about their duties and thought over the day's developments. Although he was unmarried, he was not averse to enjoying the pleasures of a female body and had frequently visited the more upmarket bordellos for this purpose. It was not unknown for a captain to avail himself of a female convict during the voyage and he considered himself fortunate in having found such a good 'catch'. She was quite desirable and he made a mental note that, when they called at the first port en route, he would take the opportunity to go ashore and buy her a more pleasing dress to wear. It seemed that his watch dragged on longer than usual and it was a considerable relief when the first officer appeared to take over.

He entered his cabin and saw Tanya standing on the far side. With her dress and herself much cleaner, she looked even more desirable. He closed and locked the door behind him and turned to look at her. He stood hypnotised as she slowly raised her hands and undid the buttons down the front of the dress and let it slip to the floor at her feet. He caught his breath as the full loveliness of her slim, naked, body was fully revealed. She was his for the rest of the long voyage which now promised to be the most pleasant he had ever embarked upon. Feeling his pulse racing, he walked slowly towards her.

After she let the dress slide to the floor, Tanya was in a state of apprehension. She had decided to make the best of a bad job and, if she must submit to him, she would appear to do so willingly. If she could captivate him with her body, perhaps she would not have to suffer under the cane. But would this act of submission please him or would he take offence at her forwardness and beat her? She

watched with bated breath as he walked towards her. She breathed a sigh of relief when he took her in his arms and kissed her and gently eased her backwards to the edge of his bunk, his hands exploring the soft contours of her supple body. Quickly, he divested himself of his clothing, revealing a hard muscular body that sent strange tingling sensations through her own. She had expected, and had prepared herself for, a fierce taking. On the contrary, he lowered her to the bunk and began to stroke her body and kiss her until she felt her own desires burning within her. When he finally took her, it was gently and with a passion that she had never expected or experienced before. When they finally lay side by side on the bunk, satiated and drenched in the sweat of their spent passion, the last thing she remembered was that her body had arched rigid beneath him as shattering sensations swept through her until she eventually subsided into a delicious blackness. She had experienced her first orgasm, something she had only ever heard about before - and then only in whispered, giggling, conversations with one of her parents' maids.

Tanya's buttocks healed quickly, thanks to the liniment the surgeon had left with her. She had been very careful of her conduct and had, so far, escaped his cane. But this state of affairs could not last for ever and she knew that before the voyage ended she would have to submit to being caned by him. Surprisingly, the thought did not fill her with revulsion and fear as she considered it would. Several times, when left alone in the cabin, she had taken the cane from the cupboard and flexed it between her small hands. It was supple and thin and it seemed strange to her that such an inanimate object could come to life in a man's hand and cause such pain in her buttocks. The truth of this was to be brought home to her in no uncertain manner before long. One morning, one of the young midshipmen, he couldn't have been more than seventeen years old, came to the cabin to collect a telescope the captain had forgotten to take on deck with him. Instead of merely handing him the instrument, she made him stay and talk to her for a while. She was interested to find out as much as she could about the captain. In a short time, she learned a lot, mostly to his credit. Their conversation was suddenly interrupted when the captain himself barged into the cabin, his face clouded with anger.

"What are you doing?" he shouted at the young man. "It does not take you ten minutes just to fetch something. You were ordered to return immediately. I will speak to Mr Noakes. Now get back to your duties." So saying he followed the fleeing lad and slammed the door behind him.

Tanya was in a state of confused agitation. His entry had taken her by surprise and his exit had shaken her. She suddenly remembered how he had introduced the cane to her. 'Similar to what is used on the midshipmen', he had said. Had she been the cause of the young lad getting a thrashing? This thought was still troubling her when John Macklay returned to the cabin an hour later.

"What will you do to that young lad, Sir?" she dared to ask.

"He will be flogged for dereliction of duty."

"It was not his fault," Tanya blurted out. "He would have returned immediately, but I made him stay and tell me about life on board!" she tried to explain. "I said you wouldn't mind. It is not fair to have him punished."

The captain turned on her, anger showing on his face and in his eyes. "You had no right to assume whether I would mind or not," he said. "He knew this and should not have stayed." The blatant anger clearly showing in his voice, gave Tanya an insight into an aspect of his character that had, so far not been apparent. It showed that beneath his apparently mild exterior he was a strict disciplinarian.

Tanya thought of the cane, which still hung in the cupboard, and shuddered. As much as she dreaded and hated even the thought of it lashing her bottom, she knew what she must do.

The young boy had been friendly towards her and it would not be fair for him to be beaten because of her.

"No matter what you say, it was my fault not his. If anyone must be punished, it should be me," she stammered. "I will take his punishment for him," she added, speaking softly and trying to hide the terror she felt from showing in her voice.

John Macklay was taken aback at this proposal. If what she said was true, and he had no reason to doubt her, then the lad was not so much at fault. He looked at the girl, saw the fear in her eyes and marvelled at her sense of honour. She was offering to be flogged instead of the young officer! When he had watched her beaten by the bo'sun, he had, for a moment and quite contrary to his normal nature, wished it had been he wielding the rope. He looked into her green eyes as he strode across the cabin to the cupboard and took out the cane, noticing them open wide in fear.

"So be it!" he said. "I will see that he gets let off with a caution. I would have ordered eighteen strokes for him. Bend over the end of the desk."

Tanya stood still for a second or two as realisation of what she was to endure sank in. He had not ordered her to bare her bottom, but some inner sense told her that would be what he would require. Instead of raising her skirts and bending, almost unconsciously, her hands undid the buttons of her dress. It slid to the floor, followed almost immediately by her undergarments. She hesitated, standing naked before him, then walked to the desk. She felt the edge press against the top of her thighs. She bent over, feeling the cool wood against her stomach and reached forward and gripped the far end of the top tightly. She felt the coolness of the cane touching her trembling cheeks.

"Since you were honest and owned up and prevented the lad from being wrongly

punished, I will let you off with only ten strokes," John Macklay said sternly. "But do not do it again."

"No, Sir!" Tanya stammered, and as she felt the cane leave her cheeks.

Crack.

The words had hardly left her lips when she heard the cane swish through the air and the report of it striking her bare flesh. Immediately a line of fire erupted in her bottom. Whereas the rope had burnt, the cane left behind a thin line, which felt as if a white-hot iron had been laid against her. She managed to keep still and stifle the scream that surged in her throat.

Somehow, far beyond her understanding, she managed to hold position as her soft buttocks absorbed the full beating. Tears flooded her eyes and, towards the end, she felt a light sweat break out over her body. She was not so successful with the noise. After the third stroke she could not stop herself crying out loud and full-blooded screams followed the last five strokes. As the cane lashed her bottom, she felt the pain surging from her bottom into her belly causing strange sensations to flutter there.

"You can get up now," John Macklay said, as he laid down the cane after lashing the tenth stroke across her writhing behind. He was amazed she had managed to retain her position. He was also aware of intense discomfort in his breeches. His manhood was pressing against the material and he realised he had become very aroused whilst beating her naked buttocks. He decided to assuage this problem in the usual manner.

However, before he could put his thoughts into action, Tanya slowly straightened up, her small hands rubbing her flaming bottom and feeling the raised ridges where the cane had struck. She also felt something else. Weak, helpless and, for the first time in her life, very submissive! She slowly turned to face the man who had just beaten her. How could he, who had shown so much kindness and concern when she had lain with him, hurt her so much? She saw the straining bulge in his breeches and suddenly she felt she wanted to be comforted. She dropped to her knees before him.

"I am sorry, Sir," she managed to say through the sobs she could not control. "Please forgive me. Please take me to bed and love me."

John Macklay looked down on the naked figure kneeling so submissively before him. He envied the man who would buy her at the end of the voyage. It was the first time in his life he had felt envious of anyone! He felt his penis throbbing against his breeches with a desire he could not control. He ripped off his clothes, lifted her up and carried her to the bunk. This time his taking was frantic and brutal, thrusting in and out of her tunnel, cruelly handling her soft breasts, until he came and jetted his satisfaction deep into her body.

Tanya, startled by her own request - she had never asked anyone to take her before - was shattered by the manner of his possession. There was none of the kindness and gentleness he usually displayed toward her. This time it had been fierce and demanding, inflaming the pain in her bottom as she writhed beneath him. She found herself wishing that the squire's son had been so dominating and masterful with her. Then she would have loved him even more!

Several days passed. The ship had encountered adverse weather conditions and her progress had not been to the captain's satisfaction. He had spent a lot more time on deck, ensuring that the ship was correctly handled. Tanya's offence was not mentioned again and, when he did have the time, he reverted to his usual gentle usage of her. Several days after the caning, the weather eased and she was allowed on deck. Somehow, the young midshipman managed to brush past her as he went about his duties.

"Thank you, Miss!" he whispered so she alone could hear.

Tanya blushed. Had he heard her screaming as she was caned?

"Ship on the port bow!" The cry came from the lookout in the crow's nest.

"What colours does she carry? Can you make her out?" John Macklay called back.

"She appears to be a man of war, carrying French colours!" the reply came back.

Captain Macklay raised his eyeglass and searched the sea on their port side. If she was truly French, they had nothing to worry about. He maintained their present course although he became concerned when the new arrival changed course in their direction. Half an hour later, the stranger was near enough for Tanya to make out details of her rigging. Then three things happened in quick succession. The ship turned sideways on to them, her gun ports were raised and the French flag was lowered and a green one, bearing the golden crescent replaced it.

"Pirates!" The dreaded name was shouted by many voices.

"Run out the guns!" Captain Macklay ordered. He knew his ship was badly outgunned, but he had no intention of surrendering to 'these murdering devil worshipers' as he called them.

Tanya was hustled below and locked in the captain's cabin. She heard the sounds from the decks above as the crew frantically prepared for a fight. The roar and crash of the cannons signalled that the battle had started. The sounds became confused for a while. She tried to press her slender body into a corner, dreading that at any moment a cannon ball would sear through the side of the ship and end her short life. She would have been more concerned had she been aware that

even a tough man like her captain knew they had little or no chance against the raider. Then she heard and felt a heavy thump against the side of the ship and the sound of many voices as the hand-to-hand fighting began. The skirmish was short-lived and soon the terrible noise abated. She heard footsteps on the companionway outside the cabin and then the door was battered open.

A fierce looking individual, followed by several more, crashed into the cabin and stopped suddenly as they saw her. They began jabbering in a strange language as they stood there staring at her. Then they were thrust aside as a tall lavishly dressed man forced his way between them.

"Well what have we here?" he exclaimed in English. "Allah has indeed been generous. A green eyed blonde girl! Suleimann will pay a fortune for this one. Take her aboard my ship and lock her in my cabin while we decide what to do with the rest of them."

Struggling as hard as she could, Tanya was dragged up on deck, across a wide plank and onto the pirate ship. Along the way, she had seen Captain Macklay, the first officer and the bo'sun, all badly wounded, under guard. The deck of the ship she was leaving was strewn with dead and injured sailors, mostly from the English vessel. She was taken below and thrust into a large, well-furnished, cabin. She looked around in amazement. The decor and furnishings matched the attire of the pirate captain, and contrasted with the austerity of that she had just left. She was not too concerned about her fate, although she had heard terrible tales about the pirates who infested the oceans of the World. One type of slavery was, as far as she was concerned, very much like another. Little did she realise then how wrong she could be!

CHAPTER 2.

Tanya waited in dreadful apprehension in the cabin, listening to the noises above as the pirates transhipped the other convicts and spoils to their own vessel. It was some time before the door opened and the pirate captain entered. Tanya stifled a gasp as she saw him clearly for the first time. She felt as if she had been hit in the stomach! He was quite tall and slim, no more than thirty years old she guessed, and looked very dashing and handsome in his fine clothes. Quite the opposite of her idea of a pirate! He stood looking her up and down for a few moments, a wide smile lighting up his dark face and a cruel glint in his eyes. Tanya felt her legs begin to tremble as she became aware of his self-assured manner and the sheer authority that oozed from him. So much so that, for a moment, she felt drawn irresistibly to him, as iron filings to a magnet. He epitomised all that she had ever dreamed about in a man, and here she was; his captive.

"I found this in your captain's cabin." To her surprise, he spoke in excellent English. He produced the cane, with which John Macklay had thrashed her, from behind his back. "Did he have it there to use on you?"

"Yes," Tanya answered, looking with hatred at the instrument that had hurt her so much. She saw no reason to hide the truth from him.

"So you are not one of the wealthy class in your country! There goes a large ransom! No matter, Suleimann will pay much more for a green eyed blonde like you, more than I could ever collect by way of ransom," he mused. He looked her up and down and she saw the glint of desire and appreciation in his eyes. "You are too great a treasure to put in the bilges with the rest of the scum. You will stay here, in my cabin, until we reach port. On no account try and leave this cabin. If you try, you will not succeed and will earn yourself a painful encounter with this." He waved the cane in front of her eyes.

To her relief, he cast the cane aside and approached a large sea chest in one corner of the cabin. Unlocking the lid he delved inside. To her surprise, when he withdrew his hand, she saw that he was holding a beautiful dress. Much finer than any she had owned in her life! He threw this across the cabin to her and ordered her to put it on. Under his intense gaze, she quickly stripped off the shabby clothes she wore and, ignoring the fact that she had been given no undergarments, put the dress on. She stood facing her captor. Fastened at the back, the dress left her arms and shapely shoulders bare, nipping in her narrow waist, accentuating her firm and full breasts, and falling in folds to the floor at her feet. That she looked very beautiful and desirable was confirmed by the approving look in his eyes.

"That suits you much better," he announced after scrutinising her for a few minutes.

"Thank you! The dress is beautiful but may I please have some undergarments?" Tanya asked meekly.

"You will have to make do with the dress only. It will help you to get used to no underwear. Where you are destined for, you will be allowed even less." So saying, he picked up her discarded clothes and left the cabin.

For days Tanya was confined to the cabin. Other than that visit by the captain, she only saw one member of the crew during this period. He was an old man who the captain had delegated to bring her food and remove the waste bucket provided for her use. She had searched all round the cabin, trying to find some way to escape, but there was none. Anyway, where could she go to, they were well out to sea all of the time. Yet she longed for the air that was fresher up on deck. She knew that the door to the cabin was not kept locked. The pirate captain obviously believed that his threat was sufficient to ensure her obedience.

On the third morning, she could not stand being confined in the cabin any longer. The old man, who either didn't understand English or was under orders not to speak to her, had taken away the remains of her breakfast and the bucket. She was standing, looking out of the leaded window when she decided to risk whatever

retribution disobeying the captain's order might bring upon her. She opened the door carefully, peering round to ensure there was no one in the passage, and silently crept up the companionway to the deck. She stood breathing in the fresh air, noticing the usual activity among the crew. She looked across the ship to the port side and saw that there was land in the distance. On the starboard side there was nothing to be seen except the sea, stretching to the horizon. The ship was clearly following the coastline and she wondered how long it would be before they reached their destination. The place where she would discover what fate would be.

She felt a hand grasp her shoulder and turned and look into the captain's handsome face. His eyes glowed with anger.

"I ordered you to remain in the cabin," he hissed at her. "Return there immediately."

Tanya, wondering what penalty he would make her pay for her few minutes of pleasure, made her way back to the confines of the cabin. Some short while later, the captain entered.

She looked into his dark eyes and quailed at the anger that blazed there. Strangely, in his anger, he appeared even more attractive. Mentally, she compared him with the squire's son and the image of the latter faded into nothing before the handsome pirate. Totally against her inclinations, she felt desire flood through her and longed for him to throw her to his bunk and ravish her. But, clearly, he had another fate in mind for her.

"Get that dress off," he ordered brusquely.

The order was no more than she expected, perhaps even desired. Knowing the ordeal that faced her, she tried hard to prevent the panic that surged through her from showing. She reached behind her and released the fastenings on the dress and let it slide seductively down her body to lie in a crumpled heap around her feet. She began to tremble as he tied her wrists together with a length of thin rope. The loose end he threw over an overhead beam and pulled her up on to her toes and secured the end. For a moment, Tanya thought he was going to whip her across her taut back. Inwardly she breathed a sigh of relief as she saw him pick up the cane. She closed her eyes tight. Heard him approach her across the cabin and then felt the coolness of the rod as he lightly touched her buttocks with it.

"Only the necessity of not having your back marked when you are presented to Suleimann saves you from the whipping you deserve," he hissed in her ear. "Learn well from this lesson, little one. Where you are going, disobedience is not punished so lightly."

Tanya felt the cane leave her buttocks. She clenched her teeth and gripped the rope tight.

The captain raised his arm and lashed the cane across the rounded cheeks of the girl's buttocks. The force of the impact made the cane sink into her flesh. As it fell away a white line appeared, spreading round both sides of her gorgeous globes, rapidly turning red. Slowly, methodically, he lashed her cringing buttocks another twelve times. He lowered the cane and ran his hands lightly over the punished cheeks, feeling the heat emanating from them and, at the same time, marvelling at how well she had taken the thrashing. Only after the fifth stroke had her gasps and swift intake of air changed to cries of pain and, to his surprise, she had not screamed once. He stepped back and lashed three more strokes across her burning bottom. Then she did scream! During the entire beating she had stood there, not moving other than from the jarring impact of the cane, absorbing the punishment as each stroke sank into her tender flesh.

Tanya had heard what he had said as he held the rattan against her trembling cheeks. She knew he was going to beat her soundly, but his forecast of the future that awaited her filled her with dread. For some inexplicable reason, she badly wanted to impress him with her courage under punishment and resolved to take whatever he intended to do to her as bravely as she could. She felt the cane removed and heard the swish as it sped through the air. A report echoed in her ears as a line of fire erupted in her bottom. She choked back the cry that welled up in her throat and forced her body not to writhe or squirm as the rattan lashed into her, sinking deeply into her supple cheeks and leaving behind a searing line of fire. On the sixth stroke she could hold back no longer and the first cry was wrung through her clenched teeth, yet still she managed to keep position.

Tanya's mind was in a turmoil. Her buttocks felt on fire! Yet she was conscious that it was the handsome captain who was thrashing her. She had disobeyed him and deserved the punishment. Not only deserved it but, astoundingly, she felt herself wanting it. Unconsciously, as the last six strokes were lashed across her bottom, she felt her body pressing back towards the cane as if welcoming each biting stroke. Again, she felt the pain seep from her buttocks into her belly and the same strange tingling in her tunnel. She felt her wrists released and, turning, fell to the floor at the feet of the man who had punished her. Through her tear filled eyes she saw the large bulge in his breeches. More by some latent instinct than design she raised her trembling hands and began to stroke the bulge lightly with her fingers.

"Are you a virgin?" She heard the question as she felt the bulge beneath her fingers begin to throb. The voice was husky with desire.

"No, Sir." Her response came as a whisper as she felt her own body fill with desire.

"Then my using you will not detract from your value," he mused as he reached down and grasped her succulent breasts.

She felt his rough hands reach down and close round her breasts. Only then did she realise her nipples were engorged and painfully throbbing with her lust. The hands gripped her luscious orbs tightly and pulled her to her feet. She looked into his face and trembled at the blatant lust gleaming in his eyes. Without further ado, he pushed her back until she fell, sprawled, over his bunk. It only took him a matter of seconds to tear away his own clothing and then his naked body descended on hers. His taking of her was, just as she wanted, fierce and rough. She wrapped her legs round his hips and thrust upwards, forcing his penetration deeper into her body. Strange, delightful sensations surged through her and, just as he shed his passion deep into her vagina, her body shuddered violently as it succumbed to a series of shattering orgasms.

Having satisfied his needs, the captain replaced his clothing and returned to his position on deck, leaving Tanya panting, sweating and shuddering in the aftermath of his usage. She was very confused. He had soundly flogged her buttocks, they still burned and throbbed terribly, and had then taken his pleasure of her so thoroughly. She wondered what it would be like if, when he used her again, he took her as a lover. The very prospect sent waves of raging desire through her. Suddenly she realised that, in this pirate, she had found a man who could master her and make her his slave. The very idea brought her up with a shock. The squire's son had never produced such erotic desires in her and she had never before had such submissive thoughts about any man.

Much to her surprise, and disappointment, the pirate did not come near her for the next five days. She was confined to the cabin, the door was now locked, and the only person she saw was the old seaman who brought her food. The only change in the routine was that, each time he appeared, he signalled to her to lie on the bunk, then he raised her skirts and rubbed some sort of cream into her bruised buttocks.

One morning she heard strange sounds and much activity on deck. Looking out of the window, she saw that the ship was approaching land and there were strange looking buildings on the shore. They were about to enter port! Spasms of fear and dread flooded through her as she saw figures of men on the quayside, dressed in strange garments. Was this where she was to be handed over to the man referred to as Suleimann? If so, what manner of man was he? The cargo, obviously the proceeds of attacks on other ships, and her fellow convicts were disembarked and she shuddered as she saw the men and women roughly herded away.

She tried the door to her cabin and found the seaman had forgotten to lock it. Her curiosity got the better of common sense. She eased it open and peered around. No one in sight! She crept along the passage and up the companion way to the deck and stood looking round in amazement at the sight that met her eyes. Many brightly dressed men were standing round giving orders and teams of half naked men hurried to obey. There didn't appear to be any women in sight, which surprised her. She was gazing at the strange design of the buildings when she felt her arm grasped. Alarmed, she turned her head and saw it was the captain behind

her.

"So! You didn't learn from the caning. You still see fit to disobey me. Get back to the cabin immediately."

Realising, despite the quiet tone he had used in addressing her, that he was in a towering rage with her, Tanya retreated to the cabin and awaited his retribution. But it was not until the next morning that the pirate, accompanied by the old sailor and two others carrying a large tub, entered the cabin.

The sailors placed the tub in the centre of the floor and departed. She saw that it was filled with steaming hot water. The pirate captain stood looking at her for some moments, his eyes sweeping over her with undisguised lust shining in them. Eventually, he gave a deep sigh and handed her a large sponge and a bar of perfumed soap.

"Unfortunately, we have reached port and there is no time to punish you for your disobedience," he said brusquely. "It is time to prepare you to be presented to Suleimann. I can't take you to him with whip marks on you. Remove the dress and turn your back to me."

Trying to conceal the embarrassment she felt, Tanya did as he ordered.

The pirate captain closely surveyed her buttocks. "Good," he announced as he saw that the cream had eradicated all signs of the thrashing he had inflicted on her. "It would not do for Suleimann to find weals on your behind. Now get into the bath and scrub your body clean."

The water was hot and refreshing and Tanya enjoyed the opportunity to cleanse her body and wash her hair. The pirate captain made no attempt to hurry her, sitting back in a chair and watching her all the time, his eyes straying occasionally to where the cane was kept. Eventually he stood up and ordered her out and to dry herself with a large towel he thrust at her. Ignoring his close scrutiny, she towelled her hair and body dry, revelling in being thoroughly clean for the first time since her capture. He took the towel from her and ordered her to lie face down on a table. She watched, apprehensively, as she saw him open the door and beckon to someone. A large, half-naked black man entered the cabin, carrying a tray that he set down on the table at her side. Too frightened to move a muscle, she felt him smooth some expensively perfumed cream on her, covering her from her neck to her ankles. She nearly screamed as she saw him pick up a wicked looking knife and start to shave the cream from her body. Then she was ordered to turn over and the process was repeated on her front. The black man was about to shave away her golden pubic bush when the pirate captain shouted something at him in his own language.

"We must leave that intact," the captain said. "It is proof that you are a true blonde."

When the black man had finished, the captain sent him away and ordered her to stand in the centre of the cabin. He inspected her closely and then turned to a large chest, which he unlocked. He commenced lifting out dress after dress, occasionally looking across at her, and finally decided on an emerald green coloured one. He tossed this to her and ordered her to put it on. He again rummaged in the chest and lifted out a pair of gold coloured sandals with high thin heels. Again he ordered her to put them on and then surveyed the finished product closely.

The dress was far more sumptuous than any she had worn before and, were it not for the fact that she was stark naked beneath it, she would have felt very pleased to be wearing it. She turned and looked at her reflection in a long mirror and caught her breath. The dress left her exquisite shoulders bare, and was nipped in at the waist, thrusting her firm breasts upwards accentuating the cleavage between them. From the waist, the full skirt swept the floor. She was not vain by nature but could not help feeling a sense of pride as she caught the reflection of the captain's face. Then she recalled where she was and who she was with.

"Please," she dared ask, not turning away from the mirror. "What do you intend to do with me?"

"I see no reason why you should not know," he replied, his eyes devouring her. "Much as I would like to keep you for myself, you are to be taken to a very important slave trader. He will see that you are sufficiently educated and then sell you. If I am any judge, it will be by private auction when a few very rich and influential patrons will be given the chance to bid for you."

Tanya fell silent as the full truth of what he had said sank in. She was to be exhibited and sold! Just as if she was an animal, like those she had seen in the market at home. Some unknown person would then own her and she would be his, or hers she added shuddering at the thought, to do with as he or she pleased. Many more questions flooded into her mind but she refrained from asking them, dreading what the answers might be. But there was one question that had plagued her ever since her capture. Since she was very shortly to be parted from him, she wondered if she dare ask it. Even if he were angry at her audacity, surely he would not beat her just before he took her to the slave dealer. She decided to take the risk.

"Please, Sir." She spoke as timidly as she could. "May I know your name before we are parted?"

"My name?" he replied, looking at her quizzically. "Certainly. I am called 'The Scorpion' but my real name is Chevalier Pierre Du Morvan. An exiled lesser nobleman of France."

She had not failed to notice the sadness in his eyes as he had looked at her and

she was suddenly prompted to cast aside all fear of retribution as her own longing for this man welled within her. "Please do not take me to Suleimann," she whispered. "Keep me for your own. I will be anything you want me to be, even your slave."

"Unfortunately, I have no choice, much as I would dearly love to have you as my slave. But Suleimann owns this boat and all captured treasure, which includes you, must first be given to him. I, and the crew, merely get paid a percentage of the value."

She was inexplicably drawn to this man and the thought of being separated from him sent waves of sadness through her. Hearing that he wanted her for himself prompted Tanya to make one last plea. "Please keep me! I love you! Suleimann need never know."

"Silence! Cease tempting me, you Jezebel! Must I risk Suleimann's wrath and whip you to teach you obedience?"

Tanya lapsed into a sullen silence. His answers solved the problem that had occupied her thoughts as to why such an obviously well educated man should have taken up piracy. The captain left her alone with her thoughts as he went up on deck. She heard the noises coming from above and from the quayside as the remainder of the cargo was unloaded then, some time later, he returned. Her wrists were tied behind her back and slim metal rings, with a short light chain joining them, were attached to her ankles. He then delved into the chest and came up with a long hooded black cloak, which he put on her. He pulled the hood across her face, obscuring her head except for a narrow gauze-covered gap for her to see through.

With the bo'sun in attendance, she was taken from the ship onto the dock, where an open carriage awaited. Tanya stared round in wonder and fear as the carriage made its way through the streets. The people she saw were strangely dressed and the architecture of the buildings entirely different from anything she had seen before. The appearance of the men, in particular, sent shivers down her spine. They were mostly light brown skinned with fierce faces, a few being darker brown or black. The latter were mainly naked from the waist up, displaying muscular chests and arms. If what she was seeing was typical of the men to whom she was to be consigned, her future seemed terrible indeed.

The carriage approached a pair of heavy wooden gates set in a high stone wall. At their approach the gates opened and the carriage passed through and halted in front of a large building. She was ordered to step down as the captain rapped on an iron-studded door. It opened and a huge, half-naked black man beckoned her and her escort inside. As the door closed ominously behind her, Tanya looked round. She was in a large airy hall, much cooler than the outside had been.

"Greetings Captain." The black man addressed her escort, bowing and touching

his chest, mouth and forehead lightly with the fingers of his massive right hand.

"I wish to see your Master," the captain said. "I have some merchandise in which he will be interested."

"The Master is aware of your arrival and awaits you. Please to follow me," the black man replied as he turned and strode across the hall.

Escorted on either side by the captain and bo'sun, Tanya followed the huge man. The very sight of him, his huge body and bulging muscles made her legs feel weak as fear and apprehension about her future swept through her. Her progress was not made any easier by the chain between her ankles. The small procession passed along a short corridor and into a large room. As she looked round, Tanya gasped at the undisguised luxury of the décor and furnishings. The sight that sent fresh waves of terror through her was that of a very fat man, reclining on a couch near one of the large windows that looked out onto an enclosed yard. He was dressed in an expensive looking kaftan, and wore a blue and white striped cloth on his head, held in place by what appeared to be bands of gleaming white rope threaded through five blue wooden balls.

The captain bowed to the man and, at his signal, he and the bo'sun sat on another couch at right angles to his. The black man led Tanya forward until she stood in the triangle thus formed.

"What rubbish have you brought to my humble dwelling this time, my friend?" the fat man asked.

"A prize beyond value, my dear Suleimann!" the captain replied. "And you will ask Allah to bless me for having brought it to you."

"And how many times have I heard that from your lips, good captain?" the slaver said, a shrewd expression clouding his eyes. "The last consignment you brought was so poor that I lost money on it!"

"I very much doubt that, you old rascal," the captain said, the steely expression in his eyes belying the banter of his words. "I have never known you not to make a good profit on any deal. Anyway, see for yourself."

"Osman!" The slaver looked at his henchman. "Uncover the wench and let me see what rubbish I have been brought this time."

The huge black man stepped forward and removed Tanya's cloak. The captain watched the slaver closely and smiled as he saw the look of interest flit across the man's face. Tanya stood erect, her head held high, trying hard to forget that it was her, her body, that was the subject of the fat man's appraisal.

"How much do you value her at?" the slaver asked eventually.

"Thirty thousand dinars."

Tanya thought the fat man was going to explode as he leaned back and laughed loudly. The captain sat silent.

"Thirty thousand dinars!" The slaver scoffed when his mirth abated. "Where would you get any wench worth half that. Even the Sultan would not pay that for a prize camel, let alone a mere woman."

"I say she is worth at least that," the captain insisted quietly, looking hard at the slaver. "If you do not want her, I can take her elsewhere."

"I did not say I didn't want her," the slaver said, looking at Tanya through half closed eyes. "Just that she could not be worth so much."

"Then I suggest you use the eyes and common sense that Allah gave you and look at her again," the captain said, then turned to the black man and spoke to him in his own tongue.

Tanya had stood there as these men discussed her as if she was an animal. She had no idea of how much thirty thousand dinars represented and didn't care. All that concerned her was that it was her body they were putting a value on and the shame and degradation she felt. She shivered as she felt the black man's hands at the back of her dress. Slowly the garment slid to the floor at her feet and now she stood naked. The black untied her wrists and removed the shackles from her ankles. She saw the slaver lean forward, intense interest replacing the disinterested look he had forced into his eyes. He slowly looked her up and down, clearly assessing the full but firm breasts, narrow waist and flaring hips above her long and shapely legs.

"Where did you get her from and what is her history?" the slaver asked. Now no longer able to conceal his interest.

The captain replied, telling him all that he knew. The slaver struggled to his feet and approached her. He proceeded to give her a series of orders which she obeyed, albeit reluctantly. She opened her mouth as he inspected her teeth. Raised her arms above her head as he cupped her breasts in his hands, assessing their firmness. Then he slowly ran his hands down the soft smoothness of her body. She let out a sharp squeal as he pulled out one of her pubic hairs and examined it closely. Then he ordered her to turn round, spread her legs and touch her toes. Tanya felt her face blush red with shame as he ran a finger over her anus, pressing hard into her recess and then repeated the process on her sex lips. She felt disgusted and soiled as the man's fingers sought and found these intimate parts of her body.

"She is not bad," the slaver conceded, having returned to the couch. "But she is

not a virgin and is untrained and that reduces her value. The first can not be remedied and I will have to spend time and expense in training her."

Tanya, who had now straightened up and turned to face them, had no choice but to listen to the bargaining that now followed. At the slaver's order, a scantily dressed young girl entered and served thick black coffee, completely ignoring her nakedness. At last the men seemed to reach an agreement. The slaver reached down at his side, picked up a bell and shook it. In response, another man not so lavishly dressed, entered. The slaver turned his head to him.

"You will add twenty thousand dinars to the captain's manifest," the slaver said to the newcomer. "Once the full tally has been counted, you may pay the captain and the crew their shares." He dismissed the man with a wave.

The deal had been done to their mutual satisfaction and Tanya knew that she had been sold just as if she were a prize mare. At least the captain had won the argument over her value! This did little to compensate her for the fact that she would never see him again. Sadness swept over her and only her determination not to let them see kept the tears from her eyes. She knew, in her heart she would never serve any man as well as she would have served him. A feeling of utter despondency descended over her.

When the captain and bo'sun had left, Suleimann ordered the black man to take Tanya away and have her cleaned to begin her life as a true slave. She followed him back to the hall and along another corridor towards a door guarded by a fierce looking man holding a curved sword across his bare chest. Passing through the door, they entered another oblong hall from which several doors led off. The reality of her situation was suddenly brought home to her as they passed one of the doors and she heard a loud sharp report followed by a shrill scream. Some unfortunate girl was obviously being punished!

The black man ushered her into a room, clearly a washroom, and clapped his hands. Immediately two women and another black entered. Tanya did not fail to notice the cane hanging from the belt at this new arrival's waist. The sight of this, and the sounds she had heard as they had passed along the corridor, immediately dispelled the sense of rebellion that had started to foment inside her, dissipating the gloom engulfing her. She was ordered to lie along a bench while the girls depilated her body, trimming her bush into a heart shape in the centre of which her sex lips were shaved so they were clearly visible in the golden frame. Then she was bathed and her hair washed thoroughly. Finally, having been dried, she was made to stand still while the women applied cosmetics to her face and body and brushed out her long blonde tresses. When the senior black man was satisfied, he led her, still naked, back to the room where Suleimann awaited her return.

The black man halted her in front of the seated slaver and forced her to her knees. She looked up into the fat flabby face and saw the lascivious gleam in his pig-like eyes. The thought of having to submit physically to this fat, repulsive

creature reawakened the rebellion she had, so far, managed to suppress.

"Why have I been brought here? You have no right to detain me. Give me back my clothes!" She had raised her eyes to look defiantly into his as she blurted out her protest.

Suleimann sat silent, watching her, his countenance not betraying his anger at her outburst. He was fascinated by her blonde hair and flashing green eyes. His eyes travelled over her delightful body. His anger began to fade as he realised that, once she had been trained and made to accept her slavery, he was certain to make a handsome profit above the twenty thousand dinars the pirate had finally persuaded him to agree was her value.

"Osman," he said pulling his gaze away from the seductive apparition and turning to his chief assistant. "The slave spoke without permission. She also failed to address me as 'Master'. Before you take her to the cells, see that she receives ten strokes for each offence."

"Yes, Sir," Osman replied.

Tanya, realising she was again to be beaten, was on the point of protesting when common sense prevailed. If he intended her to be beaten then beaten she would be. Of that she had no doubt. Better not to make things worse. She choked back the protest.

"Look at me, slave," Suleimann commanded. "You must banish any thought of escape or rescue. Better you accept the fate that Allah so clearly intends for you. A body and colouring such as yours demands to be a slave. Listen to me carefully." He paused and looked hard into Tanya's raised face. "As a slave you will show proper respect to all men. You will kneel in their presence and you will not speak without permission. You will obey the orders of men without hesitation or question and do so willingly. At the moment you are worthless but, when you have been trained, your value may increase enough to compare with the scrawniest of camels. You will be soundly whipped if you give the slightest cause for displeasure. You are as nothing, merely the property of whoever owns you at the time, far less than any animal."

Despite his gross and unpleasant appearance, he had spoken with such sheer authority in his voice that Tanya was left in no doubt as to her future. That she was owned and at the mercy of any man had been made well and truly clear. She glanced sideways at the huge Osman and began to tremble. Not entirely with fear! There was a certain element of submission creeping over her. From being the daughter of a successful merchant, she had descended to being a mere nothing. Her train of thought was broken as Suleimann began speaking again.

"Take her away, Osman. Once my order has been carried out, she will be confined in the cells until her training commences tomorrow."

Obedying Osman's orders, she rose and followed the black man from the room. They entered the hall and Osman guided her towards the door behind which she had earlier heard the scream. He opened the door and pushed her into the room. Tanya looked round and began to shake. Her eyes took in a tall thick wooden post and a much shorter one with a padded crosspiece at its top. Both were fitted with rings, ropes and chains. Her eyes fastened on the padded leather crosspiece and she began to tremble. She did not fail to notice that the leather shone where it had been well worn. Soon, she realised, she would be adding to its wear and tear. Osman clapped his hands and a far door opened and another huge black man entered.

"Faisal," Osman addressed the new arrival. "This is the new girl, Tanya. She is allocated to you to supervise. She is to be put in the cells until tomorrow when you will begin with her. The Master wishes her training completed as quickly as possible. He is anxious to put her up for an early sale, so see that she is not permanently damaged."

"I will attend to it, Osman Bey," Faisal replied.

"Before you take her to the cells, she is to be caned. Twenty strokes for disrespect to her Master. See to it now while I will watch," Osman ordered. He always made a point of seeing a new slave receive her first beating. It helped him assess how quickly she would learn and what sort of slave she would make

Tanya felt her arms grasped in a vice-like grip. She was pulled towards the shorter of the posts and forced over it. Her wrists and ankles were quickly strapped to rings at its base. Then she felt the coolness of the cane as it was laid across her taut buttocks as Faisal measured his distance. She braced her body for the thrashing to begin, but nothing happened. Why didn't he get the beating over? The waiting, with the instrument against her trembling bottom was torture. She felt her hair grasped and her head pulled up until she looked into Osman's face.

"A slave is punished because she has displeased her master," Osman said. "It is her duty and desire to please her master and, if she fails to do so, then she must welcome the punishment and, as a sign of her regret for failing, take the whipping as quietly as possible." Osman released her hair. "Proceed Faisal."

Tanya had cringed at Osman's words. She was to be flogged! She was to be badly hurt! Yet she was expected to welcome all this and take it bravely? She felt the cane removed from her behind and gripped the rings tight. Stubborn pride took possession of her. She didn't deserve the beating but she would show these savages that an English woman could be just as brave as any other.

Crack!

The cane whipped across the centre of her buttocks, curling round both sides and

leaving a fierce line of pain where it had struck. Tanya's body jerked against her bonds and a gasp escaped through her clenched teeth.

Crack!

Crack!

Osman watched as she absorbed these first strokes. If this was how well she could take a beating, there was hope for her becoming a satisfactory slave. No master liked his slaves to scream too early during a punishment.

Crack!

Crack!

The girl had taken five strokes and still managed to remain silent, except for the hiss of air expelled through her teeth as each landed. Also her slender body was writhing sweetly as the pain built up.

Crack!

"Aaaaaarrrrgggggghh!" A long drawn out wail followed the snap of the cane on bare flesh as Tanya's control finally snapped. She felt a light sweat begin to seep through her pores as the pain began to spread through her body.

Four more times the rattan seared across her taut cheeks, each stroke drawing a shrill cry from her open mouth. Her tears were beginning to form a pool on the floor under her head. Part of her brain had been counting the strokes and she shuddered as she realised she was only half way through her ordeal. Captain Macklay had given her ten, she remembered, and the pirate captain sixteen, then both had used her afterwards. The memory of the pirate captain's possession of her caused a strong tingling in her vagina as she recalled the exquisite feelings he had induced in her. The next stroke was long in coming! Surely she was not to be let off the rest of her beating! Then she sensed Osman crouching at her side and felt his hand cup her hanging breast. Fingers sought her nipple and pinched it lightly. Then she felt a finger touching her sex lips. What was he doing?

She sensed him straighten up as his hands were removed. She forced her mind to concentrate on the memory of her union with the pirate captain - anything to dull the terrible pain searing her bottom. Then the cane exploded across her throbbing cheeks as her punishment was resumed. Five more strokes seared against her writhing buttocks, sending sheets of pain through her whole body. She knew she was sweating freely now, she could feel the runnels coursing down her pendant breasts and dropping from her nipples to the floor. Only five more strokes to come, her brain registered, and then her ordeal would be over. For this time at least! But, again, the stroke did not come. Instead she felt Osman's hand on her breast and his fingers teasing her nipple. Through the mist of pain that

engulfed her, she felt her nipple enlarge and grow hard. Then the fingers were gliding lightly over the raised weals on her cheeks. She shuddered as she felt the tip of a finger press on her anus, and the touch sent strange sensations coursing through her body. Then the hand moved down and the fingers sought her sex. This time, instead of just rubbing against them, she felt two fingers ease their way between her lips and touch her clitoris. The strange sensations immediately intensified and revealed their nature. Her body was being aroused! How could this happen when she was being flogged? Was it because of the pain of the beating or the visions of the pirate captain, and the love she held for him, that kept flashing through her mind?

Osman straightened up, a smile of surprise and satisfaction on his lips. The slave's body was being aroused and had responded nicely to his touch. It didn't happen with many girls but it was a bonus when it did. With careful training she could become aroused when under a beating, and this would greatly increase her value. Some men liked to prepare a slave's body in this manner before quenching their desires on it. He nodded to Faisal to continue.

Tanya's body jerked and writhed violently as the cane struck again. The flash of pain in her buttocks seemed to intensify the stimulation that Osman's fingers had begun and the scream that followed the impact was both of pain and desire. As Faisal lashed the remaining four strokes across her buttocks, the desires escalated and she began to plead for her needs to be satisfied. The smile on Osman's face widened. He took the cane from Faisal and slowly inserted the end between her sex lips.

Tanya, writhing with the pain of the beating, could not understand what was happening. Initially the cane had hurt terribly until, after the tenth stroke, Osman had started to touch her. Then, after the fifteenth, when he touched her again she had felt desire soaring through her body as it had done when she had lain with the pirate captain. She tried to preserve what little pride still flourished within her but failed and cried out, begging the men to use her and satisfy her needs. She had counted the twentieth stroke and heaved a sigh of relief that the beating was over. Then she had felt the cane pushed in between her sex lips and, as it had been pushed further in, her muscles tried to tighten around it. The desires this aroused banished any fear of the men that the flogging had instilled in her. Cursing and swearing at them she yelled loudly, begging the men to use her and quench the fires raging in her sex. Little did she realise then that they were incapable of fulfilling her demands.

The punishment over, Faisal released her bonds and ordered her to follow him. He took her to a large room around which there were many metal cages. These consisted of metal bars erected on a stone floor. Each cage was no more than six feet long by four wide and five feet in height. The only entrance to this confined space was by a two foot square door set in one end. Still shaking and sobbing with the pain of the thrashing and her needs still burning inside her, Tanya sank to her knees and crawled through the door. Faisal closed and locked this and departed,

leaving her alone with her thoughts.

She looked round through tear filled eyes. The only things in the cell were a bucket at one end and straw scattered over the floor. She curled up on the straw and wept. Not so much from the pain but from the shame and humiliation she felt at the way her body has been aroused! Even the squire's young son had never made her feel that way. Had never aroused her body to the extent that she had begged him to take her! That she would probably be beaten as a bond-maid, and later a slave, she had been able to accept but to be tortured in the way she had just been was something she had not bargained for.

She was to be imprisoned in the cage for three weeks. The first night or two, she found it nearly impossible to sleep, and only dozed enough to prevent her strength being sapped away. As her training progressed, by the time she was shut up for the night, she was so tired that sleep came quickly despite the discomfort and the aches and pains coursing through her body. During the course of her incarceration in the cage the other cages were occupied by a succession of young girls, all beautiful, but any conversation or contact between them was strictly forbidden.

CHAPTER 3.

The daily routine was the same. Each morning she was awakened by one of the young black men, rattling a cane along the bars of the cages. Taking the bucket with her, she crawled through the small door and knelt outside the cage. The girls were ordered to remove the soiled straw from their cage and, having carefully scrubbed the floor, replace this with fresh from a heap at one end of the room. They were then taken to a washroom, where they had to wash their bodies and hair. After a meal of foul tasting gruel, which they must consume completely or risk a beating, they were separated as they were taken to the various tasks allotted to them. In Tanya's case, she was not made to work as the others were. She was taken to a special room where her training was carried out under the supervision of Faisal.

The first day after her arrival she was escorted by Faisal to a long room, which was devoid of any furniture except for a chair at one end. She was led to this and, prompted by the caning she had received the day before, fell to her knees. Osman, seated in the chair, looked down on her with approval. She was already beginning to learn!

"You are to be trained in the rudiments of slavery," Osman said. "We have only three weeks in which to accomplish this so you will have to learn fast and well. Faisal will be responsible for your training and he will encourage you with this strap, which he may use as and when he thinks fit." Tanya saw him hand a thick heavy strap to his assistant. "He will be assisted by a country woman of yours called Deena. You will obey her every instruction. Once this has been done, you will be taught how to behave on the auction block. The Master will expect a high

price for you and, if he does not get it, your back and behind will suffer. So learn well! I will come and judge your progress from time to time, and, if I am not satisfied, you will be soundly beaten, do you understand? "

"Yes, Sir," Tanya replied. She understood only too well. It was evident that her soft young body was to suffer untold tortures just so that she would fetch a high price for the slaver.

Having again conversed with Faisal, Osman departed and Tanya's training began.

"Stand, slave," Faisal ordered. When Tanya had obeyed, he threw the strap along the floor to the other end of the room. "Fetch it!" he ordered.

Tanya had only taken a couple of steps forward when she was halted by a sharp command from her mentor. She returned to stand in front of him.

"On your hands and knees! Pick it up in your mouth and see that it does not become wet."

Tanya turned and sank to her knees. Aware that her position presented her buttocks to the now seated Faisal, she crawled to the strap, picked it up in her teeth and returned with it to him. He took it and examined it carefully.

"It is wet," he announced. "Lower your head to the floor."

Tanya bent forward, raising her buttocks from her heels, until her forehead touched the floor at his feet. She failed to hear him move. The impact of the strap across her back rocked her sideways along the floor as a thick line of agony erupted across her shoulders. Hastily, she regained her position. Again, he threw the strap across the room. This time she was more careful as she picked it up and, when he took it, there was no dampness to be beaten for. Time after time, the exercise was repeated, each time Faisal made some criticism on her deportment. Finally she managed to retrieve the strap several times to his satisfaction.

"Your movements are not fluid enough, however," Faisal said. "You must exercise daily and start right away."

The rest of that day was spent doing numerous exercises while Faisal watched carefully. She felt terribly embarrassed as she stood, her arms stretched above her head and twisted from side to side, then, keeping her legs rigid, bending and touching her toes, time after time. Then running on the spot, her knees raised high in the air, followed by exercises, lying on the floor and raising first her legs and then her torso in the air. All these exercises involved adopting very embarrassing positions but the worst was knowing he was watching her breasts as they bounced up and down as she ran on the spot. Slowly, despite the tiredness that eventually overcame her, and the aching in muscles she did not know she

even possessed, her body and limbs became looser and her movements more flowing. She sweated profusely with the effort and, when the end of the day came, was grateful to be led to the washroom to cleanse herself. She had exerted herself so much that, having devoured the usual gruel as if it was a delicacy, she crawled through the door to her cell and fell instantly asleep.

The next day or so was spent exercising and learning instant and unquestioning obedience. Faisal, aware that Suleimann wished her to learn quickly and well, shouted order after order at her, demanding immediate and submissive obedience. Tanya, eager to escape further attentions of the strap, did her best to obey. Faisal demanded the highest standard from her and, when she returned to her cage each evening, her back bore witness to his impatience with her progress. As they came to the third day of this routine, Faisal looked down on her sweating body as she knelt before him.

"We are, at last, making progress," he said. "Tomorrow I will call Deena to come and we will move on to other things. Your efforts today were most satisfactory. You may have a reward."

Tanya was aware that she had pleased him and, finally, met his standards. That her back had lacked any attention from the strap all day testified to this. She looked up to thank him for the praise and saw his hand extended towards her. In the palm lay a sweetmeat! She could smell the sugary odour.

"You may take it. With your mouth."

Tanya leaned forward and, as gently as she could, took the candy between her teeth. Its sweetness moistened her tongue and she resisted the temptation to chew it. Better to let it dissolve slowly and prolong the pleasure.

"A Master will occasionally feed his slave in that manner. It is to teach her that she is totally reliant on him for her nourishment. Thus she must please him at all times, or starve."

In the short time before sleep engulfed her as she lay on her straw that evening, Tanya thought about this. It brought home to her, even more effectively than the cane or strap, that she now had no control over her destiny and was totally subject to the whims of whoever owned her. For the first time since the court trial she realised what complete submission meant. Strangely, the idea did not disturb her as much as she thought it should. Her only regret was that it was not to the pirate captain she would be made to surrender. It was with difficulty that she remembered the girl she had been once, self-centred, arrogant and looking down with scorn on most men she had met. She had even manipulated the squire's son when it suited her.

The next morning when she was taken by Faisal to the training room, she found the woman, Deena already there. To her surprise, the woman was not as young

as she had supposed she would be. She surveyed Tanya's naked body with interest and watched closely as she went through the daily routine of exercises. Then Faisal gave the woman permission to proceed with the slave's training.

Under Deena's instructions, Tanya was taught when and how to speak to a master. Respect and subservience were the operative words. She was also taught how to walk as a slave, submissively and enticingly. She had previously considered that her gait was quite sexy! But Deena insisted that she learned to walk all over again, in a manner befitting a slave. She learned to walk with short, dainty steps on the balls of the feet, with her arms stationary at her sides and the palms of her hands pressed against the back of her thighs, her breasts thrust provocatively forward. She must keep her head raised but her eyes demurely lowered. To assist her, Deena fixed a short chain between her ankles and placed a block of wood on her head. In this posture, Deena said, a slave's body was displayed to the best advantage. Tanya was made to circle the room, time after time, taking careful note of the minor adjustments that the woman demanded.

Three days she had spent with Faisal and a further three with Deena. On the evening of the sixth day, as she lay curled up in her cage, Tanya was aware of a change that had come over her. Late that afternoon, Osman had put in his first appearance. He had demanded a demonstration and, afterwards, seemed pleased with her progress. She did not see the smile of satisfaction on his face as, kneeling demurely in front of him, she gently took the candy he offered to her and thanked him for it in a most subservient manner. It was only the second candy she had earned and she tried to make it last as long as possible.

The seventh day she was not taken to the training room. Instead, to her alarm, she was led to the room where she had been caned. Faisal closed the door behind them and it was then that she saw Osman seated to one side. She approached and, as Deena had taught her, sank to her knees in front of him, spreading her thighs wide and placing her hands, palms clasped together, between her heels.

Osman smiled at the change in the slave. She was moving most seductively and she presented herself to him well, as if she had always been a slave. "When does a Master have his slave beaten?" Osman asked.

For a moment, the question mystified Tanya. "When she has been found displeasing, Sir," she replied eventually, keeping her eyes lowered and addressing him correctly. Was this the prelude to a thrashing, she wondered? But she couldn't think of anything she might have done wrong! Thankfully, she had remembered to call him 'Sir', as she had been instructed!

"Wrong!" Osman said. "A master needs no reason to have a slave beaten. She is his property and he may do with her as he wishes. Is that not so?"

"Yes, Sir," Tanya answered.

"What should a slave think when she is about to be, and is being, beaten?" Osman asked.

Tanya remembered what she had been told in this very room and had no need to think of the answer to this question. "That she has failed in her duty to please her master and, as a sign of her penitence, must welcome the pain of the punishment, take it as bravely as she can, and remember to thank her Master for the lesson."

Osman smiled at her reply. This slave would be a joy for some man to own. At that moment, he decided to persuade Suleimann to let him preside at her auction, instead of the man usually employed.

"When you were caned in this room the other day, your body became sexually aroused, did it not?" Osman asked suddenly.

Again, Tanya was stunned by the question. "Yes, Sir," she answered, feeling her face grow hot with embarrassment at the memory. Was it the caning, thinking about the pirate captain and the way he had used her, or the feeling of complete domination and submission that had surged through her that had aroused her? This was a problem she had pondered on ever since and had been unable to solve.

Her embarrassment was not lost on her questioner. He reached under his seat and produced a short length of wood, shaped and polished like an erect penis. Tanya's eyes opened wide in alarm at the sight. That it was to form some part of her training she had no doubt. Already she could imagine the object being thrust inside her and she felt a strange stirring in her sex tunnel as if her muscles anticipated its penetration. This symptom disturbed her! When she had copulated with her first lover she had enjoyed the experience but had never been aroused to the same extent as when she was caned. The first two times in her life that she had been beaten, her body had responded deeply to the sexual stimulation creating strong needs and desires that demanded to be satisfied. Then, when she had been brought to this room on the day of her arrival and Faisal had caned her, the needs aroused in her body had been so demanding that she had actually pleaded with a man to use her.

Osman looked down on the kneeling slave and smiled as he sensed the confusion raging inside her. "It is rare for a woman to become aroused by pain," he said. "That you displayed such potential is something we must capitalise on. Under the right control and with the right master, it would increase your value considerably. So, for the next two weeks, as well as your other training, we will concentrate on this. During the course of each day, you will be both flogged and aroused until your body responds automatically in the required manner. Then you will be taught to control yourself until a master allows you satisfaction." Osman turned his gaze to Faisal. "Prepare her."

Tanya was ordered to rise and bend over the short wooden post. Faisal secured

her wrists to the base rings as before. Then, to her dismay, her legs were pulled wide apart and tied to rings set in the floor. She trembled with fear and blushed with shame at the lewd way in which her private parts were so openly displayed.

Osman crouched close to her face. "You must quickly overcome the outward signs of embarrassment," he said. "A slave is not allowed the luxury of modesty. Remember that."

"I will try, Sir," Tanya said, although how she could control her blushing was beyond her.

"First," Osman continued. "You will be thrashed with ten strokes. Then this little toy will be inserted inside you and the thrashing will continue until you climax. You do know what I mean?"

"No, Sir," Tanya answered. In her naivety she didn't connect the delicious feelings she had enjoyed with the pirate captain with what the question meant.

"You will learn, then, when it happens. But first, let me see you enjoy a caning like a slave should," Osman said. "You may commence, Faisal."

Tanya gripped the metal rings tight. She was going to be beaten and he had said she should enjoy it! She tensed herself as she heard the cane whistle through the air. A line of fire wrapped round her cheeks, even penetrating into the cleavage between them. She choked back the cry that sprang to her lips. Then another line of fire, and then another. She felt tears squeeze from between her closed eyelids, but she had still managed to remain silent. Twice more the cane struck, sending more lines of agony through her bottom.

"Good! Good!" She heard Osman's voice as he crouched at her side. "A master would appreciate a slave who can take five strokes in silence. But do not hold back any longer, for to do so would make the master think you were being defiant. Cry out during the next three but on no account begin to scream until your behind has received eight strokes."

Crack!

"Oooooowwww!" Tanya's cry followed the report. And her cries became louder and more intense as the cane lashed her two more times. When the ninth stroke blazed across her taut buttocks, she could control herself no longer and her first real scream followed the sharp report of the rattan on her bare flesh. The tenth stroke drew the same response from her open mouth.

Osman again crouched at her side. He was pleased with her performance so far. If she could repeat this each time she was beaten in the future, her master would be pleased. Now for the next part of the lesson. "Now your body is to be taught to show how much you are enjoying the thrashing. Do not try and fight against what

will happen. Let yourself go. Later we will teach you to control your body in the right way to please a master."

Through the thin veil of pain floating round her mind, Tanya heard his words, although she did not understand their meaning. She felt something press against her sex lips making her jump with the shock. Faisal watched closely as Osman pressed the wooden phallus against the girl's sex. On his superior's instructions, he had changed the cane for his strap - the girl was to be beaten several times a day for the next few days and it was essential not to damage her buttocks too much. The strap would evoke the required degree of sting and pain but not do the same damage as a cane.

Tanya screamed as the leather strap lashed across her throbbing buttocks. As her cry died away, she felt the wooden thing pressed against her sex, then the strap struck again. She began to feel the strange tingling in her belly and her body involuntarily pressed back on the thing and she felt her sex lips start to peel apart. Again the leather struck and she felt the object pressed harder against her sex lips and the tingling sensation increased sending delicious feelings through her body. The next stroke of the leather seared across the lower half of her cheeks, forcing her forward and up on her toes. As her body recoiled from the stroke, she felt the object slide inside her. Waves of exquisite pleasure swept through her, mingling with the pain, until a moan of sheer desire was forced from her throat as she felt her inner muscles tighten around the object.

She had never experienced anything like it before. No matter how hard she fought, she could no longer control her body whose muscles closed round the invader as if they never wanted it to leave her. The strap continued to rain down on her squirming buttocks and she felt her body instinctively milking the wooden shaft. Her screams were now a mixture of pain and joy as alternate waves of pain and pleasure exploded in her body. Suddenly, completely out of control, her body pumped back and forth on the shaft and she felt a wetness seep down it and onto her thighs. Still the strap lashed her! Then her body arched rigid against her restraints as she emitted one long scream of fulfilment and a wonderful blackness descended over her.

Osman called to Faisal to cease thrashing her when her body arched. A smile lit up his face as he saw the girl's body go through the contortions of her orgasm. From what he had gleaned from questioning her before, the first artificially stimulated climax had been induced in the girl's body. Now she would understand what he was talking about in future! He left the room for a few minutes and returned accompanied by a young girl, carrying a cloth and bowl of cold water. The girl proceeded to bathe the unconscious slave, wiping the sweat from her face and body, taking care to avoid her inner thighs. Then she collected the cloth and bowl and retired, having been ordered by Osman to be ready for when she would be needed again.

Slowly, Tanya began to ascend through the soft cotton mist that engulfed her. At

first she was aware of the throbbing in her buttocks then, as the mist slowly dispersed, she felt the wonderful aftermath of her orgasm. She shook her head to clear the last of the mist and found that she was still secured over the post. She had the feeling that something wonderful had happened to her although she did not know what. She opened her eyes, found that they were no longer filled with tears, and saw Osman again crouching in front of her.

"You have now experienced your first induced slave orgasm," he said. "In future you will know what I am talking about. It was very pleasant wasn't it?"

"Yes, Sir," Tanya whispered. Her strength seemed to have been drained from her. So that was what a 'slave orgasm' was! One that was forced upon her even though she might fight against it.

"You are to be trained to respond in the same way whenever you are beaten in the future, eventually without the assistance of the phallus inside you. Then you will be taught to control your body, so that you can contain the climax until your master gives his permission, should he decide to reward you and allow you to enjoy that pleasure."

Tanya heard him with trepidation. It would seem that she was going to be beaten again and again until she liked it! The climax, as he had called it, had been delicious, but why was it necessary to be flogged so badly first? The solution to this puzzle came to her immediately. For a master's enjoyment! She shuddered as the answer came to her bringing with it the true feeling of utter submission that, instinctively, she had been fighting since her trial. She, her body and soul, were no longer her own. They belonged to whichever man owned her at the time.

She felt Osman's fingers rub along the inside of her thighs, then he held them under her nose. For the first time she inhaled the foreign odour of her own secretion. Although her buttocks still throbbed from the cane and strap, she felt a sense of satisfaction flow over her. It was almost as though she had been waiting all her short life for this moment. The moment when she knew herself to be a true slave!

Three more times during the course of that day, the 'lesson' was repeated. Each time the climax arrived a little sooner. Now, even the first ten strokes of the cane brought on the sensations in her tunnel. Osman made no demands on her to exert any control. Let her become used to the experience first, then teach her to contain the approach to the final pinnacle. That night, when Tanya was shut into her cage, she was so exhausted that she immediately fell into a deep sleep. She dreamed that she was again with the pirate and he was riding her and slowly bringing her to a state of ecstatic bliss. The dream was shattered when she was awakened by the noise of the young eunuch running his cane along the bars of her cage.

During the next two days Tanya was repeatedly taken to the room. Each day she

was tied over the post and beaten, sometimes with a cane and, at others, by the strap. Her buttocks were in a constant state of pain and she learned to hate the instruments that caused it. Osman timed it so that she was put through six sessions on each day. Six times she was flogged until she came. The last three sessions on the second day, Osman desisted from using the phallus, but she still came, although it took just a little longer. Each night Tanya collapsed as soon as she entered her cage, weeping and trembling violently, and utterly exhausted. The dreams she had enjoyed that first evening turned into nightmares of her soft body being caned and whipped, while a group of strangers sat watching the inevitable response in her body.

The fourth and fifth days after that were even worse. Now, although she was still beaten soundly, Osman insisted she fight against the arousal until he gave permission to surrender. At first, Tanya did not find this easy. Over the three days they had educated her body to respond, whether she wished it to or not, until she had no control over her reactions. Now, they were trying to make her fight against the very thing they had invoked in her body. Fear of a threatened whipping with a heavy whip across her back, however, had the desired effect.

Osman was so satisfied with her progress that, on the last session of the fifth day, he arranged for Suleimann to be present. Tanya was already tied over the post when the slaver entered the room. He stopped behind her and examined her buttocks. He had given orders that she should not be damaged and was intent in checking that his instructions had been carried out. Her behind was certainly swollen and bruised, he expected no less, but she would quickly recover from this. He settled his gross bulk in the chair his servant had provided and gave the signal for the demonstration to begin.

Osman had already instructed the slave girl to wash Tanya carefully and bathe her buttocks with cold water. He had then warned Tanya that she was to take the next thrashing as if her buttocks were not already bruised and sore. She had groaned with dismay at this order. Although her behind was still hurting badly from the earlier sessions, he would expect her to remain silent whilst the first five or six strokes were laid on. She heard the slaver give the order for the session to start. She gritted her teeth and tightened her grip on the rings and waited for the onslaught to commence. She knew she must try to keep silent, but also knew she had little chance of obeying the order. Visions of her back lacerated by a whip flashed through her mind.

It was perhaps this that enabled her to choke back her screams as Faisal lashed four hard strokes of his cane across her offered buttocks. The fifth stroke not only broke her control over her cries, but also started the spiral of sensations in her belly. Then, as the eunuch continued to flog her, her screams echoed the report of the rattan on her bare flesh. She felt the arousal in her sex escalating, just as they had taught her body it should react, and concentrated all her weak resources in trying to prevent it soaring past the point of her control.

Suleimann watched carefully as the slave girl endured the first four strokes with the cane in silence. Considering the state of her buttocks before the beating started, he was more than satisfied with this effort. Then as the thrashing continued, her screams were as music to his ears. This was exactly how most masters would wish a slave to behave. At least the special type of slave he was intent in making out of this one. Then he saw her sex lips peel open and her clitoris appear. She had endured fifteen strokes when the first juices poured from her sex and ran down her thighs. He detected the sound of frustrated desire, as well as pain, in the screams that echoed round the room. From then on, he saw the tremendous effort the slave was making to contain her climax.

This would be a most interesting phenomenon to display at her auction. Reactions such as this were rare and would increase her value no end. There were some of his patrons who would pay well for a girl who could provide this type of entertainment. Not wishing to risk damaging his goods, after the twentieth stroke, he signalled Osman to let the girl release her control. When the eunuch passed on the message, Tanya felt welcome relief. The fire of desire in her loins was such that she had known, no matter what threat had been made, she would not have been able to stave off the climax much longer. In fact it only took five more strokes to accomplish the desired effect. Suleimann watched, fascinated, as the slave's body arched against her bonds, her back bending like a bow, as her body shuddered under a shattering orgasm.

When she was awakened the following morning, Tanya cleaned her cage as usual and was taken to wash and be fed. She expected to be taken back to the room for further training and another series of beatings. Her buttocks were so badly swollen and painful that she could not bear them to be touched, let alone sit on them. How could her soft bottom endure yet even just one more beating! She had eaten her gruel kneeling, much to the silent amusement of the other girls present. Her feelings of relief were profound when Faisal came and took her to a different part of the building. She entered a room where a bath of hot water was waiting. There was also a wide long bench without restraining straps, with a small table at the side on which there were numerous jars and bottles. A young slave girl knelt to one side, her forehead pressed to the floor.

Tanya spent the entire day in the room. She soaked in a hot bath - the water was repeatedly replenished - while the girl washed her carefully. Then she lay on the bench while soothing and healing creams were massaged into her buttocks, and scented oils rubbed into the rest of her body. Occasionally, Faisal gave her a sweetmeat and, when mid-day came, a tasty meal was provided for her. Throughout the day, she was bathed, massaged and anointed with the oils. Tanya was, at first, suspicious of these gentle and kind attentions but, after a while, relaxed and enjoyed it. But she was brought back to reality eventually when, come evening, she was put back into her cage.

To her relief, when the routine chores had been completed the next morning, she was not taken to the room to be beaten again. Instead, Faisal took her to another

part of the building where a middle aged woman awaited.

"You are now to be taught how to use your body to give pleasure to a master," Faisal informed her. "Fatima is skilled in these arts and will educate you. Failure to learn quickly will be dealt with severely."

Then followed several days during which the woman showed Tanya the various ways that a girl could stimulate a man, using almost every part of her own body. Tanya soon discovered that seducing a man was both exciting and exhausting. Fatima was a good teacher and she learned quickly. Consequently, her buttocks received very little attention from Faisal's strap. By the end of the second day, her cheeks had healed almost completely and showed hardly any evidence of the beatings she had received during the earlier days of her training. On the third day under Fatima's tutelage a refinement was added to her lessons. A blindfolded naked man was brought in and reclined on a low divan. Fatima's teaching changed from theory to practice. Tanya was made to demonstrate the various methods of seduction on the male body. When it came to using her mouth to masturbate the man's penis, Tanya initially rebelled but several whacks with the strap, and the threat of the whip, soon dispelled her reluctance.

Once she had overcome this barrier, she began to feel a sense of power as the man's body reacted to her ministrations. It was when it came to actually having the man's organ inside her own body that problems occurred. Under the earlier teaching with the cane and strap, her body had been educated to respond, especially when the phallus was inside her. Now that it was a real man's organ penetrating her vagina, her body responded immediately and she had great difficulty in controlling the arousal that this caused to surge through her.

"You must remember at all times," Faisal kept repeating. "You are a slave giving pleasure to a master. A slave does not get pleasure herself, unless the master wishes otherwise. You must learn to control yourself."

Initially, frequent attentions of the strap and threats of the whip were needed to curtail Tanya's natural desires. Then she found that, as when under the caning and strapping, she could make her own desires take second place to the task in hand and the time soon came when Fatima announced that she was satisfied with the slave's education and that there was no more she could teach her. Faisal reported to Osman who, in turn, acquainted Suleimann of the fact. The slaver, ever conscious of the profit he hoped to make on her sale, decided to test the slave out himself.

Thus it was that, having been cleansed and made up with cosmetics, Tanya was led, naked, into Suleimann's bedchamber and ordered to demonstrate her prowess. Tanya, on hearing the order, felt the bile rise in her throat. She was expected to pleasure this obese ogre's body! The men on whose bodies she had learned had all been reasonably young and muscular. Far different from the flabby rolls of fat that she assumed were hidden beneath the slaver's kaftan.

Exerting the severest constraint on her feelings, Tanya approached the divan where the slaver reclined under a thin sheet. She knelt at the end and insinuated her head under the sheet. Forcing herself to progress slowly, she eased her body up under the sheet, licking and kissing the inside of the ogre's legs. As she passed the knee level and reached the thighs she was aware of an increase in the man's breathing rate. It was quite light under the sheet and her eyes reached the apex of the triangle and she saw the flaccid penis, nestling in a mass of dark hair.

Using her fingers and tongue, as Fatima had taught her, she began to stroke, lick and kiss the foul object and the heavy sac dangling between his legs. As the object of her ministrations began to swell and harden, she smelt the aroma of his arousal. She had to fight hard to choke back the sickness that rose in her throat when she eventually took the now rigid organ into her mouth. Somehow she resisted the temptation to make him come as quickly as possible, and so end her ordeal. Instead she forced herself to take matters slowly, listening to the increasing breathing labours of the man and the hot pulsing of his shaft. Eventually, he could hold back no longer and a stream of his sperm jetted down the back of her throat.

Stunned by his virility, she had to repeat the exercise several times gradually bringing him to a climax. Then the sheet was whisked away and she was ordered to mount the slaver's body. Once again his organ grew, standing like a mast from his gross stomach. She slowly lowered her belly down and felt the slaver's hands on her breasts as his shaft buried itself deep into her vagina. Just as she had done on the men on whom she had practised, she began to ride the slaver, feeling her own muscles closed tightly round his organ. Either he was nearly fully spent by her previous attentions, or he was using massive control. Tanya rode him, increasing the momentum until she was bouncing up and down on his belly, her body drenched in sweat from her exertions. At last, she felt his ejaculation spurt into her. She continued to ride him slowly as her muscles milked him dry. Then she slid down the divan and licked him clean.

Panting heavily and sweating, she eased herself off the divan and knelt at the side, awaiting his verdict on her prowess. Nothing was said and, in response to Fasial's order, she rose and followed the black from the room. Cleaned and fed, she was returned to her cage. She lay there, shuddering at the ordeal she had just endured. Had she satisfied him? Was he pleased with her? Or would she be dragged back to the room and flogged? She lay there, inwardly squirming at what she had been made to do. She ardently prayed that, when the time of her auction came, the man who would purchase her would be young, with a hard body. Not another obese lout! But, she reminded herself, like it or not she was a slave and must satisfy the man who owned her, no matter how repulsive his body might be.

Osman took over her training for the next two days. He took her to the hall where the auction would be held and, time and time again, took her through the routine he had devised for her. Anxious to get away from Suleimann's establishment, Tanya even dared to make several suggestions, which the eunuch accepted. He intended to make his master as much profit as he could. That the slave seemed

eagerly co-operative was a pleasant surprise. Her training had been more successful than he had hoped for! His master, Suleimann, would, as soon as he was informed that the slave was ready, send out invitations to the appropriate people, advising them of a 'special commodity' that was to be sold by private auction and he prayed to Allah that they would all attend. The more interested parties present, the higher her selling price would be.

Although there was a little resentment in Tanya's mind at being put up for sale as if she were an animal in the market, she felt a certain pride at Osman's obvious satisfaction as his eyes roved over her; pride in her body knowing that it would be displayed naked for the scrutiny of the potential buyers. She had always, ever since she had reached puberty and her body had begun to show signs of womanhood, been proud of her slender shape. That this was to be displayed, in all its glory, before the critical eyes of men sent pangs of excitement surging through her belly.

Before Osman dismissed her she was ordered to stand upright, her feet spaced apart. He then proceeded to take measurements of her body and limbs, calling out the figures to another eunuch who recorded them on a sheet of paper. These would be her block measurements that would be called out first on the day she stood on the auction platform.

Tanya stood perfectly still as these records were taken, her pride continuing as Osman muttered his approval as each measurement was taken. Although she didn't realise it, she was the perfect size all over and the eunuch was pleased since this would help to enhance her price. She hoped and prayed that she would be brought by a man who would appreciate her beauty and treat her kindly and not continually have her figure marred by signs of punishment.

Back in her cage she conjured up in her mind visions of herself standing, naked, on the platform as the bids rose higher and higher until she was finally sold to a young handsome prince. Someone who she could fall in love with! In fact, someone like the pirate captain who had caused her heart to flutter so much as he had held her in his arms. The knowledge that, before the auction was concluded, she would be beaten in front of them all, to display her body's strange reaction to submitting to pain at the hands of a man, did not bother her at all.

CHAPTER 4.

Tanya, lying awake in her cage, realised that the time of her sale was imminent. Her training had ceased and the two days of being rehearsed in the routine Osman required her to follow, persuaded her that her escape from the slaver's clutches was nigh. But to what further torments was she bound? She had entered Suleimann's establishment as a wilful untrained convict, soon to become someone's bondwoman. Between them, he and his minions had taught her the meaning of slavery and had discovered some latent part of her character that she had no idea existed. As much as she would have liked to be free and back with the

pirate captain, she had come to accept that this would never happen. She had been taught to be a slave and now could foresee no other future for herself. In a perverse way, she welcomed the change that had been forced upon her.

The next morning, after she had cleaned her cage and been fed, she was taken to yet another part of Suleimann's establishment. She was not overly concerned as she imagined that she was to be prepared for the auction. She was anxious to be away from this terrible place where nothing but pain and humiliation had been heaped upon her. Surely, she reasoned, any master's harem could not be this bad? The room to which she was taken was devoid of furniture other than for a huge chair, before which she was ordered to kneel, and a long bench. She had not been kneeling there for many minutes when Suleimann entered and sat on the chair.

"Raise your head and look into my eyes, slave," the slaver ordered.

Tanya did as he commanded and was stunned as she saw that his brow was creased as if he was mentally juggling with some problem. His eyes glowed dark as he looked down at her.

"Your body becomes sexually aroused when you are thrashed," he said, making her blush with shame at the statement. "Is this caused by the stimulus of the pain or because it is a man beating you?" he asked. "Or do you have some other image in your mind at the time that causes this response?"

"I do not know, Master," Tanya replied, truthfully. It was a question she had not found the answer to herself. She rarely had any image in her mind at the time, being only aware that some man was inflicting pain on her bottom, so it must be one or other of the first two options. Which one she had no idea.

"Then we must find out," Suleimann said. "It is essential that we know before you are put up for sale." He turned to the Osman, who had escorted her there. "Proceed with the experiment I suggested."

It dawned on Tanya that she was again to be beaten. Beaten just to satisfy the slaver's curiosity! It wasn't fair! Hadn't he had her hurt enough? She had accepted her slavery since she had realised she had no choice, what more did they want?

Following Osman's orders, she rose and laid her naked body along the bench. It was long enough that, when her ankles were just over one end, she had to reach forward to grip the far end. Osman looked hard at her and then ordered her to kneel up. When she had done so, he placed a thick cushion roll on the bench and ordered her to regain her position. When she stretched out again, she found that the thick roll was under her hips, raising her buttocks in the air. She was perfectly placed for a sound flogging across them. Osman inspected her new position and, being satisfied, tightened leather straps round her ankles and waist, pinioning her to the bench. Her wrists were secured to the end of the bench. She watched as he walked away from her towards the door by which they had entered.

She saw him open the door and gasped in disbelief as two very young girls entered. Each carried a long thin cane swinging from their hands. They halted in front of her and flexed the canes until the ends met, demonstrating to her the suppleness of the rods. Tanya looked at their faces but they were devoid of any expression. Surely, she thought, they were not going to be the ones to beat her? The thought was enough to quench the stirrings in her stomach that had begun to manifest themselves as soon as she realised she was to be beaten. She began to shudder with disgust as Osman came and stood in front of the girls.

"These two girls have been ordered to thrash your buttocks with the canes," he announced, confirming her worst fears. "They have been ordered to lay the strokes on as hard as they can or they will be whipped for dereliction of duty. As the thrashing progresses, you will be tested to see if there is any sexual response in your body. You also will be closely watched to ensure that you allow your body to behave as you have been taught. You will think of nothing other than the fact that it is two young females wielding the canes. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Sir," Tanya replied, trying to hide the hatred she felt from showing in her tone. She didn't need to earn another whipping afterwards for disrespect!

She saw Osman nod to the two girls, who now walked past her and disappeared from her sight. She waited for the onslaught to begin, but nothing happened. After she had lain there, quaking for a couple of minutes, she turned her head and looked over her shoulder. One of the girls was standing level with her buttocks, the cane raised high above her head. She quickly turned her head and looked over the other shoulder and saw the same sight. She realised that the hiatus in the proceedings had been especially engineered so that she would look and be certain it was the girls beating her.

"Look to your front," she heard Osman command. "You will remain silent."

Her head hardly returned to look to the front before the canes came whistling down on her raised buttocks. The canes struck almost at the same time, landing less than a cane's width apart. Two lines of fire blazed in her cheeks, each wrapping round the sides so that the whole width of her bottom was set alight. Again and again, the canes struck, never more than a cane's width apart and always in unison. Tanya gripped the bench until her knuckles gleamed white and clenched her teeth to stifle the screams that erupted in her throat. Just when she thought her control would snap, the beating stopped. She felt a finger pressed down between her thighs and rub against her sex. She knew it would come away dry. The caning was having no arousing effect on her body whatsoever. Even her nipples, usually the first to show stimulation, remained soft.

The beating was resumed immediately, the canes lacing across her squirming buttocks, fuelling the fire that burned there until she, again, thought her control would break and her cries would echo round the room. The onslaught ceased and

again the finger probed against, and into her sex. Still with no evidence of any arousal. She heard a whispered conversation behind her between Osman and the slaver. Then the bonds on her ankles were released and she breathed a sigh of relief. A little prematurely though. To her horror, her legs were pulled wide apart and bent at the knees under the bench and the ankles tied together.

She heard the canes whistle through the air but, instead of more lines of fire being added to her bottom, the rods laced across the inside of her thighs, just above the knees. As more strokes were applied, she realised with horror that the girls were gradually working their way up her thighs, approaching the very tender area where her legs joined. Tanya cried out in horror and pain? Surely they would not cane her there!

Several more strokes later, as her screams echoed round the room, she knew her worst fears were well founded. The thin rattan rods, now falling a second or so apart, landed across her exposed sex lips, sending terrible spasms of agony through her body. She tried to wriggle to avoid the strokes landing there, but she was too securely held. Her body was sweating profusely and tears flowed freely from her eyes. Shock and horror at the treatment they were inflicting on her surged through her brain. She knew there was no arousal anywhere in her body but when would they realise this and cease beating her there?

At last the rods ceased to stripe her thighs and sex and she relaxed her tensed body, still writhing and moaning with the pain that seared through her. She felt the finger again exploring her intimate parts before it was finally removed. After a minute or two her bonds were released and she was ordered to rise and stand before Suleimann.

"So it appears that being beaten by another girl has no effect on your body," he said. "That is good! I am very pleased! That fact will surely enhance your value on the auction block." He looked hard at her. "The girls have done a good job and solved the problem for us. Now kneel before them and thank them politely for doing so."

Tanya stood there, speechless with horror. He had just ordered her to thank the girls for the terrible pain and humiliation they had just inflicted on her. Girls who were several years younger than her! This was too much humiliation to bear. She was on the verge of refusing when Osman saved her from committing the offence of blatant disobedience. An offence that would surely have earned her a severe flogging with a whip, even if it meant postponing the auction.

"You hesitated to obey an order. You will bend over the bench and each girl will give you six strokes. If you move, or fail to immediately thank them on your knees, you will be taken away and soundly whipped."

The anger in his voice, and the threat of the whip, was enough to quench the rebellion surging within her. She quickly adopted the position he had ordered and

gripped her ankles tight. She managed to hold the position as the girls lashed her already blazing buttocks with another twelve strokes. She rocked back and forth under the impact, her cries of pain echoing round the room. After the last cane had lashed her behind, she straightened up quickly and knelt before the girls and thanked them properly for beating her. Better to suffer this further humiliation than to be sent for a whipping. Thankfully, she was then returned to her cage where she silently wept away the shame.

Three days passed after the two days with Osman in the auction hall. Frequent application of some strange ointment had erased all traces of the caning the two girls had inflicted on her. On the fourth day, after cleaning her cage and being fed, she was taken to the same washroom where she had been prepared on her arrival. Osman and the two women were already there and under his close scrutiny they set about preparing her. The day of the sale had arrived! She was depilated. Her bush trimmed back into the heart shape and her sex lips shaved so that they were clearly visible. The women washed her thoroughly and massaged scented oils into her body. Cosmetics were applied to her face and body. Her nipples were rubbed with rouge which was also applied to her sex lips, accentuating these aspects of her beauty.

Osman surveyed the result closely as she stood in the centre of the room. He walked slowly round her. Her hair had been brushed until it fell in shining waves down her back, framing her sweet face. The exercises and diet had flattened her belly a little into a nicely rounded shape, accentuating her slim waist and full and firm breasts. >From behind her, he was pleased to see that her gorgeous buttocks no longer bore any evidence of the cane and strap that had, so generously, been used on them. Her long and shapely legs completed the picture. Even standing under his scrutiny, she stood erect, proud of her body and its obvious attractions, yet with her eyes demurely lowered, as befitting a slave. What he saw bore little or no resemblance to the creature he had first been presented with.

Satisfied with his survey, he ordered a light meal to be served to her. Nothing heavy, which might spoil the display he had planned she would make. After the meal, Tanya was ordered to rest on the couch until the time came for the final part of her preparation. She dozed for an hour or so, trying to keep her mind from contemplating the ordeal that faced her. The routine, which she had been made to learn thoroughly, would tax her endurance and obedience to the limit and it was best kept from her mind until the last minute. She tried to think back to the days before her trial, of the squire's son and of being in his arms. Then, to her surprise, the vision faded, to be replaced by that of the pirate captain standing over her naked body with a vicious whip in his hand. There had been something fascinating and hypnotic about him and, even in the short time she had known him, she had unwillingly been attracted to him.

Her reverie was broken when Osman returned and ordered the final part of her preparation to begin. Tanya stood, immobile, in the centre of the room while, under Osman's direction, gold snake bracelets were put on her upper arms and

fine gold chains, from which tiny bells were depended around her ankles. Then the two women secured a fine gold chain round her waist and used this to arranged lengths of chiffon on her body. As she watched in a long mirror on the wall, Tanya saw her charms gradually disguised under the layers of the almost transparent material. A further length was draped over her head, with part pinned across hiding her face except for her eyes. When he was totally satisfied, Osman called for Faisal to escort the slave to the auction hall.

Suleimann sat in the hall and looked round with a smile of pleasure lighting up his face. His notice of the impending sale had drawn the response he had hoped for. Representatives of the most wealthy members of the community were present, seated in three rows in a half circle, in the centre of which was the auction block. The block was, in fact a large stage and they were intrigued by the cloth covered shape to one side. Even the Chief Eunuch from the harem of Sheikh Ahmed Mulai had deigned to come in person. The latter's presence was essential in Suleimann's mind, as the eunuch was always on the look out for any unusual attraction which might interest his Master. Also, he was renowned for paying well for the occasional rarity, the more erotic the better, to titillate the Sheikh's unusual tastes. If Osman did his job well, Suleimann hoped the eunuch would view this girl in that light.

There was an expectant buzz of conversation in the hall as the prospective buyers awaited the auction. That this promised to be something out of the ordinary there was no doubt in their minds. The announcement had been so worded that it had already whetted their appetites. All eye turned to the stage as Osman, dressed in his finest apparel mounted the stage. He waited until the audience had fallen silent.

"My Lords." The eunuch's voice sounded loud in the heavy silence. "My Master bids you welcome. The House of Suleimann is proud to offer, for your kind consideration, a treasure of such unusual beauty and rare talent that it will surely bring delight to any man." He proceeded to list her features, her height, colouring and the various measurements of her body that was the usual practice when selling a slave. Then he turned sideways and clapped his hands.

Tanya, escorted by two semi-naked eunuchs emerged from behind a curtain and was escorted to within a couple of feet of the front of the stage. The materials, although hiding the details, still allowed her shape to be discerned. The watchers took this in before they looked at her head and saw the vivid green eyes peering from between the chiffon. Immediately their interest was fuelled. Green eyes were a rarity alone. If the rest of her matched, then she would be a very desirable creature to own!

"Who will start the bidding for this delectable creature?" Osman called out.

Tanya, obeying Osman's instructions, stood immobile, her head held high but with her eyes submissively lowered. At last, she was on display and soon she

would become the property of another. She had seen the initial admiring glances and she was excited by their approval of her body. The bidding was sparse and only of a low value. This was exactly as the eunuch had foretold. She felt the veil removed from her head, allowing her cascade of golden hair to be seen. Immediately the bidding became more active and the price began to rise as the prospective buyers saw that, not only had she green eyes but was also a blonde. She certainly was the rarity they had been promised. As the bids started to fade, Osman slowly removed the material from her chest. As the full luscious firmness of her breasts were displayed the bidding came to life again. Osman signalled to the two assistants, who retired to the rear of the stage, and one stepped forward and handed him a cruel looking whip. He raised it in the air and brought it down on the floor with a sharp 'crack'.

Tanya's body jerked as if struck. This was also the signal for her to begin taking an active part in the sale of her body. Lowering her eyes demurely, her hands reached for her waist. Almost reluctantly, it seemed, she tugged gently at her hips and two veils fell away revealing her long shapely legs. Again the bidding revived. Tanya had listened carefully. The bids now equalled the sum Suleimann had paid the pirate captain for her. It was up to her to see that this figure was at least doubled. As the bidding subsided again, she raised her hands above her head, palms back to back, and slowly turned in a full circle until she again faced the bidders. Clearly hesitating for a few seconds, she stood stationary. Then she slowly lowered her arms until her hands hovered at her waist. Almost as if they knew what was to happen next, she saw the audience crane forward to get a better view. Her fingers seemed to fumble at her waist then the gold chain suddenly came apart and the remaining veils floated to the floor.

As the full extent of her lovely body was revealed, the bidding became frantic. Even some, those who had already dropped out, again joined in. To further stimulate their interest, Tanya stepped forward until she was right on the front edge of the stage. The approval that the audience so clearly showed, filled her with excitement. She was displaying herself, naked, and was astounded to find that she was enjoying it.

"Please buy this unworthy slave, Masters." Her sweet soft voice swept over the bidders as she again raised her hands above her head. "Wouldn't you wish to have this naked body in your bed?" she asked as she slowly turned until she halted with her back to them. "Would you not wish to have this slave's naked back and bottom at your mercy and watch as it was decorated by a cane or whip?" She lowered her hands and parted her hair, drawing it forward over her breasts and exposing the seductiveness of her back and buttocks to their gaze. She completed the turn and pulled her hair back in place. "Masters, I promise that your pleasures would be unbounded as this slave's body strove to fulfil your greatest desires." As she finished speaking, she sank to her knees, spreading them wide apart and pursed her lips as if she were ready to take their manhoods into it.

Suleimann was more than satisfied. Osman had presented the slave perfectly and

the bidding had now more than doubled what he had paid for her. Even the slave had astounded him by the manner in which she had goaded, and seduced, the audience into raising their bids above his expectation. A good return for just a few weeks' effort! He had been surprised with the graceful way she had turned almost as if she were a trained dancer. He almost wished he had decided to keep her for himself and have her trained as such. She would have brought many delights into his life. He was all set for his man to conclude the sale when the slave turned to Osman and looked up at him imploringly.

"My Lords," Osman said, looking out at the audience. "This delicious morsel is not only well trained, as you have seen, she also possesses a certain additional attraction which, I am confident, you will not come across very often. An asset which, when displayed, would please any Master and would be an added attraction at any entertainment he wished to provide for his friends and guests." A buzz of interest swept through the bidders. They had been captivated by the slave's unusual beauty, what other attraction had she to offer? They turned their gaze to the kneeling slave as she raised her head and looked out over them.

Now had come the moment that Tanya had been dreading. The time when she must display her strange attraction. She felt her buttocks begin to clench and relax and a gentle tingling start in her love tunnel. "Master." Tanya began to tremble as she began to make the short speech in which the eunuch had carefully schooled her. "It would appear that I have not been found sufficiently pleasing to my Master's clients." She turned her head and looked up at Osman. "Therefore I humbly beg that I may be punished for being found displeasing. Now, so that all may see an unsatisfactory slave pay for her failure."

"I am certainly far from pleased with you," came the answer for the eunuch.

Osman's words startled the audience even more than the slave's request. It was the first time they had heard a slave girl beg to be flogged. That he should agree when she had displayed herself so well was even more astounding. They watched, speechless, as Osman signalled to his two assistants. They stepped forward, raised the slave to her feet and led her towards the cloth-covered shape. As they stepped back, one pulled the cloth away revealing a high padded stool. Without any command, and keeping her rear to the audience, Tanya draped her body over the stool and spread her feet wide apart. As one assistant tied her wrists to the legs and her ankles to rings set in the floor, the other reached to the back of the stage and took up his position at her side, holding a long thin cane.

Tanya braced herself for the caning to begin. Osman had given her explicit instructions on how he expected her to behave as she was beaten. Already she felt the arousal beginning to tingle in her belly. She felt the coolness of the cane lightly touching her cheeks. That he would order her to be beaten hard, she had no doubt. But no worse than if she disobeyed the precise orders he had given her. She felt the cane leave her skin, heard the loud swish in the silent room and then the sharp report as it laced across, and round, her taut and spread cheeks.

Although she managed to choke back the cry that rose in her throat, a sharp hiss escaped her clenched teeth.

A line of fire seared through her cheeks, to be quickly followed by another and another. Still she managed to stay silent, although her buttocks writhed, most delightfully some of the watchers thought. Then the assistant laid three more searing strokes across her proffered bottom. Even then, she managed not to cry out.

"My lords," Osman's voice drew the audience's eyes away from the girl's behind. "See how well she has been schooled in taking her just punishment. Surely this is an asset to be valued."

The bidding began again and continued as the assistant continued to thrash the bound girl's writhing buttocks. Now, having survived the first six strokes as she had been ordered, Tanya had eased her control and was crying out loud as, with each stroke, the cane raised another line of fire. On the tenth stroke she began to scream.

Osman, in between acknowledging the bids that were being shouted at him, watched the slave carefully out of the corner of his eye. She was performing well and he smiled as he saw her sex lips peel back as the beating stoked the arousal in her belly. He signalled the assistant to stop and took the cane from him. Making sure all the audience could see, he ran the end of the cane down the crease between the slave's buttocks and pressed it against her sex lips. Whether he had ordered it or not, Tanya could not suppress the groan of desire that rose into the air. Then, when he bent and squeezed her breast and nipple, another, even louder groan, sounded in the silent hall. For a moment the bidding had stopped as the clients watched Osman demonstrating the slave's unusual response to pain.

After the fifteenth stroke, Osman signalled to Faisal to pause. He took the cane from the eunuch and handed him the strap. Then Tanya began to scream again as Osman rubbed the cane up and down in her crease as Faisal lashed the strap across her writhing buttocks. Osman had given her instructions to allow the arousal to climax as soon as possible and Tanya willingly obeyed. Not only obeyed but tried hard to bring about the conclusion as soon as she could. As Osman crouched down and squeezed her breast, tweaking the nipple and, at the same time eased his hand under her pubes and pressed a finger into her sex, she felt the arousal soar. In fact it only took a dozen strokes of the strap before her body arched backwards, straining against her bonds as the orgasm raged through her body. With one last cry of satisfaction, her body subsided onto the stool.

Suleimann, together with the audience, had watched in silence, spellbound, as the slave had been beaten. The way her body had responded, ending in the so-clearly seen shattering climax, fascinated them. They had heard of such a thing but few had actually seen it before. Now they clamoured to own such an unusual creature. As Tanya collapsed on the stool, her body drenched in sweat and her buttocks

showing the erotic pattern made by the cane and strap, the bidding suddenly recommenced as each contestant sought to possess the slave. Suleimann saw that the sheikh's Chief Eunuch had joined in the bidding for the first time. The bids rose and rose, and the bidders became fewer and fewer until nobody could match the Chief Eunuch's latest bid. Faisal concluded the sale at this point.

Suleimann rose and waddled to his reception hall to where the Chief Eunuch was escorted. The necessary paperwork was completed and the Certificate of Ownership of the slave was passed over. Tanya had now become the property of Sheikh Ahmed Mulai.

Tanya was in a daze as Osman's assistants released her bonds. Slowly she straightened up and looked at Osman through eyes filled with tears. Tears both of pain and humiliation, but mainly of humiliation at the spectacle she had been forced to make of herself. She saw the wide smile of satisfaction on his face and realised he was more than pleased with the sale. She must have fetched a very good price! Completely ignoring any possible retribution for the act, she frantically rubbed her flaming buttocks with her hands. She turned to face the audience. They had seen her shame, but she was only a slave.

"Thank you, Masters," she spoke with her eyes demurely lowered as her hands continued to rub her bottom, conscious that, at this close distance, they could clearly see the stain of her juices on her thighs.

The two assistants held her by the arms and marched her through the door at the back of the stage. She was taken quickly to the washroom where the jewellery was removed from her arms and ankles. A quick bath followed after which she was hustled to the reception hall where the Chief Eunuch, the transaction completed, waited to take possession of her. He quickly looked her over then tied her wrists behind her back and placed leather cuffs, joined by a short chain, round her ankles. A long black hooded cloak was thrown over her; enveloping her nakedness completely, save for a narrow gauze panel in front of her eyes. He attached a collar and chain round her neck and, with this, led her out to the yard. He lifted her up as if she weighed nothing and laid her over the back of a camel and lashed her wrists and ankles together by passing a rope under the beast's body. He mounted his own beast and, holding the reins of the second camel, set off at a sharp trot.

Tanya, her back bent over the camel, was thankful that the journey did not take long. The dust from the beast's hooves rose into her eyes and mouth, and the constant jarring was aggravating the soreness in her buttocks. They halted at a temporary camp, beside a small oasis and the eunuch released her and dragged her into a tent. The cloak was pulled from her. She looked round and saw several half-naked black men standing surveying her naked body. She was ordered to sit near one of the tent poles and her ankles were chained to it. She remained there, looking at the men as they discussed her. She could not understand the language they used but, by the apparent satisfaction on their faces, she gathered they

approved of their chief's choice.

Tanya was kept chained to the post for the remainder of the day and all through the night. As the men came and went through the tent opening, she was able to see that the camp comprised many heavily armed men, all dressed in the same livery, and a number of camels and horses. There were several carts, which, she assumed, were for transporting the tents and equipment. She was fed and washed by one of the eunuchs and ordered to make use of the bucket they provided. The following morning, still naked, she was loaded into one of the carts, which was covered by black sheeting, and her ankles chained to a metal bar running along the centre. With much shouting and bustling, the caravan set off. Tanya was able to move around in the cart and found that she could see through a gap in the sheeting. For two days and nights the party travelled over the desert until they arrived at their destination.

CHAPTER 5.

It was late on the third day of the journey that Tanya sensed a change in the atmosphere surrounding the caravan. The guards, who she could see through the gap in the sheeting, sat upright in their saddles and seemed more alert than usual. She moved to the front of the cart and, through another gap, saw that they were approaching a high sandstone wall, behind which she could just make out the tops of a large number of buildings. Two heavy wooden doors set in the wall were closed. She heard a challenge called from the top of the wall, which was answered by the man, who she had found out, was the captain of the guard.

The doors opened and the caravan passed through and proceeded along a wide street with stone buildings on either side. Turning a corner, Tanya looked along another long street on either side of which there were shops. Outside some of these, the merchants had laid out their wares and outside some there were craftsmen working on copper and silver objects. The entire place was a hive of industry. At the far end of the street there was an open area on the far side of which another high wall confronted the caravan. Again a challenge was issued and answered and more heavy doors opened to let the travellers through. Tanya heard the doors close with an ominous 'thump' behind them.

Compared with the dust and activity they had passed through, inside the walls everything was quiet and serene. Tanya saw long stretches of luscious green lawns with tall palm trees and flowerbeds full of colourful exotic blooms. Scattered here and there, were a number of beautifully designed pavilions. She could see numerous men working in the gardens and several liveried guards, all heavily armed with daggers and curved swords, striding from one building to another. The caravan made its way round a very large, imposing but delightful building to the rear where the cart was halted and the escort dispersed. The chief eunuch climbed into the cart and released Tanya's ankles from the bar and ordered her to put on the long black cloak. Ensuring that this covered her entirely, he ordered her to climb out.

Shamil - this she had found out was the chief eunuch's name - led her through a door and into the building. They crossed a large marble floored hall to a door on either side of which were armed guards with their scimitars held across their chests. Shamil knocked on the door. A spy hole was opened and then the door swung wide and Tanya was hustled through. The door closed immediately behind them. Two half naked black men stood in front of them, bowing respectfully to the chief eunuch.

"This is the new slave," Shamil informed them, removing the cloak from her body. "Take her and see that she is fully prepared to be presented to the Master."

Tanya followed the two black men until they led her into a large room where one clapped his hands and several older women emerged from beyond another door. The eunuchs gave orders and the women stepped forward and gently took hold of Tanya's arms. She was made to lie along a wide bench while the women depilated her body and limbs, and trimmed her golden bush into a circle with her sex lips shaved so they were on full view. A hot bath followed during which the women scrubbed her all over until her skin glowed. Having dried her thoroughly, she was again laid along the bench while they massaged her with scented oils. Tanya remained docile and obedient while all this was done to her, not daring to quiz the women, although her mind was reeling with questions.

The women ordered Tanya to stand up with her legs wide apart and remain perfectly still. They brushed her hair until it hung in a cascade of waves down her back. They applied cosmetics to her face and outlined her eyes and sex lips with black kohl. Shamil reappeared as they completed this task and inspected their efforts closely. Once he was satisfied, he signalled to one of the women who placed a silver ring on Tanya's head, from which was suspended a circular sheath of chiffon which reached to the floor. Tanya saw her reflection in a long mirror. It was like looking at herself through a fine mist through which her young supple body was just discernible. Shamil turned and ordered his minions to follow him and bring the slave.

Tanya looked in amazement as the chief eunuch led her from one hall to another. The architecture, whilst being completely strange to her, took her breath away by its magnificence. Marble tiles covered the floors and wide pillars of the same stone held up the elaborately decorated ceilings. Every door through which they passed was guarded by two huge, fierce looking men, each holding a bare sword in his hands, and dressed in, what she now realised, was her Master's livery. Tanya was stunned by the sheer opulence of the place and was reminded that the chief eunuch had not even started bidding for her at the auction until the price had surpassed the purses of most of those present.

The chief eunuch eventually halted outside a door on which he knocked. The door swung open and he led her into a large airy room. This was luxuriously furnished and exquisite Persian rugs covered the floor. A large throne-like chair,

set with its back to an open window, was to one side. Shamil, bowing respectfully, led her towards it. She saw a richly dressed man sitting there. Her Master! He studied her as she approached and she saw dark, forbidding eyes set in a stern face. It was a face that belonged to a man who would clearly brook no nonsense from anyone and which made her legs tremble with fear. Obeying the instructions the chief eunuch had given her on the way, Tanya sank to her knees before the seated man and lowered her head to the floor.

"What have we here, Shamil?" the sheikh's voice was deep and commanding.

"A new slave, Master," Shamil replied. "I heard that the slaver, Suleimann had something special on offer and I went to see what this was. At first I was not much impressed until it was demonstrated that this slut had an unusual attraction. It was this that persuaded me to buy her. I thought it might provide some interest for you and entertainment for your guests."

"And what might that be?" the sheikh asked.

There was no indication of interest in his tone and Tanya thought he was bored already. A rich man, such as he, would have many female concubines and slaves and one more would not be of great interest to him.

"Might I suggest that you examine the slut first, Master," Shamil said. "The special talent to which I referred can then be demonstrated to you, if you are still interested."

"As you wish!" the sheikh replied, a bored look entering his heavily hooded eyes.

"Stand, slave," Shamil ordered.

Tanya tried to remember all that Fatima had taught her. She rose gracefully to her feet and stood, facing the sheikh but keeping her eyes demurely lowered and the palms of her hands pressed against the back of her thighs. She felt the eunuch carefully lift the ring from her head and whisk the chiffon curtain from her body.

"Raise your eyes, slave, and look at your Master," Shamil ordered.

Tanya forced her gaze upwards until she looked directly into the sheikh's dark eyes. She began to tremble at the undisguised authority and cruelty she saw glowing there. The sheikh leaned forward and looked hard at her for a moment or two. The harsh expression on his face softened as a smile spread over his mouth. From appearing extremely forbidding, he suddenly appeared handsome and Tanya felt a strange sense of attraction surge through her. Perhaps this man who now owned her was not as bad as her first impression had led her to believe.

"She has emerald green eyes," the sheikh muttered. "A true blonde with green eyes! You have done well, Shamil. But what is this demonstration you

mentioned."

Instead of replying, the eunuch approached the sheikh and whispered in his ear. Tanya saw his eyes light up.

"That is most interesting," he mused. "I would like to see this."

"With your permission, I will proceed with the demonstration." Shamil waited until the sheikh nodded and then clapped his hands.

Tanya stood there trembling. She was sure the 'demonstration' would involve her being beaten. Beaten, not because she had done anything wrong but just to satisfy the sheikh's curiosity! Shamil approached her and whispered in her ear. She felt the blood drain from her face and her legs suddenly felt weak. It was not so much the fact that she was to be beaten that caused this. It was the threat that the eunuch made if she failed to perform properly. There had been sounds of movement in the room and she sensed other persons standing behind her.

"Turn round, slave. Let your Master see your buttocks," Shamil commanded.

Tanya obeyed and her heart sank. In front of her was a heavy wooden stool with a padded top. Straps were fixed to the four legs. Straps to confine her in position whilst she was flogged. Her body jerked suddenly as she felt fingers lightly touching her buttocks. Was he testing to make that she had not been numbed for the beating? Then her eyes caught sight of the cane in the hand of one of the eunuchs. It was longer and thinner than any that she had seen before, and her buttocks instinctively clenched as they anticipated the pain shortly to be inflicted on them. Although she hated and dreaded the cane, she knew her body would, once the pain had reached a certain height, revel in the exquisite sensations that would be aroused in it.

"Proceed, Shamil." She heard the sheikh command.

The two eunuchs moved to her side and grasped her arms. What little pride and self-respect she had been allowed to keep took command. If she were to be flogged, they would not have the pleasure of seeing her struggle as they dragged her to the stool. She shrugged off their grasp and walked slowly towards the place where her beating would be administered. She halted as the stool pressed against her crotch and bent over, spreading her legs wide apart.

Her ankles were tied to a wooden beam attached to the rear legs of the stool and her wrists similarly secured to the front ones.

Shamil crouched down at her side. "This time, slut, you count the strokes out loud, after each, and thank your Master sweetly."

Tanya seethed with indignation. Her soft bottom was to be thrashed and she was

to thank her Master for each stroke! Thank him for the pain that the hated cane would inflict on her! Although Deena had warned her that most masters insisted on it, now that it was actually to happen, it was too much! Rebellion surged through her.

Crack.

Without any warning, the cane lashed round her taut cheeks, the shaft curling round her hips, leaving a line of intense fire in its wake. Her body jerked under the impact and she just managed to stifle the cry of pain and shock that rose in her throat. It seemed to her that the eunuch was certainly laying the strokes on as hard as he could. She turned her head and looked at the eunuch who was flogging her. She trembled as she saw that his eyes held no expression. He was merely carrying out his orders. Neither her nakedness, nor the pain he was to inflict on her soft, young body appeared to have any effect on him.

"One. Thank you Master," Tanya managed to stammer. The first line of fire, and the knowledge that others would follow had dispelled the rebellion.

Crack.

Another line of fire joined the first, making her writhe under the force of the stroke.

"Two. Thank you Master," Tanya whispered through her clenched teeth.

Crack.

She just managed to stay silent, except for a sharp hiss as she expelled the air from her lungs through her clenched teeth. Shamil had said she must take eight strokes in silence. She had only received three and the pain was already testing her control to the limit. How could her soft bottom take another five! How could she stop from screaming as the pain built up?

"Three. Thank you Master."

Crack.

"F-f-four. Thank you Master," Tanya gasped. How could she repress the screams when she had to speak these words after each line of agony was added to her suffering.

Crack.

The tears were flooding from her eyes as her body writhed over the stool, making her pendant breasts swing from side to side. The threat had so far been sufficient to force her to remain silent but she had another three searing strokes to come.

The threat had been that hot irons would be pressed into her tender flesh.

"F-f-five. T-thank you Master," Tanya forced the words from her mouth.

Crack.

"Six. Thank you Master."

Crack.

"Seven. Thank you Master." The words came out in a strangled gasp. Now she had only one more to come before she could give in and scream. Her body writhed against her bonds. Her breasts performed an erotic dance beneath her. She felt sweat break out all over her body. The pain surging through her had spread outwards from her buttocks and the feeling of complete helplessness and domination began to manifest itself in her body. She felt her sex lips start to peel open as she sensed the beginnings of an arousal in her tunnel.

Crack.

"E-e-e-ight. Thank you Master." For the eighth time the rattan cut into her throbbing bottom. A groan of agony escaped her clenched teeth after she had spoken. Would he interpret this as disobedience of his order? Tanya prayed for the next stroke to come quickly, before the scream in her throat echoed round the room.

Crack.

The ninth stroke! Tanya threw back her head, her tear filled eyes turned to the ceiling as a terrible scream echoed the report of the cane against her burning flesh. She felt the sweat running in rivulets down her legs and breasts, dripping from her swollen nipples to form pools on the floor with her tears. She had survived without disobeying the order. Now, how many more times would that hated cane lash her tender body?

The eunuch continued to rain strokes down on her writhing bottom, Each stroke followed by a loud scream. She realised she had stopped counting after the eighth stroke. She may have stayed silent, as ordered, but she had not counted and she had a mental vision of her back being whipped for the omission. The thought sent her arousal soaring out of control. She raised herself up on her toes, just as the cane landed. A line of fire seared across the base of her cheeks, cutting between her thighs and biting her gaping sex.

The sheikh watched as the slave's body arched backwards, like a well drawn bow, as she succumbed to a series of shattering orgasms. The whole display had been most entertaining but the climax, as the slave had thrashed about while the orgasm raged through her had awakened his own libido. He signalled the eunuchs

to leave the room, and, when they had obeyed, rose and stood behind the shuddering girl.

Tanya slowly surfaced through the delicious darkness into which she had fallen. She found she was still tied over the stool. She blinked the tears from her eyes and looked round. She was alone! Then she heard breathing behind her. She looked over her shoulder and saw the sheikh standing behind her. He had removed his clothes and she saw his large erect penis as he leaned towards her. She felt the hot tip against her soaking sex and then it was thrust inside her. Her muscles contracted immediately, gripping it tight, as a moan of desire escaped her mouth.

"It is forbidden to come," he ordered.

Her new master proceeded to take his pleasure of her, sending fresh desires flooding through her body. The arousal the beating had induced had hardly had time to decline and she knew she had not the strength to contain it as it was rekindled. The sheikh was not taking his time and, in a few minutes, his sperm jetted into her body in fierce gusts. But his emission did not come quickly enough for the slave writhing beneath him. As she felt his satisfaction released, her own arousal soared out of control and she sank back into the delicious cloud of black fulfilment.

The first thing Tanya was conscious of as she emerged from the darkness was that she was still secured over the stool. The second was that she had disobeyed her master. Her buttocks were still on fire from the caning and she felt weak and drained from the orgasms that had shattered her body. She shook her head to clear it and tried to look round. The room was empty. How long had she been unconscious, she wondered, and for how long would she be left over the stool? She began to shake as her mind imagined the terrible retribution she would suffer for her disobedience. Never before had she felt so terrified and alone.

She raised her head as she heard the door opened. The eunuch, the one who had flogged her, approached the stool, released her wrists from the bonds and immediately shackled them together. He then released her ankles and ordered her to stand up. She used the top of the stool to ease herself upright. The pain in her bottom seemed to increase in waves as she moved and she silently cursed the eunuch for tying her hands. She would have given anything to be able to rub her bottom and ease the fire raging there. She looked at the eunuch's eyes and trembled as she saw the sternness there.

"My name is Mehmet," he informed her. "The Master and Shamil are both angry with you. First you failed to keep count of the strokes and second you disobeyed the Master when he ordered you not to climax." He paused for a moment as a look of pity entered his eyes. "I have been ordered to take you to Hassan."

He reached out and locked a collar round her neck to which was attached a long lead. With this he led her from the room. Across the hall and along a long

corridor she followed the eunuch until they came to a heavy door. This gave out on to an enclosed yard. Tanya began to shake as she looked round. At various points around the yard were pieces of wooden apparatus, each fitted with rings and chains. She shook even more as she caught sight of a huge black man emerging from a building on the far side of the yard. He wore a pair of baggy trousers and sandals on his feet. Round his waist was a wide leather belt, above which he was naked. The muscles on his chest and arms stood out proudly, rippling as he moved towards them.

"Hassan, my friend!" Mehmet greeted the man. "I have work for you. This slave is guilty of disobedience and is to be flogged, fifteen lashes with the light slave whip." He then whispered something in the giant's ear, which Tanya did not hear.

"I understand," Hassan said as Mehmet stepped back.

Hassan took the lead from Mehmet and led Tanya towards a thick wooden post shaped like the letter 'Y'. He pushed her against the post and, removing the shackles from her wrists, pulled her arms up and out to the top of the frame and locked each wrist to the wood with a padded manacle. A leather strap was pulled tight across the top of her thighs, pinioning her body against the upright. She watched the huge man stride across the yard and disappear inside the building.

Mehmet stood in front of her and put his hands behind her neck. He drew her hair forward and, having rolled it into a ball, stuffed it into her mouth. As a gag it was very effective, muffling the terrified screams she tried to make as she saw Hassan re-emerge from the building carrying a whip in his big hand. From a thick handle, several round strips of leather, some four feet long and each being about a quarter of an inch in diameter, depended.

Mehmet leaned close to her. "Try and relax, little one. It will soon be over. Shamil intended you to get thirty lashes but I persuaded the Master that fifteen would teach you obedience this time. Learn well! I might not be able to help you next time."

Tanya had been watching the huge black man as he reached the frame, her eyes drawn to the whip in his hand. She was to be flogged with it across her back! Faisal had said it would have been thirty lashes, but she couldn't believe she would survive the fifteen she was to get. Hassan disappeared behind her and she shut her eyes tight and pressed her small hands against the wood. Without further warning, she felt a heavy thump across her back. Immediately a terrible fire spread across her shoulders. Her head jerked back and a terrible scream erupted in her throat. Another thump and the fire raged fiercer, then another, then another until she thought her back had been stripped of its skin.

Hassan, an escaped slave from a farm much further south, enjoyed beating white women. His own back still bore the scars of a severe lashing with a bullwhip. The

farmer had done this because his young daughter had lied to him and said that Hassan had tried to touch her. The sheikh had found him wandering in the desert after he had escaped and taken him into his service. He had seen the girl enter the yard and had licked his lips in anticipation of the pleasure to come. Mehmet's whispered instruction had, however, made him curb his enthusiasm. The slave was to be whipped but not permanently marked.

Tanya's body jerked and writhed as the thongs lashed her back. Her screams were deadened by the gag in her mouth but nothing could stop the sweat pouring from her skin as the indescribable agony in her back spread to the whole of her young body. Remorselessly, Hassan laid on the strokes, smiling as he watched the young white naked body writhing each time the thongs laced across her back.. The slave had received eight strokes when she rose up onto her toes just as the thongs were about to administer the ninth. The leathers landed lower down and curled round her side, the ends seeking out, and finding, the succulence of her upraised breast and nipple. The slave's body jerked rigid against the frame and her legs gave way, leaving her suspended by her wrists. The terrible agony in her breast had sapped all the strength out of her and she hung, her slim arms taking all of her slight weight, as the remainder of her punishment was administered. As the last stroke broke across her back, she sank into the merciful release of unconsciousness.

The darkness, into which the flogging had precipitated her, gradually began to disperse. As consciousness began to return, she discovered that she was lying, on her stomach, on something soft. She tried to raise her head and look round.

"Do not try to move," a soft and gentle voice whispered in her ear. "Keep still and let the cream ease away your pain."

Tanya looked up and saw a young face above her. A young face which belonged to an equally young girl.

"Where am I?"

"You are in the recovery room of the Master's harem," the voice replied. "Mehmet had you carried here from the punishment yard. Drink this and then you must rest quietly until you have recovered."

Tanya drank the glass of liquid offered to her and lowered her head down onto the soft pillow. Her back and buttocks hurt terribly, as if hot coals had been laid on her. She remembered the beating with the cane and then being taken to Hassan. Then the fires of hell had seemed to break out all over her back as the whipping had begun. She suddenly felt drowsy and the last thing she was conscious of was the girl's hand gently caressing her hair. Then she sank into sleep.

Tanya had no idea how long she slept. She came awake slowly and eased herself up on her elbows. The pain in her back and bottom, whilst still bad, had subsided

and was now bearable. She heard soft footsteps approaching the bed and saw the young girl draw near.

"How are you feeling now?" she asked softly as she knelt at Tanya's side.

"Much better, thank you," Tanya replied.

"Good!" The girl said, softly. "The cream is really intended to disperse the marks quickly, but it also eases the pain. Lie still, while I apply some more."

Tanya relaxed on the bed as the girl gently rubbed more of the soothing salve on her back and bottom. The girl chatted as she worked.

"My name is Leila and Mehmet ordered me to attend to you when he brought you here yesterday evening. You had a very unpleasant introduction to the Master's service, I'm afraid."

Leila continued to ramble on for a while until she had covered Tanya's bruises with the cream. Once the medication was completed, Tanya managed to turn on her side and look at the girl who had ministered to her. Leila was clearly very young, only eighteen years old she found out later, with a sweet face framed by jet black hair that hung in a fringe in front and fell in a shower down her back. She was dressed in a colourful tiny bolero jacket that hardly covered her full breasts and a pair of loose trousers, clipped in at the ankle, whose opaqueness barely concealed her shapely legs. Her dainty feet were encased in soft slippers.

Her skin was a pale olive.

"If you are feeling up to it," Leila said, "I will show you round the harem and introduce you to the other girls. But first, you had better get some clothes on."

Leila handed Tanya a jacket and a pair of trousers and slippers, similar to her own, then led her out of the room into a large airy and spacious hall. Looking round, Tanya saw that the ceiling was supported on thick marble pillars and open windows gave onto a large garden. There were some three dozen young women reclining on divans and cushions scattered round the room. Whilst their colouring signified that they came from vastly different countries, they all had one thing in common. They were all exceedingly beautiful. Leila first led her to a girl who was watching her intently.

"This is Ayesha," Leila introduced her. "Ayesha is the Master's favourite and is also the First Girl in the harem."

Ayesha signed for Tanya to sit on a cushion at her side. She then proceeded to question the new arrival on her past and demanded to know the reason she had been flogged on arrival. Tanya told her story, leaving nothing out, but unable to stop her face reddening when she explained the reason for her beating. Ayesha

heard her out in silence, and then outlined some of the rules she was now to live by.

"As Leila has explained," Ayesha said. "I am First Girl. I am responsible for keeping the rest of the girls in order. If you behave yourself and do as you are told, life can be very enjoyable. If not, your existence can be very painful. See that eunuch over there?" she pointed to a half naked black man on the other side of the room, who was watching them intently. "There is always one on duty. They are allowed to beat us with the strap, which they carry on their belts, for the very minor offences, but only three strokes through our trousers. That also incurs one black mark against the girl's name, more serious offences are reported directly to Shamil without our being told. And very serious offences are reported immediately by Shamil to the Master and that means a visit to Hassan's yard."

Ayesha was prevented from continuing by a shout from the eunuch. One of the girls rose immediately and approached the eunuch, falling to her knees in front of him. As if to demonstrate Ayesha's words, Tanya watched as the girl rose, turned her back on the man and bent over, grasping her ankles. The eunuch detached the strap from his belt and lashed it across the girl's buttocks three times. The girl remained still and silent. After the third stroke, she rose, turned and knelt again, lowering her forehead to the floor. Tanya heard the girl thank the eunuch before she stood up. As she turned away from him, Tanya could see tears in her eyes and a very concerned look on her face.

"That is the third black mark she has earned this week," Ayesha said. "She had better watch out or it will be a full repayment at the end of the month."

Tanya was introduced to the rest of the girls. When they came to the girl who had just been strapped, Leila explained that she was called Yasmin and was her best friend.

"That is at least three black marks already, Yasmin," Leila whispered. "Try and be good. You still have three weeks to go before the end of the month and you know what happens if you have more than ten marks against your name."

"I know," Yasmin replied. "But that one seems to have it in for me. I don't know why but I think he wants to see me in bad trouble."

"Mansur does seem to like getting us into trouble," Leila said. "But just try and be more careful."

The remainder of the day passed slowly as Tanya became accustomed to the boring existence in the harem. She walked round the garden, marvelling at the exotic flowers and tinkling fountains. Thoughts of trying to escape did enter her head, but she discarded these. The only exit from the harem was through the locked door, which was always guarded by two sentries. Even if she got past these, there were always the dangers of the desert and desert tribes to face. With her

back still sore from her first meeting with a whip, she resigned herself, with grudging reluctance, to a lifetime of incarceration in this luxurious prison.

Towards late evening, the girls started to become excited. They began brushing their hair and repairing their make up. Tanya noticed that more eunuchs had appeared and that the girls continually looked up to a lattice screen in one of the walls. Leila explained that soon, the Master would be seated behind the screen. Then certain girls, already selected, would parade before the screen. From these, the Master would choose which would be sent for to serve him during the night. Any girl who bore evidence of punishment was automatically excluded from the list, Leila informed her, a master did not like to be distracted by weals on a girl's body.

For six days Tanya idled away her time in the harem. After the first day, she became accepted by the other slaves and joined in their chatting and the games they devised to pass away the hours. All the time they were aware of the ever-present eunuchs keeping watch over them. There was one who seemed very young. The first day he was on guard, Tanya nudged the girl nearest to her and asked if he had been castrated like the rest. He seemed too young! She burst out laughing at the thought.

"Tanya. Come here!" the boy shouted across the room.

Following the instructions Leila had told her about, Tanya approached the boy and knelt at his feet.

"What were you laughing about?" the youth demanded sternly.

"Nothing, Sir," Tanya replied, using the correct form of address.

"I think you were laughing at me. Stand up and bend over. Hold your ankles and do not move until I say you may."

Rather than make him angrier by denying his accusation, Tanya did as he ordered. As she gripped her ankles, she felt a shiver of disgust as she realised she was to be beaten, even though it would only be three with the strap, by a youth. She felt him run his hands over her bottom, smoothing out the thin material of her trousers. Young or not, the three strokes with the strap shocked her by the force with which they were lashed across her proffered buttocks. She was so surprised at the force that she had great difficulty in remaining still. She remembered to kneel and thank him and, as she finally walked away, rubbing her small hands over her burning cheeks, she glanced over her shoulder and saw the smile of satisfaction on his face.

It was on her tenth day in the harem that the routine changed. Shamil entered the large room in the early morning and called out eight names, Tanya, Leila and six others. It did not escape her notice that four girls were blonde haired and four

girls had black hair. Under escort by several eunuchs, the girls were conducted from the harem to a large yard enclosed by high walls.

"The Master has ordered that you slaves are to be trained as pony girls," Shamil announced. "You are to be trained to a rider. In two months' time, the Master is attending a meeting of the leaders of other tribes. As part of the entertainment, you will race against teams which the other sheikhs will bring with them. Ali, here," he pointed to a fierce looking man, "is to be your trainer. You will obey him in every detail. Now strip."

The girls quickly shed their flimsy garments and stood naked awaiting the eunuch's next order. Shamil's minions then went about the girls, with bundles of leather strips in their hands. Tanya felt a belt tied round her with metal rings at the sides. A halter was placed over her head with a metal bit in her mouth. From this long reins depended. She had seen horses bridled in this fashion before being attached to the shafts of a carriage. The girls were divided into pairs and a short chain clipped to the rings at their belts. The ends of the reins were tied to rings in a post in the centre of the yard. Keeping the reins stretched taut, the pairs were made to run round the post, keeping in step with each other. The eunuchs, supervised by Ali, stationed outside the circle, kept the girls moving correctly with short whips which they flicked at the bare buttocks as they passed by.

Ali drove the girls remorselessly. It was his intention that they would win the contests. Dire threats were made about how any girl, who did not perform satisfactorily, would suffer. The girls ran round the circuit time after time, until he was satisfied with both their gait and ability to move in unison. The pairings were chopped and changed about until he had matched the best girls in pairs together. On the second day heavy wooden logs were attached by chains to the rings in the belts at their waists. What had been quite an easy exercise now developed into a trial of stamina. At the end of the first week, two girls were eliminated and sent back to the harem. From the remaining six, four would be finally chosen to form the master's team. At the end of the second week two more girls were eliminated leaving only two blonde and two black haired girls, which included Tanya and Leila.

As the slaves were returned to the harem quarters at the end of the second week, they were informed that there would be no training the next day. On reaching their quarters, Shamil appeared and informed the slaves that they would be redeeming their black marks the following morning. The atmosphere in the harem changed from its normal light heartedness to one of expectant dread. It was the practice for the girls not to be told the tally of marks against their names in advance and there were many quivering stomachs as they settled down for the night. The following morning, Ayesha took Tanya aside and explained the routine that would be followed for the redemption parade.

"The girls are called forward, beginning with those with the lowest score," Ayesha informed her. "Any with eight black marks, or less, have to lower their trousers

and bend over holding their ankles. They must take their strokes without moving. They also have to count the strokes out loud after each and thank the Master for it. If they fail to keep still, or miss count, they are called back again later for extra strokes. Those with more than eight have to strip naked and lay along a bench to which they are strapped. These girls do not have to count the strokes nor thank the Master after each."

Tanya assimilated the information with dread. Apart from the floggings on the boat and at the auction, she had not been publicly beaten and was nervous about others seeing how her body had been trained to react. She knew she had earned at least three black marks but she had no idea how many more had been set against her name, if any. She was well aware that discipline in the harem was strict. It was, therefore, a very nervous gathering that waited for the dreaded summons.

One of Shamil's senior eunuchs entered the harem and ordered the slaves to line up and follow him. He led the file to another part of the building and they entered a long hall and were ordered to kneel along one side. The sheikh entered, followed by Shamil carrying a board on which the girls' fates were etched, and sat on a raised throne at the end of the hall. Several eunuchs entered, some carrying a long bench, which they set down sideways on to the throne, and others carrying canes. Tanya gasped as she saw that at least two of these were very long and slender.

"Proceed, Shamil," the sheikh ordered.

"The following slaves have earned no black marks," the chief eunuch announced, consulting the list.

As each girl's name was called, Ayesha among them, she rose and knelt in front of the throne, facing into the hall. Each had a look of relief on their faces. Shamil then called out one single name. The girl so named, rose and walked to stand facing the throne. She fell to her knees and bowed her forehead to the floor.

"Five marks!" Shamil announced.

Tanya watched as the girl rose, turned her back on the throne and took six steps forward. She lowered her trousers until they fell to the floor and then bent over. She straightened her legs and grasped her ankles tight. One of the eunuchs, holding one of the shorter canes moved to her side. Five times the cane lashed across the girl's buttocks. She rocked back and forth under the impact but still managed to hold her position, call out the strokes, and thank her Master, as each seared round her cheeks. After the last stroke, Shamil ordered her to rise. The girl straightened and, picking up her discarded trousers, walked to the throne and sank to her knees.

"Thank you, Master, for my punishment," she stammered through her tears and

returned to her kneeling position in line.

Shamil called out several names and each girl went through the same procedure, the number of strokes ranging from five to eight. Tanya was pleased when Leila's friend, Yasmin, was called forward for only six strokes. All the slaves managed to keep count and take their beating without moving, although one or two cried out as the last few strokes were laid on. Tanya, disturbed that her name had not yet been called, heard Leila called forward. She sank to her knees and lowered her forehead to the floor.

"Leila is guilty of disrespect. The punishment is to be delivered with the long cane," Shamil pronounced. "Five double strokes."

Tanya watched as her friend stood up and turned her back on the sheikh. Her face was white with fear. She slowly walked the paces forward, lowered her trousers and kicked them to one side. She placed her feet wide apart and bent over. Instead of gripping her ankles, she leaned slightly forward and placed the palms of her hands flat on the floor. Once she had gained her balance she straightened her legs, but her buttocks were already clenching and relaxing as they anticipated the beating to come. Tanya just managed to suppress a gasp of horror as two eunuchs, each armed with a long cane, took up their position to either side of the bent slave.

The eunuchs raised their arms and lashed the canes across the offered buttocks, one landing almost at the same second as the other. Leila rocked forward under the impact and a sharp hiss of pain escaped through her clenched teeth. She called out the first two strokes. Three more times the eunuchs lashed the long thin canes across Leila's bottom. The slave managed to call the count for two of them but, as the canes struck for the fifth time, she staggered forward, her hands flying round to rub her bottom. She forced herself upright, Tanya saw a terrified look on her friend's face as she sank to the floor before her master and thanked him, as the previous girls had done.

"You moved and failed to count properly," the sheikh said. "For that you will receive further punishment. Return to your place."

Leila, walking gingerly, made her way back to her position in the line and knelt.

"Tanya," Shamil called out.

Her turn had come. Trying hard to hide the trembling in her legs, Tanya approached the throne, knelt and placed her forehead on the floor.

"Twelve marks."

Tanya heard the chief eunuch pronounce her sentence with horror. What had she possibly done wrong to have earned twelve marks? She rose to her feet and

removed her flimsy garments. A eunuch took her arm and led her to the bench. For the first time she noticed that the bench was not flat as she had expected. It was in the shape of a shallow inverted 'V'. Obeying the eunuch's orders, she laid her body along the bench so that her hips were directly over the apex of the shape. Her arms were pulled forward and strapped to the front legs. She nearly cried out with terror as her legs were pulled apart and bent so that a wooden bar was laid across the back of her knees under the bench. Her feet were then pulled up over the top of the bench and her ankles secured with straps. She looked over her shoulders and saw one of the eunuchs approaching with one of the long thin canes in his hand.

Tanya shook with fear as she realised her young bottom was to be lashed a dozen times with that wicked implement. Anticipation of the pain to come, and the feeling of utter helplessness, began working on her body. Already, she could feel the beginnings of an arousal in her stomach. She gripped the wooden legs and clamped her teeth tight shut.

Thwack!

A line of exquisite agony flared in her bottom, making her writhe against her in bonds. The cane had struck on the lower section of her cheeks - the softest and most tender part of her bottom. She managed to choke back the cry of pain that welled up in her throat. At least she did not have to count the strokes!

Thwack.

Crack.

The wicked rattan curled across her writhing cheeks sending sheets of agony coursing through her bottom and into her body. She felt the arousal intensifying. Her body had been taught to respond in this fashion but her pride and self-respect fought to contain the urge. She could not bear the humiliation of the other slaves seeing her condition but her wide spread thighs would make this impossible to conceal!

Thwack.

Crack.

Crack.

Tanya cried out loud each time as the cane struck. She felt a fine sweat break out over her body as it struggled against the confining bonds. The disgrace threatening in her sex tunnel escalated. She had only received half her punishment and already she felt tiny droplets seeping from her sex lips. She silently prayed that the other slaves would not notice!

Thwack.

A scream of pain and horror escaped her open mouth as the eunuch changed his aim. The cane had lashed downwards across her left cheek and the end had cut into her sensitive sex lips. The arousal soared inside her.

Crack.

Thwack.

Two more strokes landing alongside the previous one added to her torment. The pain in her bottom, and especially her sex was beyond her endurance. She wanted to scream for mercy! Not to be hit there again! Her body was writhing and bucking on the bench, the motion increasing the pressure on her belly making the arousal worse. Three more strokes to come and she must, just must, contain her body's conditioned response.

Thwack.

Crack.

Thwack.

Fortunately, the eunuch had adjusted his aim and these last three strokes laced across the centre of her bottom. The pain was exquisite and she writhed and screamed as the rattan bit into her bruised and swollen cheeks. She felt her bonds released. Using the bench for leverage, she forced her pain-racked body to her feet and tiptoed to stand in front of her master. As she sank to her knees, she noticed a knowing smile on his face. He had guessed her body's dilemma and it had amused him.

"Thank you, Master, for my punishment," Tanya forced the words from her mouth. She gathered up her discarded garments and returned to her position in line. As her heels sank into her throbbing bottom, a faint groan escaped her lips.

She had to remain there, kneeling with her heels aggravating the pain in her buttocks while five more slaves were flogged over the bench. She winced each time the cane struck bare flesh and, selfishly, was relieved when each girl screamed after the third stroke. The last girl returned to her place in line and Tanya waited for the order to rise and return to the harem. But there was one more punishment to come.

"Leila. Stand forth!" Shamil commanded.

Tanya watched as her friend rose and went and knelt before the throne. Already, her buttocks were badly bruised and swollen.

"You moved whilst under punishment and failed to completed the count," Shamil's high-pitched voice thundered in the hall. "Your offence of disrespect was very serious and yet the Master had generously showed leniency. You showed your gratitude by disobedience. Rise and strip."

Leila, shaking visibly, stood up and removed her bolero. Her trousers already lay on the floor at her side.

"The Master has ordered that you be spread and your back and buttocks lashed with five lashes of the whip each." Shamil signalled to four of his minions.

Leila was seized by the arms and dragged to the centre of the room. She was forced to her knees and each of her wrists and ankles seized by a eunuch. Her arms and legs were pulled taut, stretching her spread-eagled on the floor. Another eunuch knelt by her head and, winding her long hair into a loose plait, pulled it above her head. Her back and buttocks were now ready for the attentions of the lash. Shamil removed his embroidered jacket, displaying his muscular arms and chest and took a long lashed whip from his assistant. Leila had turned her head and saw him approaching and began to struggle.

The long thong hissed as it slithered along the floor behind the eunuch. There was a swishing sound as the leather thong sped through the air and landed with a resounding 'crack' across the slave's buttocks. A scream of agony rent the air as her body jerked off the floor as a heavy raised weal was etched on the bruised cheeks. The next stroke was laid across her pale back, raising another ugly weal. The eunuchs struggled to retain their grip on her limbs as, one by one, her bottom and back absorbed the remainder of her punishment. Tanya dared to glance at the sheikh as the whip lashed her friend's body and cringed as she saw the sadistic smile on his face.

The punishment parade over, the sheikh rose and left the room. Two of the girls who had not been beaten helped Leila to her feet and gently assisted her back to the harem. The slaves set about attending to each other's bruises, applying cream and soothing lotions. Tanya, dismissing any aid for herself, attended to her friend. At close quarters, she was astounded to see that, whilst the whip had raised terrible welts on her friend's back and bottom, the skin had not been broken.

There was no training for the slaves the next day and they rested, allowing their bodies to recover from their beatings.

CHAPTER 6.

The training for the remaining four slaves recommenced two days after the punishment parade. The four remaining girls, who were to be entered in the contests, were assembled in the enclosed yard. Instead of the harness they had previously worn, now they were girdled with something different. A wide leather belt was fitted round their waists, with straps attached at the back and front,

which were adjusted over their shoulders. From the belt, stirrups hung on either side. The usual bridle was placed over their heads with the metal bit between their teeth.

Once Ali was satisfied that they were correctly kitted out, he signalled to one of his minions. The eunuch opened a door in one of the walls and called out. Four young boys entered the yard, each carrying a thin cane. They appeared to have been chosen carefully. All were no more than four feet tall and were slight in build. They walked slowly towards where the slaves stood, eyeing them closely. Tanya, conscious of her nakedness, felt her face redden under their intense gaze.

The young boys separated and each approached one of the girls. Tanya looked at the one nearing her and saw a determined look on his face. He picked up the reins from her bridle and, putting a foot on one of the stirrups, hoisted himself on to her back. His other foot stood in the other stirrup and Tanya felt his knees close tight against her sides, pushing her breasts together. The boy weighed little and she had only to lean forward slightly to maintain her balance. Ali inspected the result. The four girls were the 'ponies' and the boys the 'jockeys'. Tanya felt her rider take up the slack on the reins, pulling the bit hard back in her mouth.

A circuit had been marked out in the yard by a series of wands wedged into the sand. One by one, Ali made the girls trot round this to get used to the boy on her back. Then the training began in earnest. The mounts were paired off and raced round the track. Tanya found that she could run quite easily, even with the boy standing in the stirrups. At first, there was no pressure on the girls to hurry but, once they had become accustomed to their burden, Ali ordered the boys to increase the pace. It was then that the girls felt the sting of the canes on their flanks as the boys urged them on to greater efforts. Round and round the track the girls raced until their legs gave way beneath them.

Tanya lay, gasping for breath, on the sand and watched Ali approach. The boy handed him the cane and Ali stood flexing it in his hands as he ordered her to rise. Trying hard to catch her breath, Tanya obeyed and waited for the order to bend for the inevitable thrashing. To her surprise, Ali merely handed the cane back to the boy and ordered him to remount and take her round the track five more times. The threat had not been missed and Tanya ran as fast as she could until, at the end of the fifth lap, she again collapsed on the sand.

This training went on for several days at the end of which the sheikh appeared to judge the slaves' performance. The four girls raced round the track, the boys on their backs encouraging them with the canes, until the sheikh ordered them to halt and kneel in front of him.

"Well done, Ali," he said, looking down on his naked slaves. "The slaves are to be kept fit with regular practising until the day of the gathering. Do not overwork them though, I want them at their best on the day."

At the end of the training session, the girls were taken back to the harem. Tanya lay along a bench while other slaves massaged her aching limbs and body with scented oils, easing away the stiffness. A hot bath, followed by more massaging, completed their treatment and they were then ordered to rest. This routine went on for days as the time for the sheikhs' gathering neared.

It was the day that the training session ended early that Tanya was faced with her next ordeal. For the first time, she was among those that Shamil selected for the evening parade. She had been massaged and bathed and the strain of the practise session had eased from her body. It was with a mixture of excitement and trepidation that Tanya took her place in line in front of the lattice. Without raising her head, she endeavoured to glance up through her eyelashes to where she knew the Sheikh would be studying the line. Her body longed to be used and she hoped that, although this was her first appearance in the line, she would be selected to serve the master. That this might involve a beating she had no doubt, but the yearnings in her body had been building up demanding to be satisfied.

It was some time after the parade that Shamil sought her out and ordered her to follow him. She was taken to a different part of the building, on the far side of the harem adjoining the master's rooms. Two women depilated her body, even her golden bush, bathed and massaged her with scented oils. Then cosmetics and a subtle perfume were applied to her face and body. Shamil made her drink a sweet yellowish potion to stop her 'falling' when the master used her. Tanya submitted passively to all these attentions. Would he be pleased with her? Would he allow her own needs to be fulfilled? Would she be beaten? These thoughts raced through her mind as Shamil inspected her naked body and then ordered her to follow him from the room.

He led her into a large spacious room with luxurious furnishings. She noticed a large bed, with an intricate metal frame at the head and foot, covered in a mass of cushions. To one side, there was a high padded stool with a cane lying across the top. Tanya's heart missed a beat as she saw this. She hated canes and the pain that they inflicted on her young soft body. Yet they also induced the most delightful sensations. Even the stinging encouragement from the cane wielded by her 'jockey' had been known to sow the seeds of an arousal in her tunnel.

"Kneel at the foot of the bed, facing it, with your hands raised and gripping the frame." Shamil ordered.

Tanya obeyed, reaching up and grasping the cool metal with her small hands. She felt something, long and thin, draped over her shoulders and, looking down, saw that this was the thong of a whip. Her body began to tremble.

"Do not, under any circumstances, move until you are given permission," she heard Shamil order.

The door to the room was opened and closed. She sensed that she was now alone.

The feel of the whip dangling down her back and the memory of the cane lying on the stool sent shivers of dread and anticipation through her body. She racked her brain to remember the teaching she had received from Fatima so long ago. It was essential that she pleased the sheikh, her master. Not only to avoid punishment but in the hope that if he was sufficiently pleased with her he might allow the needs rising in her body to be satisfied. She heard the door open and close and the sound of approaching footsteps. Her master came into view as he stood at the side of the bed. The embroidered kaftan slipped from his body and he lowered himself down on the bed.

"You may begin," he ordered.

Tanya rose and quickly stepped to the side of the bed. She glanced sideways at his face and saw a pair of dark eyes watching her. The expression on his face told her nothing. It was almost as if he was undergoing something repugnant but which was expected of him. She lowered her eyes and looked at his body. It was not fat and bloated like Suleimann's but the hardness that had once been there was beginning to soften. Her eyes sought his penis and she caught her breath. Even in its present state of repose, it seemed massive and she quailed at the thought that soon, when it had grown and hardened, it would be forcing an entry into her small opening.

She lowered herself to the bed and began to stroke and kiss the inside of his ankles. Slowly she eased her way up the calves of his legs to his knees. As she gently kissed and licked she reached forward, her fingers seeking his sac and manhood. Concentrating on Fatima's teaching, she slowly made her way up the insides of his thighs, kissing and lightly licking at the hairs growing there. All the while her fingers were softly teasing his sac and penis. Slowly the latter began to stiffen and grow and she sensed his breathing begin to quicken. Her nostrils picked up the aroma of his passion as she raised her head and kissed the crown of his shaft. It felt hot and pulsated gently. She was almost taken by surprise when she felt his hands stroke the top of her head. Was this a good sign or a reminder to improve her efforts, she wondered?

She felt the thong of the whip, that had remained looped round her shoulders, removed as she eased her way further up the bed between his spread legs and closed her lips over the crown of his shaft. It was now hard and swollen, fully distended, and, as she slid her lips down towards the mass of hair, she felt the pulsating increase and the organ heat up. She concentrated on manipulating him for as long as she could, bringing him to the brink of a climax then letting it subside for a few minutes before working him up again. She felt the telltale signs just in time! She increased her efforts, moving her mouth up and down the throbbing shaft as her fingers teased and stroked its base and the heavy sac beneath. Suddenly his body arched rigid under her as, with a cry of release, he jetted his sperm into the depths of her throat.

When she felt his passion was spent, Tanya licked him clean, watching his

erection slowly decline, and sank to her knees at the side of the bed, swallowing the last drops of his emission. She waited, trembling, to find out if she had been satisfactory or not. Her own body was in a state of arousal and she felt the stirrings in her tunnel. She sensed rather than saw him slowly raise his himself up on to his elbows and stare at her.

"Stand and fetch the cane," he ordered.

The moment she had dreaded had arrived. He was going to beat her! Tanya stood at the side of the bed, cane in hand, and awaited his next order.

"Stand over there," he said, pointing to a spot a few feet away from the side of the bed. "Back to me. Now bend over and hold the cane against your behind."

Completely baffled at the order, Tanya obeyed. The cane felt cool against her flesh and her cheeks quivered in anticipation of the caning he was about to give her. His next order astounded her, both by its unexpectedness and the humiliation it conveyed.

"Now beat yourself."

Tanya was immobile for a moment or two. This was too degrading but she had no option but obey. How could she do it? She sensed his impatience and, fearing a proper thrashing for disobedience, changed her grip on the cane. She steeled herself and, flicking her wrist, began to hit her bottom with the cane. At first, she could not get the hang of it, the cane laced across her thighs and legs until she managed to get her aim right. There could be no power behind her wrist but the sting that she caused in her cheeks was not her imagination. She kept this up for some minutes, her face flushed with the effort and the shame that the action aroused in her. She felt debased and only the thought of the whip, now lying at the side of the bed, induced her to try and do the distasteful task properly.

"Stop. Come and resume," the sheikh ordered.

Thankfully, Tanya straightened up and replaced the cane on the stool. She approached the bed and, obeying her master's order, straddled his body. His penis had hardened again and she slowly lowered her body until the tip pressed against her sex. She was surprised to find that her lips were open and already moist. She pressed down, feeling the shaft enter her sending delicious sensations through her tunnel. She began to ride him, easing her muscles up and down his manhood, feeling it grow even harder and fill her tunnel until she feared it would tear her. Again, she concentrated on giving him pleasure for as long as she could, despite the raging needs in her own belly. At last she felt him arch under her and increased her efforts until his sperm jetted deep into the recesses of her body. As his organ became flaccid, she dismounted and licked him clean. She knelt, in trepidation, at the side for the bed for some time, awaiting his verdict on her performance.

"That was very good, slave," she heard him say and relief surged through her. "But I detected that your body was also filled with desire. Do you wish those needs satisfied?"

"If my Master so pleases," Tanya answered softly. "What price would he demand?"

"You have been well trained in the art of giving pleasure and I understand that you have also been well trained in taking a beating. Is that so?"

"I have been trained, yes, Master," Tanya replied. "Whether my Master would consider that I have been well trained I do not know." She began to tremble as she guessed what was to follow next.

The sheikh eased himself into a sitting position on the bed. "Fetch me the cane," he ordered. "If you can take ten strokes in silence and without moving, I will grant your wish and satisfy your needs."

Tanya rose to her feet and handed him the cane. She looked round for something to bend over.

"Over there, in the centre of the room where I can get a good swing at you," the sheikh ordered.

Tanya walked slowly to the centre of the room and halted. Placing her feet wide apart, she bent over and gripped her ankles tight. She needed the desires raging in her body satisfied and, somehow, she must endure what was to come. She heard her master rise and move to her.

"Keep perfectly still," he ordered as he ran his hand lightly over her taut cheeks. "You will count each stroke out loud and thank me for it. Other than that, if you remain still and silent, your needs will be attended to."

Tanya, out of the corner of her eye, saw him take his position at her side. Her bottom quivered as he held the cane against her cheeks.

"Are you ready, slave?"

"Yes, Master," Tanya replied. "Please beat your slave." She tightened her grip on her ankles as she felt the cane removed.

Crack.

A line of fire erupted in her bottom as the rattan curled round both cheeks. "One. Thank you Master" she hissed through her clenched teeth.

The cane bit into her cheeks, making her rock back and forth on her feet, as her

master lashed it across his slave's bottom. After each, Tanya called out the count and thanked him. The pain built up rapidly, fuelling the arousal that surged in her body. Line after line of fire seared its path across her cheeks as the count mounted. She managed to keep hold of her ankles but, as each stroke landed, she felt the force threatening to make her fall forward and break position. She wanted desperately to scream as the seventh stroke fired her needs but she was determined not to lose control. As she called out the count for the tenth stroke, she inwardly breathed a sigh of relief. She had survived and the arousal surging through her would now be satisfied.

"Go and lie on the bed. Legs spread wide and keep your eyes shut," the sheikh ordered.

Tanya straightened up and turned towards the bed. She was dismayed to see that the sheikh had put his kaftan back on. He was going to break his promise! She lay on the bed, spreading her legs wide apart as he had ordered. What was he going to do to her? Surely he would not make her come by whipping her across her sex? She heard the door opened and the sound of a gong being struck. There was the sound of a whispered conversation, then a dreadful silence. She felt her body shaking with fear.

"Ah! Captain," she heard the sheikh's voice across the room. "I promised you a reward for your good service. There it is! Enjoy yourself!"

Tanya heard hurried footsteps cross the room and the sound of garments being discarded. She eased her eyelids slightly apart, just in time to see a naked man climb onto the bed. He was quite young with a hard muscled body. His penis was already hard and swollen in anticipation of the pleasure to come. She felt him lower his body on to hers and, instinctively, reached for his organ and directed it between her waiting lips. He thrust his penis deep into her and began to use her, sending her own arousal soaring.

"Do not come until he does," she heard her master's voice in her ear. He was watching her being taken!

Fortunately, the man was not able to control his desire for long. It was almost an unheard of honour to be given one of the master's slaves to use! He pumped up and down on the soft body under him, her legs curled round him holding his hard body tight to her own. Suddenly, with a sharp cry of triumph, he thrust deep into her, she felt his sperm jet into her and as her body arched under him and shuddered, one orgasm after another flooded through her. Some sixth sense managed to keep the threatened darkness at bay as her needs were satiated. The man collapsed at her side and, as he gradually recovered, she leaned over him and cleansed him. She slid to her knees at the side of the bed as the man replaced his clothing and, after thanking the sheikh, departed.

"You enjoyed that, slave?" the sheikh said, standing at her side.

"Yes, thank you Master," Tanya answered.

"Good. Stand in the middle of the room and bend over again."

Hardly able to believe that he was going to beat her again, Tanya obeyed. She bent over in the centre of the room, her legs wide apart and her hands gripping her ankles. She began to shake in terror as she watched him pick up the whip. She saw his arm rise high as the thong snaked along the floor behind him. She stifled the scream that rose in her throat and shut her eyes tight. She heard the lash whistle through the air, the sharp report of the impact as the leather struck her taut flesh and felt a line of sheer agony flare up in her already sore bottom.

A shrill scream echoed round the room as her tortured body fell forward and she curled up on the floor, shaking and writhing, her small hands clutching where the lash had raised a heavy weal on her bottom. Slowly she forced herself upright and bent over again, waiting for the next stroke. How many was she going to have to take? She heard the door open.

"Shamil. You may return the slave to the harem. See that her backside is attended to," the sheikh ordered.

Relieved that her bottom was not to suffer more torment; one with the whip had hurt enough, Tanya followed the chief eunuch back to the slaves' quarters where he ordered one of the girls to deal with her buttocks. Tanya had a quick bath to remove the stains from her thighs and the sweat from her body and then lay on a bed while the girl rubbed soothing balm into her sore cheeks. Although it was virtually unknown for a girl to return to the harem with weals on her buttocks - if she had been found displeasing she would normally be sent to Hassan the next morning - the girl refrained from questioning Tanya.

Enough time had elapsed since her capture by the pirates, and her education had been swift and remorseless, for Tanya to have fully appreciated the extent to which a slave could be, and was, owned by her Master. It seemed a lifetime since that fateful day of the pirates' attack on the ship and since then she had been slowly but surely indoctrinated into the status of a slave. No longer did she think of her body as her own. It was now the property of any man who was her master and he could do whatever he desired with it. She had suffered many beatings, had endured sessions where the needs of her body had been so cruelly denied, and thought she was fully conversant with the extent of pain a man could inflict on her. She had been thoroughly exhausted from the evening's events and, with these thoughts floating in her mind, she fell into a deep sleep.

If she had thought she had seen and endured the worst a man could do to a slave, she was to find out, the next morning, that she was thoroughly mistaken. When she awoke, there was a dreadfully strained atmosphere in the harem. The normally cheerful girls were unusually silent and the number of eunuchs watching

over them had doubled. It was only when one of the eunuchs clapped his hands and ordered the slaves to line up, that Tanya realised two of the girls were missing. The slaves followed the eunuch through the building to the hall where the monthly punishment sessions were held and knelt in a line along one side.

Still unaware of what was to take place, Tanya covertly looked round the hall. Where the bench usually stood there were now two sets of beams mounted on thick wooden legs. Each set consisted of a short narrow rounded beam and a longer one, slightly lower than the first and about two feet away. The sets had been placed close together so that the longer beams faced each other. Placed on stools nearby were two bundles of very thin rattan rods. Tanya felt her buttocks clench with fear just at the sight of these cruel looking implements. It was clear that someone was to be terribly beaten - she just prayed that it would not be her. The thought of her soft cheeks being flogged with those bundles of rods was beyond her comprehension. A door opposite the kneeling line opened and several eunuchs entered, dragging two naked slave girls. Tanya immediately recognised them as two who were either arguing with each other or at other times whispering and giggling in secluded parts of the harem.

The two were led to the throne, where the sheikh had taken his place, and thrust to the ground. The slaves lay flat on their stomachs with their legs straight behind them and their arms stretched sideways. Their rounded buttocks trembled.

"These two sluts," Shamil, standing behind the sheikh, broke the silence that had fallen in the hall. "Were caught indulging in sexual relations with each other. Such behaviour will not be tolerated. Let their punishment be a warning to you all. Any repetition of this offence, by any of you, will be dealt with in the same manner," he looked round at the assembled slaves. "Ayesha. Step forward."

Visibly trembling, Ayesha walked forward and knelt before her Master.

"As First Girl you are responsible for the behaviour in the harem," Shamil continued. "You have failed to do your duty. Prepare for punishment."

Ayesha quickly removed her scanty garments and knelt before the sheik. Her face had drained of colour and she was shaking.

"Your punishment will be twenty strokes," Shamil pronounced gravely. "If you permit this offence to be repeated, you will be sent to the breeding pens." He looked towards where the eunuchs were standing. "Proceed, Hassan."

The huge eunuch stepped forward and grabbing Ayesha by her long hair pulled her to her feet. He dragged her towards the nearer of the sets of beams. Ayesha bent over the narrow beam so that her buttocks were facing the gathered slaves and spread her arms along the farther. Two eunuchs secured her ankles and wrists and stepped back. Meanwhile, Hassan had taken a short whip, with a thick thong, from one of the eunuchs and approached the bent girl. Tanya gasped

silently as she saw what the girl was to be flogged with.

Hassan's arm rose and the heavy thong whistled through the air and landed with a terrible 'thwack' across Ayesha's buttocks. The girl's body jerked violently on the impact and a strangled gasp escaped her clenched teeth. She only managed to survive three strokes before a shrill scream followed the fourth. Heavy raised ridges stood out about the girl's olive skin, each one rapidly turning dark red. By the time ten weals decorated her buttocks, Ayesha was screaming loud and long and her body was already drenched in sweat. A dreadful silence, broken only by the sound of the lash falling and the girl's agonised screams, had fallen in the hall.

Tanya watched in terrible fascination as Ayesha's buttocks received the strokes of her punishment, one by one. Rapidly her buttocks became covered in weals, swollen and throbbing. The girl screamed and screamed, even after the last stroke had curled round her pain-racked cheeks. At last her ordeal was over and her bonds were released. She sank to the floor, her small hands gently rubbing her behind as she crawled across the floor. She halted before her master and, bowing her head, thanked him for her punishment.

"Return to your position," Shamil ordered.

Still not trusting her legs to support her slight weight, Ayesha crawled back to the group of slaves. They could see the pain showing clearly in her eyes that streamed with tears. Her body was glistening with the sweat that still poured from her skin.

Shamil cleared his throat and all eyes turned to him. He looked down on the two prone slaves whose bodies were shaking with terror. They had heard Ayesha being flogged, had heard her screams, knowing that their fate would be far worse.

"The offenders are to be flogged with fifty strokes and then will be sent to the breeding pens where they will remain. Any repetition of their offence will be punished with the 'snake'.

Further, any other slaves caught indulging themselves in this manner will be punished with fifty lashes of the 'snake' before being committed to the breeding pens." He looked sternly at the kneeling slaves. "Proceed, Hassan."

The kneeling slaves gasped at the eunuch's words. They were all well aware of the nature of the 'snake'. A long heavy plaited whip whose lash was some six feet in length. One stroke of this across the back of a man could cut to the bone. What it would do to the tender soft flesh of a young girl did not bear thinking about.

"Prepare the slaves for punishment. The kiss of repentance!" Shamil ordered.

Hassan signalled to two of his assistants who pulled the two girls to their feet and dragged them to the bars. They were bent over the shorter beam and their legs spread wide and shackled to rings in the floor. They were pushed forward until

their shoulders rested on the longer beam, their arms stretched along its length and secured with straps over their wrists and upper arms. Two eunuchs grasped a handful of the girls' hair and pressed their faces together, mouth to mouth, and bound them tight to each other. Thus the two slaves were forced to kiss each other as their punishment was carried out.

"Fifty strokes each," Shamil announced. "Proceed."

As two heavily muscled eunuchs moved forward and picked up the bundle of rattan rods, Tanya stole a look at the sheikh's face. She shuddered with disgust at the sheer sadistic smile that played on his mouth as he leaned forward to watch the agony that was about to be inflicted on his two slaves.

In unison, the eunuchs' arms rose high in the air and brought the rods whistling down on the smooth contours of the waiting behinds. The report of the impact echoed round the room and both girls jerked as a sheet of agony exploded in their bottoms. Not daring to look away, Tanya watched as the eunuchs lashed the rods down ten times across the writhing bottoms. The girls' screams were muted as each yelled their pain down the throat of the other. After the tenth stroke, the eunuchs stood back and handed the rods to another pair of equally strong associates.

Another ten strokes were applied to the shuddering backsides. The girls were writhing violently, struggling against their bonds. Their bodies, jerking violently with each stroke, were flowing with sweat and their buttocks were now a mass of dark lines etched on an angry red and swollen surface that had, just a few moments ago, been a pale white. The watchers could now hear, clearly, the screams coming from the suffering slaves each time the rods laced across their cheeks.

After the twentieth stroke had been applied, the eunuchs handed the rods back to the previous pair. This enabled the pairs to rest after applying ten strokes and would ensure that their arms did not tire. There was to be no element of mercy shown in the punishment. The first pair commenced to lay on the next ten strokes. Only five of these had landed when Tanya saw that the bottoms of both girls showed bright red lines where blood had been drawn. By the time the third quota had been delivered, thin lines of bright red were running down over the girls' buttocks and onto their thighs.

As the eunuchs stood back, Shamil gave a signal and the straps securing the slaves' heads were removed.

The second pair of eunuchs had once again taken up their position and Tanya cringed as, in unison, they raised their arms. She felt a violent shudder pass through her body when, instead of the rods lashing the girls' behinds, they landed across their shoulders. Immediately thin lines of bright red showed on the pale skin where the stroke had landed. Even shriller screams echoed round the hall as,

one by one, the remaining twenty strokes of the slaves' punishment was meted out across their backs.

The punishments having been completed, the kneeling slaves were ordered to rise and return to the harem, escorted by the eunuchs. Tanya never saw the two flogged slaves again. She waited until she and Leila were alone and asked the two questions that had been whirling round in her mind.

"Leila," she whispered. "Those two girls must have suffered terribly. Why did they not pass out with the pain?"

"They would have been given a potion to ensure they remained conscious, no matter how terrible their punishment was to be," her friend replied.

Tanya shuddered as she thought about this for a moment.

"What are the breeding pens?" she asked eventually.

Ayesha looked round carefully to ensure they were not overheard. "That is where the Master breeds his slaves. It is a 'farm' some miles away in the desert. The girls, who are sent there, are mated with healthy male slaves. As soon as the babies are born, they are taken away and reared by wet nurses. They are looked after until they are old enough to be sent for auction. Young boys, and very young, virgin girls, are considered a delicacy by some men! The slaves, from whom they are bred, are immediately mated with another male slave."

Tanya was shocked by her friend's words. It had never occurred to her that anyone, even a slave, could be treated so barbarously. As much as she thought her lot was almost unbearable, she realised there were far worse fates that could befall her. It was, therefore, a relief when she and Leila were told their training would resume the next day.

On arrival at the training area, Tanya discovered that a further refinement was to be added. She had been girded in the harness and the boy had mounted her when Ali approached with a box in his hands. He reached inside and when his hand reappeared, Tanya saw that he held some sort of clip with a long length of leather rein attached. She gasped as he pressed the clip and she saw its jaws gape open, exposing two rows of sharp teeth. He put down the box, reached forward and gripped one of her nipples between his fingers and gently pinched it. She immediately felt the nipple become erect. In astonished dread, she watched as his other hand, the one holding the clip, rose towards her breast. She could not suppress a sharp cry as the jaws were placed over her erect nipple and released. The teeth sank into her tender flesh sending sharp agonising pains jabbing through her breast. Her other nipple received similar treatment and the loose reins were handed to the boy jockey.

When the other three girls had been similarly attended to, the training

commenced. Round and round the course the four girls ran. She found that the boy on her back was using the reins in her mouth to guide her and the ones attached to her nipples to exhort her to greater efforts. Even a gentle tug on the latter sent fresh waves of pain through her breasts and spurred her on to increase her speed. Time after time, they raced round the laid out course until she felt she would collapse with exhaustion. She heaved a sigh of relief when Ali called for them to halt and the boy on her back dismounted. She sank to the ground, panting heavily and nearly fainting with pain, both from the biting of the clips and from the stinging of the boy's cane on her flank.

The training went on all day, for several days, with only short breaks for the slaves to regain their strength. Each evening when she was returned to the harem, Tanya was astounded to see that her nipples were not bleeding. She realised that the clips must be adjusted so that they did not actually pierce the skin. It was after one very tiring day that she entered the harem and collapsed, exhausted on her couch that she fell foul of the young eunuch. She was so tired that she did not notice him standing by her side nor hear him speak to her.

"Stand up, slave! Show respect!"

The anger in his high pitched voice eventually penetrated the tiredness that had engulfed her. She struggled to her feet and stood before him. She raised her eyes and saw that his face was suffused with anger. She had not remembered to kneel! She quickly did so.

"You were slow to show respect," he spat at her. "For this you to are be punished. Stand, turn round and bend!"

Looking round and seeing that none of the other girls were in sight, Tanya slowly obeyed the order.

"Twice you were slow to obey. You get six strokes. Do not move or I make sure you go to Hassan." As he spoke she felt his hands at her waist, sliding her flimsy trousers over her hips. He was not allowed to bare her or give her more than three strokes! She sprang up and turned to face him.

"You are not allowed to hit me six times, or take down my clothing," she shouted at him.

"You refuse to take your punishment?" he shouted back at her. "For this I will make sure you get ten black marks. Now do as I order."

Tanya was already aware that she must have earned at least six black marks since the last accounting. She had been so tired with the training that she had missed doing some of the few duties allotted to her. If she got another ten she would be in serious trouble at the end of the month. There was no choice but to obey the lout! She turned her back on him and lowered her trousers and bent over.

"No! Take them right off. Then spread your feet wide apart," the youth ordered. He had heard strange stories of this slave and was taking the opportunity to see if they were true. They were alone and she would not dare to report him to Shamil. Anyway, if she did, no one would believe her word against his.

Resigning herself to the inevitable, Tanya obeyed. She grasped her ankles tight, determined not to move and give him the pleasure of reporting her. She felt him rub his hands over her taut buttocks. His fingers strayed into her crease and pressed against her anus then slid down to her sex lips. She gasped with horror as she felt them peel open merely at his touch. Shame and humiliation flooded over her.

Three times the boy's strap lashed across her taut buttocks. She clamped her teeth shut and managed to remain still and silent. The next stroke was long in coming and she heard his feet as he moved about. Then the strap lashed her again, but this time not across her bottom. He had changed his aim and the strap descended down the crease of her buttocks, the end whipping under her and cutting into her sex lips. The next landed in the same place and, this time, she could not prevent her body jerking upright.

"That one not count!" he spat at her. "You moved. You disobedient again."

Somehow, Tanya managed to keep still and silent as he lashed two more strokes down between her cheeks, each one curling under and the end whipping against her sex. She shivered with revulsion as she realised that juices were seeping from her. Then, to her utter disgust, she felt his fingers rubbing against her sex.

"So it is true," he mused aloud. "You do like being beaten. The twelve black marks you have earned this evening will please you then. You will be well flogged at the end of the month."

Tanya heard him stalk away and stood up, replacing her trousers. Although she had taken the beating he was still going to report her! She hated him. Not just because he had beaten her, or was to have her in trouble at the end of the month. He had made her body disgrace her and now he would be gloating over this with the other eunuchs. She just prayed that they would not want to try her out for themselves. She sank down on her couch and fell asleep.

CHAPTER 7.

The day of the meeting of the sheikhs dawned. Tanya, Leila and the other two girls were taken from the harem early in the morning. They were depilated and made to bathe. Their bodies and faces were enhanced with cosmetics and their hair pulled back and secured by jewelled bands so that it fell in ponytails down their backs. With thick, heavy, cloaks covering their heads and bodies, they were then taken down to the stables where they were handed over to Ali. He placed

shackles round their ankles and, having ushered them into a covered cart, secured the shackles to a long iron bar running the length of the cart. The girls sat down on the hard wooden floor and the cart began to move.

The four girls remained silent during the journey, each of their faces reflecting their fears about hazards that might await them. They all knew that in the final analysis, only one of them could be the ultimate winner and each feared the penalty that they would incur for failing. It was well known that their Master, and probably all the other Lords present, would bet heavily on the races. Each was lost in her own private quandary and could not bring herself to look at the other girls in the cart. Tanya felt their position was rather like that of gladiators in Roman times waiting to go to the arena, knowing they must kill their opponent, friend or not, or be killed themselves. Fortunately the journey did not last for more than an hour.

The cart came to a halt and they were then ordered to dismount and led into a large tent where, again, they were shackled by their ankles to the centre pole. One of the sheikh's eunuchs stood guard over them. They were fed a light meal at mid-day. Under orders of silence, Tanya thought of the ordeal ahead. All four had been well trained and were in the peak of fitness. What concerned her was that they did not know the calibre of the opposition they were to face. Her 'jockey' had, during the training sessions, not hesitated to use his cane on her flanks nor to jerk the clamps on her nipples to exhort her to better efforts. She was sure he would not flinch from even more vigorous use of these spurs to ensure she did not fail the sheikh in the race ahead.

Tanya felt relief that the ordeal would soon be over when Ali entered the tent with four eunuchs and released the girls. Their cloaks were removed and they were ordered to lie on a bench and the eunuchs massaged their bodies and limbs thoroughly. Then they were ordered to stand while the harnesses were fitted. Tanya gritted her teeth as she felt the clamps close over her nipples. They were then led, naked, from the tent to where the races would be held. Tanya looked round and saw five other teams of four naked female slaves, each group under the supervision of their master's eunuchs. To her dismay, all the slaves appeared to be very fit and strong and she wondered which she would have to run against. There were many lavishly dressed men standing round who were obviously the other sheikhs and she saw her own master among them.

"You will race in this order," Ali said as he approached them. "Sasha, Yasmin, Leila and Tanya. Each race is three laps round the course. The winner goes forward to the final. The others are publicly caned for losing. Four strokes for the second, six for the third and eight for the fourth and ten for the last. See that you do not lose. I want to see all four of you in the final. Failure to achieve this will earn you ten black marks."

Leaving this final threat ringing in their ears, Ali summoned the four 'jockeys' and issued his final instructions. He had just finished when a bell was rung and the

sheikhs arranged themselves in position to watch the events. Sasha was led to the starting line and her 'jockey' mounted. The signal was given and the four competitors set off at a smart jog. Despite the urging of her rider, Sasha only managed second place. Tanya shuddered when, at the end of the race she noticed that a heavy trestle was placed near the starting line. Yasmin also came second in her race and Leila won hers.

Tanya's 'jockey' led her to the starting line and mounted. She felt the bit in her mouth drawn taut and sharp pains in her nipples as the reins were gathered up by her rider. She cast a sideways glance at the other four 'ponies' and shuddered as she saw they were all bigger, and apparently stronger, than her. The signal for her race to begin was given and, urged on by her rider, Tanya set off at a sharp trot. For two laps their 'jockeys' seemed content to keep their mounts trotting well within their abilities, bunched closely together and conserve energy for the final lap. Consequently all five girls were racing neck and neck as they began the final lap of the course and then the 'jockeys' really began to ply their canes. Tanya felt her body sweating profusely with the effort as she struggled to accelerate. The rider was not sparing her and her flanks stung from the cane and her nipples felt raw. They were three quarters of the way round the final lap and Tanya was lying fourth. She already had visions of bending over the trestle and being caned for failure, and of the beating she would receive for the black marks that would be entered against her name. She had almost given up hope when the leading girl stumbled. The others were so closely bunched that a collision was inevitable. Tanya felt the bit in her mouth tugged savagely guiding her past the fallen girls. Her 'jockey' gave several hard tugs on the clamps, urging her on. The pain in her nipples and flanks, together with visions of her punishment, spurred her to one final effort and she staggered over the finishing line in first place.

Together with Leila, she was hurried back to the tent where they were given a little cool water to drink and made to lie along benches while the eunuchs massaged their bodies and limbs. As they were attended to, they could hear the sharp report of the canes on female flesh, and the ensuing cries and screams, as each of the losing girls paid their forfeits. The other two girls from their team were led back into the tent, their behinds bearing the marks where they had been beaten. Tears flowed from their eyes, which also betrayed their terror as they anticipated the ten black marks that would now be logged against them. Ali entered the tent and ordered Tanya and Leila to follow him.

Once again standing at the starting line, Tanya felt her 'jockey' mount her. She cast a quick glance to her side where Leila stood and the two girls exchanged encouraging glances before the signal was given and the 'jockeys' once more lashed their mounts into a trot. All five participants were still striving to recover from their first race and the pace this time was slower. They were still well bunched as they came to the end of the second lap. Tanya saw the looks of exhaustion, and fear, in the eyes of the other four as they threw their heads back and forth drawing on their remaining strength. The jockeys were urging their mounts to greater efforts with the canes. Three quarters of the way round the final

lap there was still little or nothing between them. Tanya, aching from the weight of her rider, felt him flick the cane between her legs as she pumped them back and forth. The end of the cane caught her sex lips at the same moment he gave a hard tug on the reins to the clamps. With a cry of agony, Tanya surged forward and just managed to cross the finishing line, a pace or two ahead of Leila and the other ponies.

In a daze, she was led back to the tent and collapsed on one of the benches. Sasha and Yasmin were already there, nursing their sore behinds. She lay there panting heavily as she listened to the race official announcing the result. She heard the reports and cries as the losers were dealt with. A few minutes later, Leila was led into the tent. Tanya could not suppress a gasp of shock as she saw her friend's bottom. Eight dark red lines evidenced where a whip had been applied to her soft flesh. The penalties for the losers had been doubled for the final race and, instead of a cane, a whip had been used on them. This clearly accounted for the fact that the screams had been louder and shriller.

The races were the climax of the meeting and shortly after the journey back to the sheikh's palace began. If the outward journey had been uncomfortable, the return one was very painful for all four of them, especially Leila, who found it too painful to sit and spent the whole time curled up on the hard floor. It was therefore a considerable relief when the cart was driven into the yard at the sheikh's palace and the slaves ordered to dismount. It was, by then, late evening and the slaves were taken to the harem where they were allowed to wash and feed before being ordered to their sleeping quarters.

The next day passed uneventfully until the late afternoon. The other girls in the harem questioned the four girls closely about the meeting, and Tanya received much praise for having won the races for their master. They were ordered to prepare for the evening parade and having attended to their appearance, were led into the selection hall. The sheikh took his place on the throne and the slaves were led, one by one, before him. He surveyed them closely, ordering some to adopt certain poses until he was satisfied.

Tanya stood in line as Shamil passed slowly behind them. She felt a hand on her shoulder. She had been chosen for the master's pleasure for that evening. The other girls were ushered away and she was led to the sheikh's private part of the palace to be prepared. Once depilated and bathed she was made to drink the sweet tasting potion and was then dressed in a transparent burka that did little to hide her luscious body. Shamil inspected her and, once satisfied with her appearance, led her to the sheikh's bedroom.

He knocked on the door and in response to the sheikh's command, opened it and gently pushed Tanya inside. She heard the door close behind her and quickly fell to her knees, lowering her head to the floor.

"Rise and approach!"

As gracefully as she could she rose to her feet and walked slowly towards the large divan on which her Master reclined. Although her gaze was respectfully lowered, she sensed his eyes watching her as she made her way across the room. She came to a halt in front of the divan.

"Look at me!" the sheikh ordered.

Tanya raised her eyes to his. He looked deep into them for a few moments and then his gaze slowly descended, taking in the beauty of her scantily clad body. When he finally looked back up at her face, she saw lust and merriment in his eyes. She began to tremble.

"Why do you tremble, slave?" he asked.

"I am in my Master's presence!" It seemed a weak response but it was all she could think of.

"Is my presence so frightening, slave?"

He was playing cat and mouse with her! All she wanted was to get the ordeal over and done with and return to the relative safety of the harem. She knew what was expected of her but was terrified that she would not please him and would find herself sent to Hassan in the morning.

"I am yours to do with as you please, Master," she whispered.

"That is so!" he replied. "Look over there." He pointed to a corner of the room.

Tanya's gaze followed to where his finger was pointing. She felt her legs suddenly go weak and feared she would collapse to the floor. In the corner was the high padded stool on which lay a long thin cane. She felt her buttocks clench tight in anticipation of it cutting into her tender flesh.

"Will it be necessary to stimulate you this evening?"

"I hope not, Master!" Tanya stammered, already feeling her sex tunnel begin to tingle, just at the sight of the shining rattan.

"Well, we shall see, slave," he said as he lay back on the divan. "You may remove your burka and please me."

Under his intense scrutiny, Tanya slipped off the garment and knelt at the foot of the divan. She leaned forward and, insinuating her head under the kaftan he was wearing, began to lightly lick the inside of his ankles. She eased her body onto the divan as she slowly made her way up between his wide spread legs, kissing and licking gently as she progressed. His legs were strong and muscular and covered in

thick dark hair. As she passed his knees and began to attend to his thighs, she felt his breathing quicken and sensed the first odour of his arousal.

She reached the junction of his thighs and reached up and untied the sash that held his kaftan in place. She saw the garment fall apart, revealing his flat stomach and heavily muscled chest. She felt his hands in her long hair, which had been brushed loose and lowered her head. His hard erect penis brushed against her lips and she again began to lick it and kiss it, feeling the organ throb with his desire. Taking hold of the lance lightly in her fingers, she began to stroke it as she opened her mouth and allowed the swollen knob to slip between her lips. Trying desperately to judge her timing correctly, she brought him to the brink of ejaculation several times, before easing off her attentions. When she judged by the sound of his breathing that he had been sufficiently teased, she intensified her rhythm, sliding her lips rapidly up and down the shaft whilst the fingers of one hand stroked the heavy sac and the other hand closed tightly round his manhood. She felt his body rise in an arc beneath her as his satisfaction jetted deep into her throat. She maintained her position, licking and sucking his lance until she had absorbed the final drop, and then slid to her knees at the side of the divan.

Aware of the slender rattan in the corner, she waited apprehensively as the sheikh's breathing slowly returned to normal. Had she pleased him enough? She began to tremble as he raised himself on one elbow and looked down on her. She dared to look into his eyes, dreading to find the verdict she feared in them.

"Not bad!" he said quietly. "Come! Lie down beside me."

Breathing a silent sigh of relief, Tanya obeyed. She felt one of his hands cup her breast, the fingers lightly tweaking the nipple, still sore from the application of the clamp during the races, as the other forced a path between her legs and stroked her sex. So intent had she been on pleasing him that she had not, until then, been aware that her own body had become aroused. Her nipples were swollen and distended and her sex lips had opened permitting traces of her juices to escape. She reached down with one hand and was surprised to find his manhood again rigid. In one flowing movement, he raised his body above hers and she felt the tip of his organ press against her opening. As he proceeded to take her, slowly and thoroughly, she felt her own arousal escalating. She knew she must not come without permission and struggled to contain her response to the invasion. Just as she felt her control slipping, he shed his satisfaction deep into her body.

For some time, they lay side by side, both of their bodies drenched in sweat, struggling to regain their breath. To her utter astonishment, he used her several times during the next hour or so and, each time he came inside her, she struggled harder and harder to control her own climax. Eventually, he ordered her to kneel at the side of the divan. He replaced his kaftan and rose on his elbow and looked down on her.

"It seems that you have been well trained, slave," he said. "You have pleased me

and deserve a reward. Do you wish the needs of your body satisfied?"

"If it pleases my Master," Tanya replied hesitantly, her heart sank as the litany was repeated and she knew that what lay ahead would be painful. She felt her body begin to shake with fear, desire and anticipation. Would he, or another of his soldiers, be the one to bring satisfaction to her body, or would she merely be flogged until she climaxed?

"Place the stool in the centre of the room and bring me the cane," he ordered, a cruel smile curling his mouth.

Her worst fears were to be proved correct. She was to be flogged. Tanya rose to her feet and obeyed. As she walked across the floor, her legs felt weak and she feared she would stumble. She felt her buttocks clench as they anticipated the pain shortly to be inflicted on them. He was going to beat her until she came! She silently prayed he would not order her to endure too many strokes before allowing her to succumb to an orgasm. She handed the cane to him and stood watching in dreadful fascination as he bent it in a bow until the ends met. This demonstration of the rod's suppleness sent shivers of expectation through her body. Her Master rose from the divan and ordered her to stand, feet wide apart, in front of the stool. She sensed him standing behind her

"Open your mouth, slave."

Tanya obeyed and he thrust a rolled up cloth in her mouth and used a long scarf, tied behind her neck, to keep it in place. Then, to her horror, she felt something thick and solid thrust up between her sex lips. It had to be twisted and pushed several times before she could accommodate it and then straps were tied round her thighs, keeping it in its place deep inside her.

"Bend over, slave," her Master ordered.

Tanya obeyed, laying her stomach on the padded top and reaching down to grasp the base of the front legs. She felt him spread her legs wider apart.

"You will take ten strokes. You will be allowed a short pause between each to allow you to rub your behind. Then, keeping your position as you are now, you may come when you are ready."

Tanya felt the coolness of the cane across her buttocks as he measured his distance. Her cheeks shuddered in anticipation of the pain to come and she felt the needs throbbing in her belly increase. Her muscles tightened around the thing inside her and she felt her arousal soaring. She steeled herself to hold it in check as she felt the cane removed. There was a loud swish as the rod parted the air and then a sharp report. A line of agony erupted in her cheeks and her hands flew behind her, cupping her soft flesh and kneading it to relieve the pain. A light rap across her knuckles warned her to prepare for the next stroke and, reluctantly, she

reached down and grabbed hold of the stool legs.

With deadly accuracy, her Master laid the next two strokes exactly on top of the first. The pain was unbearable! The shrill screams, which the pain forced from her lungs, were muffled by the gag in her mouth. Somehow she managed to remain over the stool whilst the full ten strokes were laid across her bottom. Between each stroke, her small hands flew to her burning cheeks trying to ease the agony being inflicted on them. She managed to keep count and after the ninth stroke, she was reluctant to remove her hands, knowing it was her last opportunity to ease her suffering. It took several sharp raps across her knuckles before she again grasped the stool legs and locked her fingers around them. The muscles inside her tunnel were working overtime milking the intruder and stimulating her arousal.

Her body jerked as the cane lashed her buttocks for the eleventh time. She screamed into the gag and tightened her grip on the stool. Then the onslaught continued. Time and again the cane burned a path across her blazing cheeks as she relinquished control over her orgasm, letting it escalate. She felt the cane lash hard across the soft underside of her cheeks for the eighteenth time and her arousal soared to a climax. Her body, drenched in sweat, arched rigid in a tight bow as it succumbed to a series of shattering orgasms. A delicious blackness spread over her as she collapsed on the stool unconscious, her body shuddered as it enjoyed the release it demanded. She did not know how long she lay over the stool before consciousness began to return. She slid to the floor and, turning, began to crawl to the divan where her Master was again reclining.

"That was most entertaining," the sheikh said, making her face burn with shame. "I must have you perform for my guests sometime," he added.

Tanya cringed with shame. The thought of being made to behave as she had just done before a crowd of strange men filled her with disgust. But she was a slave and had no choice in the matter.

"But a lovely carcass such as yours should be more fittingly displayed first," she heard him continue. "I will have you trained as a dancer. Then you can dance for them to whet their appetites before displaying your more erotic talents. I will have Shamil see to it."

The sheikh struck a gong at his side and, almost immediately, Shamil entered the room. The sheikh gave his orders for the slave to be removed and for her to be trained as a dancer. The training to commence immediately. The eunuch escorted her back to the harem where she collapsed on her couch. Her friend Leila, who was still awake, came to her and gently rubbed cream into her tender and bruised buttocks. Tanya eventually fell into an exhausted sleep during which she dreamed she was being displayed, with a gigantic pole thrust inside her as Shamil beat her with a terrible cane, before a large assembly of fierce looking men.

When she eventually awoke the next morning, she discovered that her training would not start until the next day. She had forgotten that the monthly punishment parade was due! She shuddered as she recalled the episode with the young eunuch and prayed that he had not carried out his threat and reported her as he had said he would. Her bottom was still sore from the caning the previous evening and, if he had, her penalties would be certain to earn her a session over the bench. Along with the other slaves she was escorted into the hall where the monthly punishments were meted out. The slaves knelt along one side of the hall, their foreheads to the ground as the sheikh entered and sat on the throne. Shamil stepped forward and announced the names of the girls who had not incurred any penalties. They went and knelt in front of the throne, facing into the hall.

One by one the girls who had offended were called forward and received their punishments. Tanya became increasingly apprehensive as she watched the girls beaten. She was not in the group that had not offended and she knew that as the punishments progressed they became more severe. The sound of the rattan rods striking bare flesh and the cries and screams of the bent girls did nothing to allay her panic. Both Sasha and Yasmin suffered badly, their punishments being increased by the ten black marks added to their tally for failing to be in the final of the races. What torture was in store for her? At last she was the only slave kneeling in the line who had not received her punishment.

She heard Shamil call her name. Conscious of the terror mounting inside her, she rose and knelt before the throne, her forehead touching the floor.

"The slave, Tanya, has earned ten black marks."

She heard Shamil make the announcement. She had only earned ten, so why had she been left to last? Several of the girls who had already been beaten had higher totals.

"Further," Shamil's high-pitched voice sounded ominous in the silence. "The slave refused to submit to a 'harem punishment' when ordered to do so. This act of disobedience has increased her total to twenty-two. As a lesson to you all, the slave's punishment will be applied with the rods."

Tanya nearly cried out in horror. She had seen the two girls beaten with the bundles of rods and had seen the terrible state of their behinds afterwards. She felt her buttocks cringe in terrible anticipation. It was unfair! She had taken the beating, a double dose in fact, from the youth! She was on the point of protesting against the injustice when common sense prevailed. To question the chief eunuch's judgement, and hence her Master's, would only increase her suffering. She heard the order to prepare, rose and discarded her flimsy garments. With a show of bravado, which was contrary to the terror that gripped her, she shrugged off the hands of two eunuchs and walked to the bench. She lay along its length.

Her limbs were secured in the same manner as the first time and she tried to stop her body trembling with fear. She looked up as one of the eunuchs approached. In his hand he held the bundle of rods with which she was to be beaten. A gasp of horror escaped her clenched teeth as she saw these close up for the first time. Each rod, of which there must have been at least a dozen, was very thin but very rigid. Her buttocks were already sore and swollen from the caning the previous evening and would suffer terribly under them. The eunuch passed out of her range of vision as he took up his position level with her taut bottom.

Thwack.

A terrible band of fire erupted in her bottom and she could not suppress the scream of agony that welled up in her throat.

The eunuch lashed another four strokes across her buttocks, each drawing a piercing scream from her. Already her body was breaking out in a sweat as the terrible pain built up. The sheikh, her Master, must have authorised this terrible flogging, even though he was aware that her bottom was already badly bruised from her session in his bedroom the previous evening. Through the mist of pain, she felt a savage hatred for him, and all men, surging through her. It was not right that her young, soft and tender body should be treated in this barbaric manner.

As her flogging progressed, the hatred and pain quenched the arousal that had, as she positioned her body, begun to manifest itself. Her screams echoed the report of the rods as her body writhed and squirmed in her bonds. She had been unable to keep count and a feeling of relief flowed over her as she felt the bonds on her ankles released.

The watching line of kneeling slaves was aghast as, after the twelfth stroke, they saw Shamil step forward and halt the thrashing. Following his orders, the eunuchs released the bonds on the slave's ankles. A gasp of horror echoed round the room as they saw the men lift the slave's hips up high and push a steeper triangular frame under her. Her ankles were pulled forward and secured to the front legs of the bench. This now stretched her buttocks even more, wrenching her cheeks wide apart and exposing her sex and anus. She was perfectly positioned for the rods to lash not only her cheeks but her most sensitive parts as well.

"No! No! Please no!" The plaintive cry of protest echoed round the silent room as it sank into Tanya's pain filled mind what was being done to her. Her beating was not over after all! The flesh on her buttocks had now been stretched to the limit and this, she knew, would increase the agony of the strokes to come. She had lost count! Just how many more must she endure? She began to struggle violently, trying to escape from her bonds and the terrible agony to come.

Her struggles were in vain and she collapsed, sobbing loudly, over the frame. Shamil gave the order and the flogging resumed. The slave's buttocks jerked on each stroke as the rods cut into her taut flesh and sought out her sex and anus.

The remaining ten strokes were administered. Tanya screamed and screamed as sweat poured from her body. As the rods lashed her bottom for the final stroke, she sank into a cloud of mist and agony and was no longer aware of what was happening around her.

The monthly atonement over, the sheikh rose and walked from the hall. No emotion showed in his face as he passed the sobbing slave still secured over the frame. Shamil gave the order for the slave to be released and the other slaves were ushered back to the harem. Two eunuchs had to carry Tanya, whose legs hadn't the strength to support her slight weight. They put her down on her couch and Leila, who had been one of the girls who had escaped a beating, hurried and knelt at her side. Very gently she bathed Tanya's buttocks and smoothed cream into the bruises. Silent tears fell from her eyes as, close to, she saw the terrible cuts and bruises on her friend's cheeks. Ayesha, who had also not been punished, came across and assisted in the first aid. It was a long time since a slave had been so thoroughly flogged at a monthly session and she felt compassion for the sobbing girl.

It was several days before Shamil, who inspected Tanya's condition daily, considered her sufficiently recovered to commence her further training. After the morning meal, he sent one of his minions to take her to the room where it would take place. Here, she was introduced to a very beautiful woman. Shamil informed Tanya that she was to be her teacher and that she was to be obeyed without question. To Tanya's surprise, they were then left alone in the room.

"My name is Petra," the woman said. "And I am to be your teacher. I am to report your progress to Shamil each day so try and learn quickly."

"I understand, Mistress," Tanya responded. "I will do my best."

"Right. Let's get on with it." The woman's voice was soft and seductively husky and Tanya hoped that she would be kind to her if she tried her best.

Petra made Tanya stand perfectly still while she ran her hands over her body and limbs assessing their suppleness. Then followed hours of exercises and lessons in deportment. On the second day, Petra instructed her on how to move her body to entrance a man and whet his desires. Tanya, whose body and limbs were already quite supple, soon managed to meet the high standards that Petra demanded. Then came the more difficult part - learning the basic steps that formed the basis of the dances a slave girl performed for her master. Fortunately, Tanya was blessed with a good sense of rhythm and quickly assimilated the lessons. She learned how to move from one basic step to another, making the transition smooth and alluring. After a week of such intensive tuition, Petra pronounced herself satisfied and informed Shamil that the time had come when the slave could progress to dancing to music.

During this time, Tanya got to know Petra quite well. Although she was not a

slave girl, a close friendship had quickly developed between the two. Tanya learned that Petra was a professional dancer whose services had, in her earlier days, been in great demand. Now she danced rarely in public but her talents were still in demand as a teacher. Whilst she drove Tanya quite hard, she always gave Shamil good reports at the end of each day. As she explained to Tanya, not only had she progressed well but she did not want to be the cause of Tanya's tender bottom suffering a beating.

The day came when, on arriving at the 'classroom', Tanya found that several musicians were ensconced behind a heavy screen. Tanya was still kept naked and must be kept from their eyes. Petra demonstrated each dance first, astounding Tanya by her expertise, and setting the target her pupil must attain. Once she became accustomed to the strange strains of the music, Tanya soon learned quickly, even surprising Petra on her ability. Dances portraying a reluctant slave, a slave intent on seducing her master, or a slave performing to escape a whipping, soon became part of her repertoire. Tanya, although she was ever conscious of the degrading performance she would be required to perform for her master and his invited guests, thoroughly enjoyed the lessons.

When the time came for her to put on various dancing costumes, which Shamil provided, she was delighted. The costumes were exotic both in colour and design, and showed off her slender figure to perfection. When she was learning the 'Veil Dance', Tanya tried to imagine that she was dancing for the handsome pirate captain, trying to seduce him with the delights of her body. Strange, she thought, it was the first time she had thought about him for a long time. Deep down inside, she still longed to belong to him, although she had long ago realised such thoughts were only torturing her! Petra enlisted the services of Shamil to teach Tanya the 'Whip Dance'. As she swayed to the music, dodging the vicious lash, Tanya mentally cringed each time the whip cracked near her. It seemed to her that the time would come when she would hear this dreadful sound, not in the context of a dance, but for real as she was tied at the post for a proper whipping.

Petra continually praised Tanya for her efforts. For her part, Tanya thoroughly enjoyed the lessons - it kept her away from the harem and out of the clutches of the eunuchs. Petra reported daily to Shamil in such glowing terms that he could find no reason to have her punished. The day came when the Sheikh, on learning from his Chief Eunuch of the slave's progress, appeared on the scene to see for himself. As she entered the 'classroom' and saw her Master seated there, Tanya's happiness was shattered. His presence reminded her that soon she would be dancing before his guests and friends. At the same time she would suffer the shame and embarrassment of displaying her 'unusual talents', as the Sheikh referred to them, under the cane.

Tanya performed several different dances, including the 'Whip Dance' and concluded her audition with the 'Veil Dance'. During the entire performance the Sheikh showed no sign as to whether he was satisfied or not. Only at the end of the 'Veil Dance', as Tanya lay spread eagle on the floor before him, was she given

any indication of his reaction. She lay there, panting heavily, as she heard him give the order for the room to be cleared. She heard the others depart and the door close behind them and a deathly silence filled the room. She was conscious of the Sheikh rising from his seat. Then she was roughly ordered to rise to her knees, spreading them wide apart and lower her forehead to the floor. She dared to look up quickly and saw him, naked, standing over her. Almost before she realised what was happening, he was upon her, driving his rigid shaft not into her sex but her anus, sending sharp stabbing pains through her body. His taking was short but violent as he satiated his desires inside her tighter tunnel. The dancing had exhausted her and it was only by the utmost effort that, despite where he was using her, she prevented her body responding too much.

In what seemed to her no time at all, he rolled off her and lay panting and sweating at her side. She watched, in terrible dread, as he rose and replaced his clothing and called for Shamil. The eunuch entered the room, concern written clearly on his face as he saw Tanya still kneeling and his master's sperm seeping from her.

"The slave is ready to perform," the Sheikh said. "See that she is exercised and practices daily and that her body is kept clear of any sign of discipline. Any black marks she acquires can be held over until after she has entertained my guests."

"It shall be as you order, Master," Shamil replied.

Tanya was ushered from the room by the eunuch and escorted back to the harem. For the next three weeks, she was made to exercise and practice the dances under Petra's supervision. She, and Shamil, gave her further advice and tips to enhance her performance. Due to the Sheikh's order, Tanya was, for the first time, one of the girls not due for punishment at the next monthly session. As she knelt there, watching the other girls suffering under the cane, she wondered just how many black marks already showed against her name and what would be her ordeal when the time finally came for the accumulated total to be redeemed.

CHAPTER 8.

The day of the Sheikh's feast finally arrived. After the mid-day meal, Tanya was taken from the harem to another part of the palace. After her body had been depilated, she was made to bathe and then rest until the time came for her to be prepared. She lay on a couch for some hours, trying to blot out from her mind the ordeal that awaited her. Having to dance in front of a lot of strange men, even performing the 'Veil Dance', did not cause her too much concern. Petra had made her fully aware of her ability and the seductive allure of her body. It was what she was sure would follow as an encore that troubled her. She was to disgrace herself in front of those strange men! But she was merely a slave, she had long ago resigned herself to that, and must obey her Master's orders no matter what humiliation that might cause her.

As she lay on the couch a deep depression seemed to descend upon her. She knew that the sheikh had broadcast that something very special was to take place at the feast and she knew she would suffer terribly if she failed to give perfect satisfaction. What was worse, debasing herself before a group of strangers or the inevitable session with Hassan if she displeased her Master? The arrival of Petra, who with Shamil accompanied by several other slave girls, entered the room broke into her train of thought. Petra made her do some light loosening up exercises, then she was ordered to lie along a bench whilst the girls massaged her body all over with scented oils. Aware that the time of her ordeal rapidly approached, Tanya forced her mind to shut out all thoughts in that direction and stood submissively as her face and body were decorated with cosmetics and perfume and her hair brushed out until it hung in a golden shower down her back. While Shamil went to see how far the feast had progressed, Petra supervised while the girls dressed her in the costume for the first dance.

When she was fully prepared Tanya stood and admired herself in a long mirror. The vision that stared back at her bore no resemblance to the girl who had stood in the dock so long ago and had, with terror on her heart, heard the judge sentence her to deportation. She was looking at a true slave girl! Her stance and the aura of submissiveness that she saw in the mirror testified to the fact that she had been well and truly enslaved. Not for the first time she secretly wished that the pirate captain had kept her for himself. At least with him she would be serving a man she could love! The Chief Eunuch, accompanied by two others, returned. She was escorted from the room, across a wide hall, and halted before a heavy door. Shamil opened it and she was ushered in. She found herself behind a large, latticed screen. Through the openings she could see into the banqueting hall. The tables had been arranged around three sides. Some twenty or so fierce looking men, all dressed in sumptuous robes sat behind the tables while scantily dressed slave girls served them. To one side, several musicians sat, crossed legged, with their instruments at their sides.

Shamil approached the Sheikh and whispered in his ear. The sheikh nodded and Shamil gave a sign to his minions. Tanya felt a hand on her shoulder and was gently pushed from behind the screen. Slowly, taking short dainty steps and keeping her eyes lowered, she walked to the centre of the open square in front of the tables. She was aware that her entrance had not gone unnoticed. The loud conversation died to complete silence as many pairs of eyes were turned in her direction. As she gracefully sank to her knees, she dared to peer through her eyelashes at the assembled men before whom she must dance. Suddenly her heart missed a beat and she only just managed to suppress a startled gasp. Seated there, dressed in fine flowing robes like the others, was the pirate captain. She could hardly believe her eyes! What was he doing there? Yearnings which she thought she had overcome flared up inside her. There was the man she had loved ever since he had beaten and used her on his boat!

Such was her astonishment that she nearly didn't hear the musicians start to play. Quickly she gathered her scattered wits and rose gracefully to her feet. As she

went into the first dance, she tried to banish the watchers from her mind. All, that is, except the pirate captain! Almost unconsciously she danced solely for him, even astounding herself at the expertise with which she performed. She kept his image at the front of her mind as she glided around the floor, portraying the various stages of a girl's descent into slavery as she performed several dances, only slightly relinquishing it when the time came for the 'Whip Dance'. This needed all her concentration to avoid losing the step and having the lash sear her tender body.

After the 'Whip Dance', she was escorted from the hall, back to the room where Petra waited to prepare for the 'Veil Dance'. She was quickly divested of her costume and her body washed to remove the slight perspiration and then draped in several veils, strategically arranged to obscure her body. When Shamil returned to collect her, Petra hugged her close and whispered 'Good Luck' in her ear. Trying to control the trembling that had developed in her legs, Tanya followed the Chief Eunuch back to the hall. Before she realised what was happening, she was again kneeling in the centre of the open square.

Little or no notice had been taken of her during the previous dances, but a pregnant silence had now fallen over the diners and they were all now looking at her intently. Were they expecting this to be the 'special attraction' they had been promised? For the last time, she heard the musicians begin to play. She rose to her feet and began to dance. Keeping time with the music, she floated round the floor, moving as seductively as she could. Every now and again, the beat increased and she stood stationary, only her belly undulating rapidly. One by one she discarded the veils until only one, of the finest chiffon, was left. Although she had danced before all the men, it was mainly to the pirate captain that she had directed her steps. The image of him in her mind had been all that had kept her going, especially knowing what was to follow after the dance. It was this that was nearly her undoing. The 'Veil Dance' was intended to be the final submission of a slave to her Master and as she finally discarded the last veil and, displaying her naked body, she knelt in total submission before him. But so intense had the image of the pirate captain been in her mind that she nearly finished the dance before him. Hoping that her mistake had gone unnoticed, she managed to stop herself in time and completed the dance, falling naked before the Sheikh, her Master.

She knelt there, panting heavily, her forehead lowered to the floor, as thunderous applause echoed round the hall. With a sense of pride, she heard many tributes and much praise called out to her master, congratulating him on owning such a delightful animal. Many envied him for possessing a green eyed European blonde, especially one who had so competently mastered the dances which were usually only well performed by girls of their own nationality. She heard several offers to purchase her, all of which her Master declined. Aware that the final scene of her performance was about to start, she felt her face burn red and her body begin to tremble with terror as she sensed it become stimulated by the thought of the pain, and pleasure, soon to be inflicted on it.

"My Lords!" The sheikh's voice sounded above the noise, raising another expectant silence in the room. "I thank you for your generous comments on my slave's poor efforts. However, I promised you something special and the time has now come." The Sheikh turned his head and nodded to Shamil standing behind him. "Proceed".

The Chief Eunuch made his way to a door at the rear of the hall. Tanya heard sounds of footsteps behind her and the thump as something heavy was placed on the floor. She felt her buttocks clenching and relaxing as they anticipated the beating to come.

"Rise, slave!" she heard Shamil command.

The Chief Eunuch had already schooled her on the procedure she must follow for this part of her performance. Tanya, as gracefully as her terror would permit, rose to her feet and, bowing to the assembled audience, slowly turned her back to her Master. Her stomach sank as she saw, in the centre of the floor, a stout wooden trestle, whose padded top had a thick phallus standing upright at one end. At the far end stood two heavily muscled eunuchs, one of whom held a long thin cane in his hand. She shuddered with fear as she saw the one holding the cane was Mansur, the eunuch who enjoyed beating the girls most, and who did his best to see they were well flogged at each monthly session. Tanya began to walk slowly towards the place where her ordeal would take place, her buttocks already flinching in fear. She halted at the end of the trestle, her legs parted so the phallus just touched her sex lips. Immediately, she felt her lips peel open and strong tingling sensations spread through her tunnel to her belly.

She bent forward until her chest touched the end of the trestle, her breasts falling down either side and her buttocks thrusting high into the air. She gripped the legs tight. She felt the eunuch secure her wrists and ankles to the wooden legs and, taking a deep breath, prepared herself for the thrashing to come.

"You will remain silent for the first ten strokes, only breaking the silence to count the strokes out loud and thank your Master for each." Shamil's voice echoed loud in the hall as he gave the order. "If you disobey the order, you will be penalised with a dozen strokes of the rods."

Tanya shuddered as these last words. She had only expected to have to take five strokes in silence, something she was confident she would manage. But she had been ordered to take ten! A panic surged through her as she realised that was well beyond her endurance and she was certain to have to suffer the dozen with those terrible rods. Her mind retreated into the only refuge she could find. She forced her brain to believe it was her love, the pirate captain, who was to thrash her and her desire to please him by obeying the order. She felt the coolness of the rattan against her taut buttocks. It remained there, pressed against her trembling cheeks for a few moments before being removed. She heard a loud 'swishing' sound.

Thwack.

Immediately the familiar, blistering thread of agony erupted across her bottom, making her body jerk against its restraints, as the stroke curled round her cheeks.

"One. Thank you Master," she called out and tightened her grip on the trestle.

Thwack.

Another terrible line of fire burned parallel with the first, adding its quota of pain. A strangled gasp lodged in her throat. The eunuch was laying the strokes on viciously and she knew, even then, that she could not survive ten such agonising tracks of fire in silence.

"Two. Thank you Master," she called out.

Thwack.

The third stroke landed across the lower, most tender, parts of her cheeks. The pain of this was worse than both of the preceding ones put together. She choked back the cry that rose in her throat. Only three taken - she still had another seven to come and there was no way she would survive in silence.

"Three. Thank you Master," she managed to gasp.

Thwack.

Mansur was living up to his reputation. The force with which the strokes were being applied testified to this. Each was biting into her taut buttocks and curling round the sides and cutting into her hips. The pain seemed worse than any beating she had received before and she could already feel the arousal it was inducing building up in her belly.

"Four. Thank you Master," Tanya struggled to make the count loud enough to be heard.

Having to call out, and thank him, after each stroke made it more difficult to keep silent. Tanya felt her body begin to break out in a sweat. She was writhing with each stroke, rubbing the phallus against her sex, sending exquisite waves of desire soaring through her loins. She was thankful she had not been placed facing her Master and ordered to look into his face during the flogging!

Thwack.

"Five. Thank you Master."

Thwack.

"Six. Thank you Master."

Thwack.

"Seven. Thank you Master."

Tanya's buttocks felt as if they were being roasted over hot coals. The pain was seething through her cheeks and into her belly, increasing her arousal rapidly and making it more and more difficult to stammer out the count. Her legs were trembling so badly that she felt it almost impossible to keep in contact with the phallus and prevent her body from descending on to it. Already she could sense her juices seeping from her lips onto the waiting invader. Silently she prayed for the beating to end quickly so that she would be allowed to lower herself onto the leather and succumb to the needs raging inside her.

After delivering the seventh stroke, Mansur looked hard at the girl's writhing buttocks. He was laying the strokes on as hard as he could, the heavily raised weals confirmed this, yet he still hadn't managed to break her. His eyes strayed to the bundle of rods that he longed to whip her with. He would not be denied that pleasure. He smiled cruelly to himself and changed his aim.

Thwack.

Tanya's head jerked up, her eyes looking to the ceiling, horror and disbelief written on her face. The cane had wrapped downwards round her left cheek, the end curling under and cutting into her sex lips, pinching the edge against the leather phallus. The terrible pain sent pangs of desire raging through her body, which was now sweating profusely, runnels cascading down her breasts and dropping to the floor making pools with her tears. She only just managed to hold back the scream in her throat as she called out the count. Eight strokes burned in her bottom, only two more to come!

Thwack.

"Aaaarrrrrggghh!" Her cry of pain and despair echoed the impact of the rattan against her flesh. The stroke had mirrored the previous one, the end of the cane again cutting her sex lips and pinching the edge against the phallus. "Nine. Thank you Master!" she yelled, her voice shaking with the knowledge that she had disobeyed her orders.

Mansur smiled to himself as he again looked at the rods He had achieved his purpose and broken the slave's stubborn resistance. He raised the cane for the last time and lashed it down across the centre of her writhing buttocks.

An even longer, louder, scream echoed the report of the cane as Tanya's bottom absorbed the agony of the stroke "Ten. Thank you Master!" she managed to yell

as the pain began to draw a mist over her brain.

Apart from the sound of the rattan striking her behind, her count and latterly her scream, the hall had been silent during her beating. The watchers, although seeing a girl flogged was no novelty to them, were intrigued by the presence of the phallus on the trestle. There was, surely something further to follow and this held their interest in the affair. They looked at the round wooden discs on the table before them, wondering how these featured in the proceedings.

"Slave," said Shamil, who had moved to stand near the trestle. "You failed to keep silent and will now pay the penalty for your disobedience. Twelve strokes with the rods." He leaned close to Tanya's head and whispered, "You will not come or impale yourself."

Tanya could not suppress a groan of despair as she heard his words. She had tried her best, even though her brain had not been able to keep the image of the pirate captain vivid in her imagination after the eighth stroke. The need to contain the arousal that was escalating in her belly had required all her resources. She tightened her grip on the wooden legs, trembling violently, as she waited to be thrashed with the rods. The dreaded rods that hurt and cut so much!

Mansur applied the twelve strokes, slowly and systematically, ensuring the whole of the slave's buttocks received their attention. He felt a great sense of satisfaction as he watched the rods lashing over the thick, dark red weals, causing the skin to break in tiny cuts from which thin rivulets of bright red seeped over her cheeks and down her thighs. Tanya's screams each time he struck were like music to his ears. As he delivered the final stroke he was disappointed to see that she still managed to keep the phallus just touching her sex. If he had managed to break her and make her descend on the leather, he would have had the pleasure of knowing she would be sent to Hassan for a thorough whipping.

"My friends," the sheikh's voice broke to silence in the hall. "The slave has entertained you with her poor attempt at dancing and has displayed her ability to take a thrashing. Now comes the moment you have been waiting for. My Chief Eunuch will beat the slave with six strokes of the cane. Then he will continue to thrash her while she satisfies your curiosity by demonstrating the purpose of the leather object attached to the trestle. Proceed, Shamil."

The chief eunuch approached the sobbing slave whose body was shaking visibly as she forced herself to stay astride the phallus.

"You heard the Master's order, slave," he whispered in her ear.

"Yes Sir," Tanya stammered in reply.

"Impale yourself after the sixth stroke. Do not lose count or your back will feel the lash."

Shamil picked up the cane and took up his position. He raised his arm and brought the rattan crashing down across Tanya's buttocks six times. Tanya writhed and squirmed under each impact, her shrill screams echoing round the hall. Summoning up all her reserves of control, she waited until the cane lashed her bottom for the seventh stroke and then, with a scream of release, thrust her body down on the phallus until it sank deep inside her. She felt her muscles tighten round it. Completely oblivious to the erotic spectacle she was making of herself, she thrust up and down on the invader as the Chief Eunuch continued to lash the cane across her heaving buttocks. She felt the orgasm growing and growing deep inside her as her needs rose in proportion to the pain being inflicted on her bottom. She screamed and screamed as delicious sensations rampaged through her until, with a final violent thrust down on the leather, the eunuch ceased beating her bottom. Her body arched rigid as a series of shattering orgasms ravaged her sweating body and then she ground herself hard down on the phallus until she finally collapsed over the trestle.

As her final scream of release faded in the hall, a stunned silence took its place. The audience, who had attentively watched her performance, saw Tanya's sweat soaked, shuddering, body slowly collapse on the trestle as she sank into oblivion. Shamil put away the cane and nodded to his minions. They left the hall and returned a few minutes later with a divan and several lattice screens. They placed the former towards the end of the hall and erected the screens round it. Leila, who had entered with the eunuchs, rushed to where Tanya still lay over the trestle. She knelt behind the supine girl and, using the wet cloth she clutched in her hands, gently wiped it over her friend's swollen buttocks, staunching the flow of red from the cuts made by the rods. Then she cleansed the inside of the quivering thighs removing the stains of her juices.

"My friends," the Sheikh announced, rising from his chair. "You have all, I hope, enjoyed the slave's unusual performance, both her dancing and her display under the cane. Several of you have asked to buy her. I am sorry to disappoint you but she is not for sale. However, as a fitting climax to this evening's entertainment, there is one last treat in store for five of you."

As the sheikh was speaking, the eunuchs released Tanya's bonds and she collapsed on the floor and slowly crawled to kneel in front of her master. A soft groan escaped her lips as she knelt, her heels sinking into her tortured buttocks, and lowered her forehead to the floor.

"You will see a wooden disc on the table in front of you," the sheikh continued, looking down on the trembling body of his beaten slave. "A raffle will now be held. Five lucky ones among you will win the opportunity to slake the urges the slave's performance may have aroused in you. Those who wish to take part, please scratch your name on the disc and place it in the bowl that Shamil will now take round."

The sheikh watched with amusement as all of his guests quickly scratched their names on their disc. Shamil passed by them and collected the discs in a deep gold bowl. He went and stood beside the kneeling slave.

"It is fitting that the slave should be the one to determine which of you will be the five lucky ones," the sheik announced. "Proceed Shamil."

"Kneel up, slave," Shamil ordered.

Tanya eased her pain filled body upright, issuing another soft groan as the movement caused her heels to press deeper into her bottom. She had heard the sheikh's speech although the meaning of his words had not fully penetrated the mist that clouded her brain. She was aware of Shamil holding a golden bowl in front of her, high enough so that she could not see its contents.

"Reach into the bowl, slave," Shamil ordered. "Take out a disc and hand it to me."

Tanya reached into the bowl, felt the wooden discs, extracted one and handed it to the eunuch. She heard him call out a name, followed by a shout of triumph. Following the eunuch's orders, she removed four more discs and handed them to him. More shouts of triumph followed as the eunuch called out the names written on them. He then ordered her to rise to her feet.

Tanya obeyed and the mist slowly began to disperse as Shamil's minions led her to the erected screens and ordered her to lie, face up, on the divan. They spread her arms and legs wide and strapped her wrists and ankles to the corners. When full consciousness returned, Tanya softly wept tears of pain and humiliation as it dawned on her why she had been so positioned and that the pirate captain had witnessed her degradation. She felt the sheet beneath her, its coolness soothing her flaming buttocks. As she had heard her master speaking, she had been unable to clearly distinguish his words, and she had wondered what further trials were intended for her. Now she knew and the knowledge fuelled a feeling of rebellion in her! The five men, whose names had been on the discs she had drawn from the bowl were going to use her. She shuddered with disgust as one of the eunuchs placed a blindfold over her eyes. She was not even to be permitted to see which of the men fouled her body.

Despite the revulsion she felt about what was to be done to her, she felt the arousal that still lingered in her loins, becoming more intense. She heard footsteps approach.

"You are under strict orders not to come," Shamil's voice whispered in her ear.

She heard the sound of clothing being removed and then felt someone kneel on the foot of the divan. Hard hands clasped her already aching breasts as the man thrust his penis into her tunnel. She felt her muscles close around the organ as he

quickly took his pleasure of her body. She felt him ease himself away from her, having first shed his satisfaction deep into her. Then she felt something hot and throbbing pressed against her mouth. She opened her lips and, using her tongue, licked him clean, tasting his juices as she sucked the last few drops of his pleasure from him. One by one, the other four winners followed, each intensifying the arousal in her body until she found it almost impossible to control it. At last, she cleansed the last one and, once he had departed, the eunuchs released her limbs.

Tanya was led back to the harem, where Leila and Ayesha had stayed awake, waiting for her return. They immediately took her to where a hot bath awaited and washed her body, removing the evidence of her ordeal. At first the hot water stung her buttocks terribly, making her cry out softly, but soon had a soothing effect. She lay back in the tub and docilely submitted to their attentions. Afterwards, they helped her to her own couch where they applied soothing cream to her injured bottom. They nursed her in silence, not questioning her about what had happened, as this was clearly evident from her condition. Eventually, they left her alone and she dropped off into a deep, healing, sleep.

It was well into the next morning before Tanya awoke. She was struggling to get up when Ayesha appeared and told her to stay where she was. The other girls would see to her chores and she and Leila would soon come with some food and attend to her bottom. Tanya was a little mystified. It was not usual for a girl to be excused duties, or for the others to attend to her again the next day after a flogging. Later that day, Leila explained that, whereas beatings were accepted as part of their lives, to be beaten and used, as Tanya had been, had aroused their sympathy. In fact it was not until the following day that Ayesha let her get up and resume her place in the harem. By tacit agreement, no one mentioned her ordeal to her and Tanya tried to push it to the back of her mind.

There were two things that gave her concern, and which she could not completely banish from her mind. First, if her master had been pleased with the entertainment she had provided, he might order more performances in the future. Second, the pirate captain, despite his strange clothes she was still certain it was him that she had seen in the hall, had witnessed her humiliation and disgrace. Not that she was ever likely to see him again!

The daily routine continue unchanged, although Tanya was ordered to spend some time each day exercising and practising her dancing. The other girls in the harem, none of whom were trained dancers, persuaded her to do her practising where they could see. Tanya agreed to oblige and it soon became part of the routine. The others, strangely without exception, praised her prowess and she found that she enjoyed dancing for them. The only drawback was the way Mansur, when he was on duty, stared at her body as she danced. She was sure he was remembering the terrible thrashing he had given her that evening and imagining repeating the pleasure.

The time came again for the monthly punishment parade. Tanya, whose offences

had been deferred at the last one, was in a state of terrible anticipation as the line of slaves entered the punishment hall. Although her buttocks had fully recovered from that evening, she was greatly relieved when her name was called and she had only earned eight strokes. She dropped her trousers and bent over, holding her ankles tight, as the lesson was applied. She didn't lose count and remembered to thank her master as was required of her. She returned to her place in line, thankful for having escaped so lightly. As she watched the others redeem their black marks, she thought of her life thus far.

To her surprise, she discovered that she did not really mind being a slave girl. It would have been better, of course, if she had been allowed to choose her own master and not to have to share him with other girls. But then, would she have been a real slave? Perhaps her present existence was her true kismet. Her reverie came to an end when the last girl had been beaten and they all returned to the harem. She attended to Leila's bottom, which had received fifteen strokes of the cane, and the two talked together, discussing their lives and what the future held in store for them.

CHAPTER 9.

Many months passed. Tanya was only called upon to repeat the ordeal of dancing and entertaining at a feast once, and on that occasion she was used by eight of the master's guests. The second time had not seemed as bad as the first. As with everything else, she had discovered that it was always the first time with anything unpleasant that was the worst. She was called upon to dance for the sheikh alone quite often and it always ended with her being ordered to his bed for the night. It was a mark of the affection that all the girls had for her that not even Ayesha was jealous of these occasions. Perhaps it was because they saw the weals on her behind when she returned to the harem the next morning.

Tanya had settled down to her existence, doing her best to please her master and the eunuchs and so avoid punishment, resigned to the fact that it was to be the pattern of the rest of her life, until she became too old to be pleasing in her master's eyes. Then she hoped she would only be relegated to work somewhere in the palace for the rest of her days. Fate, though, had other plans in mind for her and her untroubled existence in the harem was not to be allowed to follow the course she had envisaged.

It was a lovely sunny morning and Tanya was lying half asleep on a couch in the garden adjoining the harem. The air was filled with the sweet scent of the flowers and a sense of tranquillity had enveloped her. Both the eunuchs and her master had left her alone for a week or so and she felt at ease with her lot. Unbeknown to her, Mansur had summoned the girls into the building to watch one of them beaten with the traditional three strokes of his strap for some misdemeanour. He looked round and noticed Tanya's absence. Instead of sending one of the girls, or another eunuch, to fetch her, he decided to go himself. He went into the garden and saw her reclined on the couch. He approached softly. Tanya, oblivious to his

approach, became aware of a bee buzzing round her head.

"Go away, you pest," she shouted as she swung her arm, intending to chase the insect away. Instead she hit Mansur. Not only hit him but, to make matters worse, hit him in his crotch. It was the impact of her hand against something solid that made her sit up and take notice of her surroundings. She immediately became aware of the terrible predicament she was in. She had struck a eunuch. Not just a eunuch but Mansur, and in a place about which he was very sensitive. She quickly fell from the couch and, on her knees, began to apologise for the accident most profusely.

"Silence slave," he yelled at her, his face suffused with anger. "You dared to strike me and ordered me to go away and called me a pest." He was nearly stammering in his anger. "This will be reported to Shamil immediately!" So saying he marched from the harem leaving the unfortunate girl he was going to use his strap on bending over, still waiting.

Tanya continued to kneel there, appalled at what had transpired. It had been a pure accident! She had not even known he was there. She began to shake in terror as she realised no one else had witnessed the event. It would be his word against hers. And who would believe a slave? She looked up and saw her friend, Leila, standing at her side.

"Whatever have you done to make Mansur so angry?" she asked quietly.

Tanya explained exactly what had happened and how it had all been a terrible accident, and how she had tried to explain to Mansur.

"It is no good trying to explain to that one, nor to apologise to him. He looks for every excuse to get us into trouble." Leila said as she gently stroked Tanya's head. "You have given him the perfect opportunity to have you severely punished."

Her words did little to quell Tanya's terror. Leila, realising that she could not do any good just uttering worthless platitudes, walked back into the harem. Tanya rose from her knees and, after standing still for a few minutes to try and compose herself, also went back into the building. The other girls, aware that something drastic had happened, tried to appear carefree, but their efforts were not very successful. It was some while later, as she lay on her own sleeping couch awaiting the dreadful summons that Tanya saw Ayesha disappear through a far door with Shamil. 'Oh God!' she thought. 'Surely they are not going to make Ayesha suffer as well.'

Tanya had to wait in fearful suspense until mid afternoon for the summons she dreaded. One of the eunuchs came up to her and ordered her to follow him. Instead of taking her to Shamil's room, he led her through the palace towards the sheikh's quarters. Here they joined Shamil, who was waiting outside a heavy brass studded door. He knocked and in response to a summons from within, ushered

Tanya and the eunuch inside. They entered a large room, three walls of which were lined with shelves containing books. The fourth was a continuous line of windows, which looked out onto a beautiful garden with the usual fountains playing in the sunlight. The sheikh was seated on a chaise longue studiously reading a book. Tanya fell to her knees and bowed her head to the floor, trying hard to stop her body shaking. Shamil and the eunuch stood, silently, either side of her. It was some minutes before the sheikh put aside the book and looked down on her.

"Look at me, slave," he ordered sternly.

Tanya, dreading what she might see in his eyes, sat back on her heels and raised her glance to his. She could read nothing in his dark eyes.

"I understand that this morning you struck one of the eunuchs," he said. "Is this true?"

"Yes, Master," Tanya stammered. She knew it would be no good trying to explain. It would only make her situation worse. Better to hear the worst and get it over with!

"You realise that the eunuchs are my representatives and that, in striking one of them, you strike me?" the sheikh asked, glaring at her.

"Yes, Master," Tanya replied softly. The matter was getting worse by the minute. She had not looked at it in that way but there was no benefit in trying to explain.

"I understand from Shamil that the matter is not as clear cut as Mansur first alleged," the sheikh continued. "Ayesha told him that it was an accident. That you were trying to discourage some flying insect! Is that correct?"

"That is exactly what happened, Master," Tanya replied. "I would not dare to strike any of the eunuchs or any of your servants."

The sheikh had been looking deeply into her eyes as she had replied and Tanya had returned his gaze unwaveringly. He could tell whether a slave was lying or not.

"I am tempted to believe your account of the matter," the sheikh eventually replied. "However, to strike one of my servants, even by accident, is a serious matter. Further, Mansur is adamant that you did it on purpose. You will be confined in one of the punishment cells until tomorrow morning while I decide what must be done with you." He looked up at Shamil. "Take the wench away and lock her up."

Tanya was grasped by the arms and led from the room. Although she had never seen the punishment cells, she knew these were situated very close to the

punishment yard where she had been taken for a whipping the first time she had met her master. She remembered Hassan and the terrifying apparatus and instruments for inflicting pain she had seen there. She was thrust into the cell and the metal barred gate was closed and locked behind her. She looked round. In one corner was an empty bucket and along one wall stood a hard bench. The only illumination came from a narrow window set high in one of the walls. She sank down on the hard bench and began to weep quietly. She was given no food that day and the only time she saw anyone was when one of the eunuchs passed her a flagon of water through the bars.

Somehow she managed to sleep during the night only to wake up in the morning, cold and stiff. She drank a little of the water in the flagon and sat on the bench awaiting her fate. The time seemed to drag by. She wanted whatever they were going to do to her to be over and done with quickly. The waiting was nearly as bad as the actual punishment. Judging by the sunlight that streamed through the window, it was about mid-day when one of the eunuchs came and unlocked the door and ordered her out. Trembling with terror, she followed him along a passage and into a large room. A bath of hot water stood to one side and, after lying on a bench while she was depilated, she was ordered to bathe. She had almost finished when Shamil, accompanied by Leila and Ayesha entered the room. He halted by the bath and looked down on her.

"The Master has agreed that these two slaves may attend to you. You will not speak to them, nor they to you except to give you instructions," said Shamil.

Tanya looked at her two friends and tried to raise a weak smile of thanks. After the bath, she was dried and her body massaged with scented oils. Cosmetics were applied to her face and body and her hair brushed out and then raised to form a crown on top of her head. It was fixed securely in place with clasps and pins. This confirmed her worst fears to Tanya. It was her back that was to pay the price of her offence! A long, almost transparent tube of material was dropped over her head, held in place with a tied ribbon on each shoulder. Shamil inspected her closely and then fastened padded cuffs, each of which had a metal ring attached, on her wrists and ankles.

He left her alone with her two friends and the eunuch guard. Tanya looked at her friends and smiled as she saw deep concern showing in their eyes. After a short time, the door opened. Instead of Shamil, it was the eunuch Mehmet who entered. The one who had been kind to her on her first visit to Hassan. He held a goblet in his hand and held it out to her.

"Drink this down," he ordered. "It is to ensure you remain conscious during the punishment and it also inhibits any sexual stimulation the flogging may induce."

Tanya looked at his face and was surprised to see pity in his eyes as she took the goblet and drained it down quickly. It tasted nice and sweet, too nice for something that was to ensure she felt the full effect of the punishment! Not only

that, it would prevent any sanctuary in sexual pleasure which might otherwise have helped her endure the whipping to come. Mehmet took the goblet from her shaking hands and, handing it to the other eunuch, signalled him to leave the room.

"It is time to take you to the door into the yard," he said softly as he gently held her arm. "Try and be brave, little one, it will soon be over."

"Thank you, Sir," Tanya whispered. "You are very kind. I will try and be brave. It will not be necessary to hold me and drag me to the post."

Giving her a final smile of encouragement, and marvelling at her bravery, Mehmet turned and led the way from the room. Tanya, followed closely by Leila and Ayesha, fell into step behind him. He eventually halted by a door which, Tanya assumed, led into the yard. They had only to wait for a moment or two before the door opened. Mehmet stepped through and led the small procession into the yard. Tanya looked round. There was no one there except the sheikh, seated on a large chair with Shamil and Hassan standing behind him. For some reason which she did not understand, Mansur was nowhere in sight. The procession halted in front of the sheikh and Mehmet stepped to one side. Tanya immediately fell to her knees and bowed her head to the floor.

"The slave Tanya is guilty of assaulting one of her Master's eunuchs," Shamil's voice broke the silence. "This action constitutes an assault on her Master for which the punishment is death."

Tanya felt her body shaking with terror. So that was why her hair had been drawn up on her head. To leave her narrow neck bare for the axe! So her young life was to be cut short in the next few minutes.

"Kneel up and look at me slave," the sheikh ordered sternly.

Tanya obeyed. She looked into his expressionless eyes and could see no sign of mercy, or regret, for the terrible fate she was to suffer. Could he see the terror in her own? She hoped not!

"I have considered this matter carefully." Her Master's voice broke the deathly silence. "Ayesha assured me you intended no assault on Mansur and I am inclined to believe her judgement. This time, therefore, you will not lose your head. However, you must be taught to be more careful in the future. You are to be punished with twenty-five lashes of the 'kitten' across your back. Let the punishment proceed, Shamil."

"Stand, slave," Shamil ordered.

Ayesha and Leila turned and knelt, facing the centre of the yard as Tanya rose to her feet. She was not to die after all she realised with relief. She had not seen a

'kitten' but knew what it was. A thick handle from which hung nine thongs of plaited leather some six feet in length! It was not as heavy or vicious as the cat-o-nine tails that was used on the male slaves but, she had heard, it hurt terribly. It was probably the worst instrument to be used on a female slave's body. She felt Mehmet undo the ribbons at her shoulders and the flimsy garment slid to the ground at her feet. She stepped to one side and turned to face the centre of the yard. She could see the two thick wooden posts, with the beam across their tops, to which she would be tied. Taking a deep breath, she shrugged off Mehmet's hands on her arms and walked slowly towards the place where her ordeal would take place.

She halted when she was between the posts and raised her arms upwards and outwards until they were almost against the ends of the crosspiece. A length of rope hung from the ends and Mehmet tied these to the rings at her wrists and pulled the ropes taut until her feet were raised from the ground. He bent down and tied another rope through the rings at her ankles and, pulling this taut, secured it to a ring in the ground. This was to stop her body swinging under the blows of the whip. Tanya looked over her shoulder in time to see Hassan approaching, the 'kitten' in his hands.

Mehmet, having ensured her body was held rigid, whispered last words of encouragement in her ear and then stepped to one side.

Tanya watched as Hassan checked that she was correctly secured and then disappeared from her sight. She shut her eyes, clamped her teeth tight and gripped the ropes holding her wrists. Her last thought was that her poor back was stretched taut and would suffer terribly under the plaited thongs. She prayed she would not be permanently marked. She heard the swish as the thongs sped through the air and then there was an almighty thump across her back as the lashes landed driving the air from her lungs. The pain that erupted in her back and shoulders was beyond her belief. It was just as if white-hot coals had been laid on her. And she was to receive twenty-five strokes just like that! She heard Mehmet, standing at her side, call out the stroke.

Again the thongs whistled through the air, another heavy thud across her back and the fire already raging there increased in intensity. This time a deep groan escaped her clenched teeth as she felt her control snap. She felt so helpless, hung there while a man whipped her body so cruelly. How could one person cause such agony to another? Then she remembered that she was not a person, merely a slave. An animal to be treated in any manner the man who owned her wished. For the first time the full extent of her slavery was brought home to her.

The next stroke landed slightly lower down. Whereas the first two had cut across her back and shoulders, this one curled round her side, the ends of the thongs seeking out, and finding, her succulent upthrust breast, one thong actually cutting against her nipple. The pain was beyond her endurance and a loud scream followed the sharp report of the impact and drowned out the count.

Hassan, under orders not to scar the slave's body, continued to apply the whip to her back and shoulders. With the slave's ankles anchored to the ground, her body was prevented from swinging under the strokes, but she was writhing and squirming delightfully as the thongs laced across her tender flesh. Due to the strict regime in the harem, it was not often that he was given the luxury of applying a whip to a white girl's back. He would dearly have liked to use the 'snake', the heavy thong whip that could cut even a man's back to the bone, on her. To scar her flesh just as his own had been! But orders were orders, and he dare not disobey them. Still, this was better than nothing, and she was screaming delightfully as each stroke was applied.

Tanya soon lost count of the strokes. The agony in her back was more than she could bear but the potion she had drunk prevented her from losing consciousness. It was also inhibiting her body's normal response to pain - there was not the slightest sign of an arousal to help ease her suffering. The weight of her slender body was putting a strain on her wrists, made worse each time her body jerked forward as the lashes were applied. As the pain increased, she sank into a world of her own, where the only thing she was aware of was the increasing agony in her back.

Mehmet, for his part, watched the slave carefully as he called out the count. As expected, she had begun to scream on the second stroke - no girl would have been able to take more. Her body broke out in a glistening sweat after the fifth and, three lashes later, it was pouring down her body and legs. Apart from calling the count, his task was to ensure that the slave did remain conscious and also that Hassan applied the strokes correctly, not cutting too deep into her soft flesh. By the time the fifteenth stroke had been applied, there were traces of bright red seeping down her back in the rivulets of sweat. He whispered a word of caution to Hassan.

Stroke after stroke whistled across her back and Tanya lost all sense of her surroundings, being only conscious of the ever-increasing agony burning in her back. Her throat was hoarse from her screaming and her arms felt as if they were being wrenched from their sockets. The mist of pain quickly thickened into a heavy fog and, as the eighteenth stroke burned a path across her back she no longer had the strength to scream. Only her writhing and squirming gave evidence that she was still conscious of the punishment being inflicted on her. Although her eyes were completely fogged with tears that streamed down her face and onto her breasts, her mind was still fully functioning. Mental visions of her body, hanging from the beam flashed through her brain and she could see the cruel thongs tearing the flesh from her bones.

Hassan raised his arm and sent the thongs lashing across the slave's back for the final stroke. He took one last look at her pain-racked body and, with a smile of satisfaction on his face, strode from the yard, bowing to the sheikh as he passed. The sheikh rose from his chair and walked towards the suspended slave and

surveyed her back. He had watched the execution of the punishment without any feeling of pity. In his eyes, she fully deserved the flogging and his only concern was that her back should not be scarred permanently. He fully intended to enjoy the beauty of her body for some time to come and it must not be disfigured. He looked closely at his slave and nodded his satisfaction. Hassan had applied the whip correctly. He turned and marched from the yard, nodding his satisfaction with the matter to Shamil as he passed.

Tanya was only aware that her ordeal had ended and that the full punishment had been dealt out, when she felt the rope being removed from her ankles. Her wrists were released from the beam and her pain filled body, gently assisted by Leila and Ayesha, was lowered until she sank in a weeping, shuddering, heap on the ground. Gradually, the fog into which her brain had descended began to clear. She opened her eyes and looked up through the tears and saw her friends bending over her, concern and wonder clearly showing in the expressions on their faces. As gently as they could, they lifted her to her feet and, each with an arm supporting her, led her from the yard and back to the harem.

Full realisation of her surroundings returned and Tanya opened her eyes and looked round. She was lying on her stomach on her night couch with Ayesha and Leila kneeling at her side. Further back, all the other girls in the harem were standing looking at her, utter disbelief etched on their faces. For many, it was the first time they had seen one of their number given so many lashes with the 'kitten'. The sight of Tanya's whipped back filled them with terror, knowing the same could be done to them at their Master's whim.

Tanya looked up at Leila. "Is it very bad?" she stammered through the sobs that still racked her body. "Will I be marked for life?" This was her one fear! If she was permanently marked, she knew the sheikh would banish her from the harem and sell her to some low class brothel.

"No!" Leila whispered back. "Your poor back will soon heal and the marks will disappear completely. The Master must have ordered Hassan not to whip you too hard."

"I wouldn't want to be whipped any harder than that," Tanya replied, trying to force a smile to her lips.

"I wouldn't want to be whipped at all," Leila answered, also smiling. It was a wonder to her that Tanya could raise a smile, knowing the terrible pain that must be burning in her back. "Now bite on this," she said, putting a rolled up cloth against Tanya's mouth. "Shamil has said you may have the soothing cream applied immediately, but it will hurt a lot at first."

Tanya opened her mouth and, when the cloth had been pushed in between her teeth, closed them tightly on it. She felt her two friends begin to spread the healing cream on her weals. Although they tried to be as gentle as they could, the

pain welled up in her back and she cried out loud as it seeped into the cuts made by the lashes. Gradually, the cream took effect and the pain subsided. She spat out the cloth and turned her head to her friends, her eyes glowing with gratitude. Since she could not lie on her back, Ayesha told her to kneel up, while they attended to the weals on her breast. Tanya looked down on her orbs and shuddered as she saw the welts that had cut into her soft flesh and the dried blood on the nipple where the end of a thong had cut into it. A groan escaped her clenched teeth as Ayesha gently applied more cream to the wounded area.

The girls had just finished their ministrations when Tanya was aware of them standing back and another figure leaning over her. She opened her eyes and saw Mehmet bending over her, inspecting her back closely. He waved the other girls away.

"You were very brave, little one," he said softly. "Your back will heal completely. Try and behave yourself in future. Hassan is disappointed that the Master ordered a light whipping. He is eager to repeat the punishment without restraining orders. He hates all white women and his one desire is to be given a free hand with one and whip the flesh from her back. So take very good care. Now I must go. You may rest here for the remainder of the day."

Tanya turned her head and looked up at the eunuch. She was puzzled at the concern he was showing for her welfare. It was the second time that had happened.

"Thank you, Sir," she replied, forcing a brave smile to her lips. "I will try not to earn another whipping."

The eunuch turned away and walked from the harem. Tanya continued to lie on the couch and Leila stayed with her and applied several doses of the cream to her wounds during the day. Eventually night came and the girls settled down. Whether it was the remaining effect of the potion, or the discomfort caused by the flogging, Tanya couldn't get to sleep. She lay there, thinking about her life and visions of the pirate captain kept recurring in her mind. His cruel, yet handsome face seemed to haunt her. She wished he had defied the slaver, Suleimann, and kept her for himself. She would have served him willingly and as perfectly as she could, and she would have been proud to bear the marks of his whip on her body. Eventually she fell into a deep, dreamless, exhausted sleep.

When she awoke the next day and went to wash, she was astounded to see that the cream had already begun to work. The weals were already losing their angry redness and, apart from a slight stiffness, her back was not uncomfortable. Her breast, and especially the nipple, were still sore but did not throb as badly as they had the previous evening. The routine in the harem returned to normal. Leila applied the cream to her back and breast several times each day and gradually the physical evidence of her ordeal disappeared. The day she looked at her back in the long mirror and saw it had returned to its previous white smoothness, she was

very relieved. The mental scars, she knew, would never disappear. She would always remember her first proper whipping. It had finally released the latent slave girl that she knew she really was. To serve a man, totally and completely was what she had been born for!

The second disaster arrived some three months after her ordeal with the whip in the yard. In the meantime, she had managed to avoid serious trouble, even her beatings for the monthly sessions had not been more than eight strokes, which she had taken without any problem. When her back had fully recovered, she had been sent for by her master on several occasions and had striven to please him, even suggesting he caned her harder than usual if it pleased him to do so. Her submissiveness, and her transformation into a complete slave girl, had not escaped his notice. He had rewarded her by letting her have her needs satisfied many times and, as her orgasms flowed through her, it had been the most exquisite pleasure.

She was strolling around the harem garden one day, humming a tune quietly to herself. Her mood was relaxed and happy as she had spent the previous night with her master and had pleased him so much that he had used both a cane and a strap on her, making her orgasm so repeatedly that she had nearly passed out. There were many exquisite flowers and shrubs in the garden and, in one corner, a fully grown peach tree which provided the fruit for the master's table. Needless to say, the slaves were expressly forbidden, on pain of terrible retribution, from touching the fruit. It was the duty of the eunuchs to pick the fruit as soon as it was ripe and take it to the master's chef.

Completely lost in her daydreams, Tanya had meandered to the corner where the tree grew. She had always loved peaches and they were one of the things she missed most. Her father had had several trees growing in his garden and he had always allowed her to pick from them as she wished. She stopped under the tree and looked up longingly at the fruit hanging there. She saw one peach that the eunuch had missed that morning and, without really realising what she was doing, stretched up closing her hands gently round the succulent fruit.

"What do you think you are doing?" a high pitched voice shouted behind her. She turned quickly, a guilty expression on her face and confronted Mansur. "You were about to pick the fruit. You know it is forbidden. Now I will see you are really punished."

"I was not going to pick it," Tanya exclaimed, horrified at the predicament in which she had been caught. "See. It is still hanging on the tree."

"You picked it. Look," Mansur answered, a sneering grin on his face as he reached up and knocked the peach to the ground at her feet.

He stooped down and picked up the fruit. As he straightened up he grasped her tightly by the arm, dragging her through the harem to Shamil's room.

"Sir," Mansur said as Shamil looked up, surprised at his entrance. "I caught this slave stealing fruit from the tree in the garden."

Shamil looked at the girl his minion had dragged into the room and thrust forward. Tanya fell to her knees before the Chief Eunuch.

"I didn't pick it!" she screamed looking up at Shamil, terrified by the anger that had reddened his face. "I did not pick it!" she repeated, imploringly. "I was only touching it when Mansur shouted at me. It was he that took it from the tree."

"Are you saying that Mansur is lying?" Shamil shouted at her. "This is the second time you have tried that excuse. The first time your wiles blinded the Master to the truth. I will see that does not happen again." He turned to Mansur. "Take her to the punishment cells. The Master is away for two days. This matter will have to wait until his return."

With a satisfied smirk on his face, Mansur grabbed her and pulled her to her feet. He dragged her, still protesting her innocence through the building to a punishment cell, pushed her inside and locked the door. Tanya collapsed, terrified, in a corner. Somehow she knew that her master would not accept any excuse this time. Any protestations of her innocence would only serve to make her position worse. As if it could be! The time passed slowly, her mind numbed by the thought of the terrible tortures to which she would be subjected. Nothing, even had she been the Master's favourite, could save her against such a serious charge. Mansur, and probably Hassan, would have their deepest desires fulfilled.

When daylight finally illuminated her cell the next morning, Mehmet entered the cell, carrying a flagon of water and some dry bread. They were not going to waste good food on a 'dead' slave. For that is what she was certain she would be when the sheikh heard Mansur's report.

She looked at the eunuch as he placed the meagre provisions on the floor. Did she detect some glimmer of sympathy in his eyes?

"What will be done with me, Sir?" she dared to ask, although she expected silence in return. Was it better to know her fate in advance or be left in ignorance until the last minute?

"That will depend on the Master," Mehmet replied, looking at her sorrowfully. She was surprised he had risked answering her. No one was supposed to converse with a slave in the punishment cells. "For certain, your right hand will be cut off, and you will be branded with the sign of the thief on your forehead. Those are the mandatory punishments for a thief in this country. After that, it will depend on the Master but I expect you will be lucky if he orders only a hundred lashes with the 'cat' first." So saying he turned and exited the cell, locking the door behind him.

Tanya curled up in a ball in the corner, ignoring the bread and water. What he had said had filled her with unspeakable terror. She looked round her cell frantically, searching for some way to end her life and escape such a barbaric punishment. There was none! It was not fair! She had not stolen the fruit! But, if Mansur had not appeared at that precise moment, would she have taken it and eaten it?

The following day passed slowly and gradually the cell became dark as day gave way to night. In the morning the sheikh would be told of her offence and her fate would be sealed. The waiting and trepidation in the face of such horrors were insupportable.

CHAPTER 10.

Tanya must have fallen into a doze. Her sleep had not been untroubled. She had dreamed of the tortures to be inflicted on her, of the rest of the slaves and servants who would be compelled to watch her punishment. If she survived, which she doubted she dreamed of being tied out on a bed in some filthy brothel while equally filthy men used her body for their pleasure. She came awake suddenly, soaked in sweat, to find that it was still dark. Surely the Master had not returned earlier than expected. There was a hand held tight over her mouth and another shaking her shoulder to waken her. She looked up and saw that it was Mehmet.

"Do not utter a sound," he ordered in a whisper in her ear. "Do you understand?"

Tanya nodded and the hand was eased away from her mouth.

"Stand up, quick," Mehmet ordered.

Tanya obeyed and, as she gained her feet, saw that the cell door was open and the young captain, to whom the sheikh had once given her as a reward, standing in the opening. Mehmet threw a long hooded black robe over her and grasped her arm.

"We must move quickly," he said. "Whatever you do, do not hesitate or make a sound."

Tanya felt the grip on her arm tightened and she was guided out of the cell. She heard the door closed and locked behind her. With astonishment she realised that she was not being taken for punishment. They would not go to these lengths! Were they rescuing her? But surely the guard captain and Mehmet would not risk the sheikh's wrath for a mere slave girl. With silent footsteps, the three figures dodged and darted along corridors, evading the guards somehow, until they arrived in the open near the driveway leading to the only gates in the high outer wall. Treading carefully along the edge of the grass, avoiding the loose gravel on the driveway, the trio approached the gates.

"Wait here," the guard captain whispered.

He disappeared into the bushes along the other side of the drive. There was a long silence and then Tanya thought she heard the slight noise of a door being opened. She began to shake. Was her rescue to be discovered so soon? A shadow darted across the drive. It was the guard captain returning.

He beckoned and they followed him as he darted back across the drive and disappeared again into the bushes. They seemed to be following the outside wall, going away from the main gates. Eventually they came to a halt and Tanya saw, with astonishment, that part of the wall had opened enough for them to squeeze through. She realised that it must be some secret escape route in case the palace was ever attacked. On the other side of the opening, they pushed their way through thick bushes, which hid the secret door, and which Mehmet had pushed closed behind them. The bushes gave way to open land and she saw one of the young guards, standing holding the reins of four horses.

"I hope you can ride," Mehmet whispered.

Tanya nodded.

"Then get on a horse and let's get away while we can," the guard captain urged, leading her to one of the horses. "It may be some time before your escape is discovered. Then the hunt for us will be in full cry."

Tanya pulled herself into the saddle and the other three mounted. They set off at a sharp canter, the guard captain leading with Mehmet and the other guard either side of her. Tanya soon regained her riding ability and the group held a fast pace for some time before the guard captain signalled them to slow down and give the horses a chance to get their wind. They travelled like this for several hours, alternately urging the horses into a crisp gallop then a steady walk. All the time her escort kept looking over their shoulders into the distance to ensure they were not being followed. They eventually came to a broken down hut at the edge of the desert where they found a fierce looking Arab waiting for them.

They entered what was left of the building and Mehmet ordered Tanya to remove her clothes. When she stood naked, he reached into a corner and threw some garments across to her. They were the clothes worn by Bedouin women, quite unlike anything she had seen before and, when she had put them on they made a good disguise. Mehmet made her lean forward and poured some liquid over her hair which, when he had worked it in turned it from blonde to black, and then pulled a hood over it. Meanwhile, he and the two guards had changed into different clothes.

When they emerged from the ruins, the Arab had five large camels tethered ready for them. Four equipped with saddles and the fifth already laden with provisions

and a tent. A sum of money changed hands and Tanya was lifted on to one of the camels and her escort mounted the others. The small caravan set off into the desert. It was still night and the guard captain set a fast pace. He clearly wished to get as deep into the desert as he could before daylight came. They travelled for some hours. The sun rose over the horizon and the heat began to beat down on them. Tanya, who had been kept out of the heat of the sun for some time suffered the worst. Her mouth was parched and the sweat made her unaccustomed clothing stick to her body. The motion of the camel on which she was mounted did not help as it made her feel sick.

It must have been about mid morning when Mehmet called to the captain ahead and pointed behind them. Fear gripped Tanya as she thought they were being pursued. She looked behind her, where the others were gazing and saw a dark cloud approaching. A sandstorm! The ideal thing to obliterate any tracks they may have left behind them. Calling for them to hurry, the captain led them into a deep wadi where they hastily hobbled the camels and erected the tent. They crawled inside and listened as the wind howled around them, driving particles of sand against the fabric of the tent. Mehmet handed round a flagon of water and, to her surprise, Tanya was allowed a few swallows.

The sandstorm abated after an hour and they crawled out of the tent. The camels were where they had left them, half covered in sand and none the worse for being left out in the open. The tent was quickly collapsed and they set off again. The heat seemed even worse and, after another two hours of travel, Tanya was relieved when she saw signs of a small oasis in the distance. Mehmet urged his mount ahead to make sure there were no nomadic people around. After a minute or so, he signalled that all was clear and the others joined him under the shade of several palm trees. In case they were disturbed, they quickly replenished their water supply, quenched their thirst and ate some of the food supplied by the Arab.

The guard captain was sure they had eluded any pursuers but thought it wise to set off as soon as possible. They left all their provisions on the spare camel, and their own saddled, ready for a quick departure if necessary. The men took it in turns to keep watch while the others rested in the shade. Tanya felt uncomfortably hot and sticky and the water in the oasis looked inviting. She was not sure of where she stood with the men but her slave girl instinct took charge. She approached Mehmet and knelt submissively before where he sat. She bowed her head to the sand.

"Permission to speak, Sir?" she asked, hesitantly.

"You may speak," he replied.

"What is to be done with me? To where am I being taken? Am I now your slave?" The questions that had been puzzling her all morning spilled out in a rush.

"No!" he answered. "You are not slave to any of us, but you will obey our orders. As to what is to be done with you, you must wait and see."

"Please, Sir," Tanya changed course - she was obviously not going to learn any more from him. "Is it permitted for me to bathe?"

Mehmet looked at her. "You may bathe, but be ready to dress again and leave at a minute's notice, and don't let your hair get wet."

Tanya thanked him and, rising to her feet, walked to the edge of the oasis. Quickly she shed her clothing and sank into the water. It was surprisingly cool and she quickly washed the dust and grime from her body, making sure her hair stayed dry. She would dearly have liked to wash it, but dared not disobey his order. When she eventually emerged from the water, Mehmet had disappeared to take his turn on guard. The other two men sat leaning against the trunks of trees, watching her intently as she came out of the water. They had probably been watching her for some time but it didn't bother her. She was used to having men's eyes on her naked body and the captain had already seen her naked body when he had used her.

The heat of the day began to decline and the captain said it was nearly time to set off again. They ate some of the food and drank their fill from the oasis. When they were ready, they mounted the camels and began another long walk into the desert. They travelled through the evening, night and into the morning, stopping only for short breaks when necessary. They stopped again at another oasis, having made sure they were alone, and remained there until the heat of the day had passed. Tanya was puzzled. Why had these men risked so much to get her out of the sheikh's palace. Surely not to save her from the fate that had threatened her. No slave was worth that! She had tried to wean the answers from them by careful questioning but they had not been forthcoming.

They set off again when the sun began to sink over the horizon. After some hours they came to a range of low mountains and, in single file, made their way over them. As they breasted the top of the pass they had chosen, Tanya was amazed to see the sea in the distance and, from the bottom of the hills, green vegetation spread into the distance. They descended the pass, leaving the desert behind them. The guard captain went some way ahead and Tanya sensed that much greater care was being taken as they approached a small village at the water's edge. She could see many boats drawn up on to the beach and wondered if they were going to be taken in one to some distant shore.

The captain reappeared from the village and the group moved forward until he led them into a small deserted fisherman's hut. They had not waited long before a figure, dressed in long black robes, with a black headdress entered and spoke to Mehmet in some strange tongue. Mehmet answered him and he seemed satisfied with the reply. The stranger handed a bag of money to the captain and the guard and, giving the appropriate farewells, they left the hut. Tanya was never to see

them again. The stranger turned again to Mehmet.

"See the wench is ready to travel," he ordered.

Tanya, obeying Mehmet's order, stripped off her clothing and stood still as he fixed manacles, joined by a short chain, to her wrists behind her back. She opened her mouth so that a ball gag could be inserted, then a long black burka was put over her, completely covering her body and obstructing her vision.

"You have done well," she heard the stranger say. "Here is the sum of money agreed upon. I hope you make it safely back to your own people and have a good life."

Tanya felt a hand on her shoulder. "Farewell, slave. I hope that you will be well pleased when you learn where you are to be taken." It was Mehmet, and she felt a sense of loss as she heard him leave the hut. She was alone with the stranger. She felt her body lifted and thrown over the stranger's shoulder as he walked briskly from the hut. She was aware that he stepped into a small boat and laid her gently down on the boards. She heard the sound of oars in the water as the boat rocked to and fro, then the sound of a voice hailing them and the stranger's reply. She felt a thick rope tied round her waist, a sharp tug and she was floating in the air. She swung back and forth as she was hoisted upwards, then rough hands held her as she was lowered onto a wooden surface. Again she was hoisted onto a pair of stout shoulders and carried, she thought, down some steps and into a room. She was set down and the burka and gag were removed.

She blinked in the bright sunlight that streamed in through a window then, as her eyes became accustomed to the glare, looked round and saw that she was in a ship's cabin. The stranger removed the cloth that covered his face and she saw a pair of black eyes, set in a dark skin, which surveyed her naked body intently. He certainly looked ferocious and she began to tremble with fear as she wondered just what predicament fate had dropped her in this time.

"Remember, girl, you are still a slave and will be treated as such. My first mate is handy with a rope's end and I will not hesitate to let him use it on you if necessary." His voice was deep and masterful and sent shivers of fear down her spine.

She fell to her knees in the submissive position of a slave. "I will try not to displease you," she said softly. She still remembered the first time she had been flogged with a rope's end and did not want the process repeated.

"You will stay in this cabin until we are out of sight of land," he ordered and turned and left the cabin, locking the door behind him.

Tanya looked round the cabin then out of the window. There was no way of escape, even if she wished to. The door was locked and even if the window

opened, she could not swim. She laid herself down on a bunk and fell asleep. She woke up as a hand shook her shoulder. She opened her eyes to see her captor standing over her. The cabin was hot and airless and she began to gasp for breath.

"You may come up on deck now, but you must not speak to any of the crew," he told her.

She followed him up some stairs and out onto the raised deck of the boat. It was only when she saw the lascivious glances from the crew that she remembered that she was still naked. But she was still a slave and must not show embarrassment. She stayed on deck for some hours and eventually saw a coastline in the distance. As they approached it, she saw that there was a large island standing about half a mile off shore and it was to this that the boat seemed to be heading. There was a large building near the summit of the island, which, Tanya thought, looked like a castle. She was herded below decks to the same cabin and locked in. There were sounds of increased activity above her on deck and, after a while, the motion of the boat ceased and she assumed they had reached some harbour.

The captain entered the cabin and ordered her to place her hands behind her back. The manacles were replaced and the black burka thrown over her. She felt a collar placed round her neck, with a long chain that fell between her breasts. Her stomach began to cringe with fear as she wondered what further ordeal fate had in store for her now. Whilst on the boat, she had enjoyed a certain freedom and, although she had not been allowed to forget that she was still a slave, she had been treated very pleasantly. But now that the short sea voyage was over it seemed that her rescue from the terrible fate in store for her in the sheikh's palace had only precipitated her into more peril.

She felt the chain taken up by the captain, and she was led up on deck. She was hoisted on a pair of strong shoulders and carried down on to the dock. Words were exchanged and she was thrown over the back some animal and a rope tied from her ankles to her wrists and pulled tight under the belly of the animal. The animal began to move forward. She sensed that she was being transported up a steep incline and remembered seeing the dark building at the top of a high hill

Eventually the animal halted and she was pulled to the ground and led into what her ears told her must be a building. The burka was removed and she saw that she was in a large oak panelled hall with tall windows through which the sun shone brightly. There was no furniture in the hall, other than several suits of armour on display in alcoves set in the walls. An elderly European woman, with a severe expression on her face, stood in front of her. She looked her up and down critically and then turned to the boat captain.

"So this is the girl the Master was talking about," she said. "I think the first requirement is a bath. She looks filthy and smells. You may go now and leave her to me. I will report to the Master that she has arrived and he will arrange your

payment to be made."

The boat captain turned and left by the heavy wood door through which they had entered. The woman looked at Tanya, still with a disapproving expression on her face.

"Follow me, child, and we will make you presentable for the Master."

Tanya followed the woman across the hall, through a door and along a passage until they went into a large room at the rear of the building. A bath, filled with hot water, stood in the centre of the room, beside which was a long bench. Two very young girls who looked like Chinese, stood by the bench. The woman ordered Tanya to lie along the bench and signalled to the two girls to start the preparations. They proceeded to shave Tanya's limbs and body, carefully trimming her golden pubic bush. Once the woman was satisfied, Tanya was ordered into the bath and told to wash herself and her hair thoroughly.

After the journey across the desert and the boat trip, Tanya welcomed the luxury of the hot bath and set about scrubbing her body and hair clean. This done, the woman allowed her to relax in the hot water for a few minutes before ordering her out. She was made to stand still while the girls rubbed her dry and then she was once more subjected to the familiar regime of being rubbed with scented oils, having her hair carefully brushed out and finally cosmetics applied .

As the woman closely inspected her Tanya was able to see her reflection in a long mirror. All traces of the ravages of the journey from the sheikh's palace had disappeared and she again looked her normal self.

"Now that you are respectable, I will introduce myself," the woman said. "I am called Chantel. I am the Master's housekeeper and responsible for the running of the household. These two girls are called Su Lin and Mai Su. They are sisters and are the Master's servants."

For the first time since entering the bathroom, Tanya looked hard at the girls. With their dark slanting eyes and long black hair, cut in a fringe at the front and which fell to their shoulders at the back, they were quite beautiful, their slender nubile bodies were evident under the colourful kimonos they wore. There was a certain merriment in their eyes as they returned her glance.

"You will obey me and the girls, without hesitation or question, just as you would the Master," the woman continued. "You are the Master's slave and failure to do so will result in punishment. You will be given tasks to perform to earn your keep and you will do these perfectly. Now you must be dressed and be taken to the Master."

Tanya had listened to the woman carefully. That she was still merely a slave was no surprise to her, but to have to obey these two young girls seemed very

demeaning. But, as ever, she had no choice! She just hoped that they were not allowed to punish her. It had been bad enough to have to bend and bare her bottom to be beaten by the young eunuch but the thought of having to do so again for young girls was just too humiliating. She was given no more time to think further as the girls opened a chest and began to dress her. A long translucent green skirt which hung from a jewelled leather belt was fastened round her hips. The front of the skirt was cut so that a long split left her shapely legs exposed. Golden cups were placed over her breasts, each with a hole in the centre through which her nipples protruded, and they were held in place by golden chains round her neck and back. There was a clasp between the cups to enable quick removal.

An almost transparent veil was placed over her lower face, held in place by earrings. Various snake and slave bracelets were put on her wrists and upper arms and fine chains, to which were attached tiny golden bells, were fastened round each ankle. Once again Chantel scrutinised her closely and, once she was satisfied, ordered Tanya to follow her. Flanked by the young girls, she was led from the room, along more passages and up flights of stairs until the woman halted outside a heavy metal studded door. She turned and, to Tanya's dismay, placed a black blindfold over her eyes. She heard Chantel knock on the door, and receive a summons from within. The young girls each took one of her hands and led her through the door, across a room and brought her to a halt.

She was ordered to kneel and the blindfold was removed. The first thing she saw as her eyes became used to the brightness was a long thin cane and a whip lying on the floor in front of her. At the sight of these fearsome implements she immediately felt the first stirrings of an arousal in her sex. Even though she had now been beaten many times, this phenomenon testified to the thoroughness of the training she had received at the hands of Suleimann's henchmen. A few feet beyond these instruments of pain, was an ornate throne, which, at that moment, was unoccupied.

"Bow your head to the floor, slave," Chantel ordered.

Tanya, keeping her heels sunk in her buttocks, obeyed; her stomach and breasts lying along the tops of her thighs. She heard footsteps and sensed someone sit on the throne.

"Raise your eyes and look at your new Master," Chantel ordered.

Tanya raised herself into a sitting position and looked up at where a face should be. Instead she saw a man, dressed in expensive robes, sitting on the throne. The face was obscured by a mask, through which dark expressionless eyes bore into her own. A deep sense of foreboding swept over her. This was the man who now owned her and she sensed a cruel, perhaps sadistic nature hiding behind the mask. She began to tremble with fear. What bleak future awaited her at this man's hands? She saw him make a signal to the woman.

"Stand, slave," Chantel ordered.

Tanya, trying to control the shaking in her legs, obeyed and stood facing the man. She felt the two sisters slowly remove the filmy garments that clothed her body, until she stood naked, her charms on full display. She looked into those dark eyes and shuddered at the undisguised lust she saw glowing there. They slowly scrutinised her, moving down her body and legs and up again until they stared at her blushing face. The man waved Chantel and the girls away, leaving Tanya alone with her new owner.

Slowly and deliberately, she saw him raise his hands to the mask and remove it. Her heart seemed to stop as his features were revealed. She could hardly believe her eyes. Sitting there before her was 'The Scorpion', the Chevalier Pierre Du Morvan. It was the man of her dreams! The man she had loved ever since he had possessed her on his boat so long ago! Without thinking of the consequences, she flung her naked body at his feet and began kissing them passionately, tears of joy clouding her eyes and all the time declaring her love for him, calling him by his name, 'Pierre'.

"Stand up," he commanded sternly. "You were not given permission to move."

Tanya obeyed willingly, and stood proudly as a slave should before her Master. To her surprise, he rose and stood in front of her and suddenly he clasped her in his arms and kissed her passionately on her mouth. She yielded herself to him, returning his kisses with equal ardour until he suddenly pushed her away.

"You are now mine, Tanya," he said. "I have dreamed of this moment for two years now. How I managed not to kidnap you that evening when you performed at the sheikh's feast, I do not know." He looked deep into her eyes. "I will make you my wife as soon as the arrangements can be made. I hope you will forgive me for the charade that Chantel and the girls performed. At my orders I must admit. I wanted this moment to be a surprise."

Tanya was taken aback. All of a sudden, she did not want to marry him.

"I can't and will not marry you," she said, softly and was astounded at the look of horror and sadness that replaced the joy in his eyes.

"Why ever not?" he asked. "I would have thought that getting your freedom would please you and you have just declared your love for me. I don't understand!"

"I have dreamed and yearned for this moment for two years also," she said. "But I have been so thoroughly trained as a slave that I can't be anything else. I want to be yours more than anything else but only if you will accept me as your slave, not as your wife."

Pierre stood there dumbfounded at her short speech. He did have other slaves in his household, the two young sisters were two of them, but he had not thought of Tanya as his slave since he had last seen her at Suleimann's house. He thought about this conundrum for a few minutes then made up his mind. If he couldn't have her as his wife then he must have her as a slave. It was clear that it would be the only way to keep her. Perhaps in time to come, he could persuade her to change her mind.

"So be it," he said eventually. "You will be my slave, then."

Tanya smiled at him but was afraid that there was some trick involved here! In her mind, she could only be happy and stay with him if she were his slave and he really treated her as such. She looked up into his eyes.

"If I am to be your slave, you must be a true Master to me. You must demand perfect service from me and not hesitate to punish me severely if I displease you in any way," she said, submissively. "Do you promise, Master?"

"Yes, slave," he replied, reaching out to hold her again. "I promise."

Tanya evaded his grasp and fell to her knees at his feet. "Then, Master, please prove your promise. The day your boat docked, I disobeyed you and you would have punished me, if it hadn't been that I had to be presented to the slaver unmarked. I have not yet been punished for that disobedience".

As she spoke, Pierre realised that, after the initial shock of what she had said, he, too, wanted her as a slave after all. His offer of marriage had been sincere, but as a slave, she suddenly appeared infinitely more desirable to him. Seeing her beaten in the sheikh's palace had aroused him no end, and he had been terribly disappointed when he had not won the use of her body in the draw. Yes, he would enjoy being her master much more than her husband. He had remained single because he had dreaded having a woman trying to rule his life. Her request had solved this problem, entirely.

Pierre walked to the door and called Chantel and the girls back and explained to them what had been decided. They all gasped in surprise at his announcement and the two young girls rushed forward and embraced her, calling her 'sister slave'. At Pierre's command, the girls quickly replaced Tanya's filmy garments and led her away to their quarters. These consisted of two rooms in the basement of one of the wings of the building. They were clean and airy, the furniture and furnishings adequate but not lavish. Su Lin, who seemed to be the more senior of the two, took Tanya on a conducted tour of the castle, explaining their duties to her as she went. They came to a heavy door which Su Lin hurried past.

"What is behind that door?" Tanya asked tentatively, although she was sure she knew the answer.

"You don't want to know," Su Lin replied, defensively.

"But I do!" insisted Tanya.

Su Lin gave a shrug of her small shoulders and looked at Tanya as if she thought she was mad. She reached up to a small shelf above the door, took down a key and opened the door. Tanya, her heart beating faster, passed through and found herself in a large yard, open to the sky. Just as she thought, it was a punishment yard. There were various wooden apparatuses scattered around and it reminded her of Hassan's yard and she shuddered as she remembered the times she had been taken there and flogged.

"This was left by the previous owner, who departed in a hurry," Su Lin said at her shoulder. "The master has only used it once when Mai Su had been especially naughty. He tied her over the frame and had her caned hard. I was in the kitchens and heard her screams. Her poor bottom was a mess for days after."

"Does he not use it for all punishments?" Tanya asked, wondering if he would summon her there for the punishment which she knew she was to receive.

"No. He usually just makes us bare our bottoms and bend over wherever he happens to be at the time," Su Lin answered. "Only on the one occasion Mai Su was ordered to report here to Jason to be punished".

Su Lin hurried her away and relocked the door. They made their way back to the main part of the building and found Chantel in the kitchen, busy cleaning. A few minutes later a huge black man entered the kitchen and sat down. Chantel introduced him to Tanya as 'Jason'. He had been the bo'sun on the Master's ship and had elected to join him ashore and act as his general handy man. Tanya looked at his muscular arms and chest and wondered if his duties would be extended to beating her as well. Judging by the way the man stared at her near naked body, he might well enjoy the duty, she thought.

It had been late afternoon when she had been brought ashore and she saw nothing of her Master for the rest of the day. A bed had been made up for her in the same room where the two girls already slept. As they were settling down for the night, Mai Su asked Tanya the question she had been dreading.

"Tanya," her soft voice broke the silence. "We thought that you were being brought here to marry the Master. It was only a joke he told us to play on you when you arrived. Why are you now to be his slave instead of his wife?"

Tanya tried to explain to her, although she was not sure of the answer herself. She told them her life story, from the time she had been sentenced by the judge up to the moment of her arrival on the island. She left out no detail, thinking that would be the best way to make the girls understand. They heard her out in silence, only

gasping when she told them how being beaten caused her body to become aroused, even to the extent of going into an orgasm. She said it was like a drug that, once taken, caused an undeniable need in her body. They thought about this in silence for some time, not fully comprehending what they had heard. They had both been beaten several times in their short lives and could not understand anyone actually wanting it done to them.

The next morning, no reference was made to the conversation the previous evening. Tanya had finished her breakfast and was helping Chantel in the kitchen while the other two went about their duties. She had finished her allotted task and was about to ask Chantel what else she could do when Su Lin entered the kitchen, looking worried. She approached Tanya who, seeing her face, read the message before the girl actually opened her mouth.

"You are to come with me," Su Lin said. "The Master has ordered Mai Su and I to bathe and prepare you and take you to the punishment yard. Please come now."

Tanya bowed her head in acceptance and was just at the doorway when Chantel called to her.

"Come to my room afterwards, child, and I will attend to you."

Tanya followed Su Lin to the room where she had been bathed on her arrival and once again she was prepared. All the time, Tanya was aware of a fluttering in her stomach and a tingling in her sex. This was all preparatory to the beating from her master. The beating she had dreamed about for so long! The beating which would establish his ownership of her. As the girls led her to the yard, she wondered which instrument he would choose to use and whether he would do it himself or allocate the task to Jason. She fervently hoped that, at least this time, it would be the former.

She entered the yard, followed by the two girls. Strangely she did not mind that they would see her beaten. She knew she would not be able to control her reactions, not with the man she dearly loved doing it, and it might help them to understand her better. She walked slowly towards where her Master sat on a chair on a raised dais and fell to her knees, bowing her head to the floor.

"Tanya. You are guilty of disobedience," she heard her Master say. "An offence that was committed some time ago and which is long overdue for correction. Stand."

Tanya rose to her feet and stood perfectly still as the girls gently removed her garments. When she was naked, she knelt again, this time spreading her knees wide and placing her hands, palms together, between her heels. She felt the muscles in her buttocks quivering in anticipation of the pain soon to be inflicted on them. The fluttering in her stomach and the tingling in her tunnel had

increased as the time for her ordeal came nearer.

"Disobedience is an offence that will not be tolerated," her Master continued. "You are to be flogged with twenty-five strokes of the riding switch across your buttocks. Stand and the girls will secure you in position."

Tanya remained kneeling. She looked up into her master's face, "Permission to speak, please Master," she requested in a soft, seductive voice.

"I trust you are now intending to beg for mercy," he replied, anger tingeing his voice

"No Master," Tanya replied. "That is not my intention."

"Then speak. Keep it short and then obey my command."

"Master," Tanya commenced the speech she had often dreamed of making. "I am truly sorry for my offence and as a token of the sincerity of my sorrow, I humbly beg that you will order me to remain silent for the first ten strokes. If I make any sound before the eleventh is applied, then increase my sentence by ten strokes as punishment for my further disobedience."

She had heard gasps of astonishment from the two girls as they digested what she was saying. Their talk the previous evening had made her seem strange to them but they could not understand anyone actually asking for their sentence to be increased. Pierre considered the matter for some time. He had seen her beaten at the sheikh's palace and the eunuch had really laid the rod on hard. Then she had survived eight strokes, only breaking silence on the ninth. It suddenly seemed as if she was issuing him with a challenge as to whether he could lay the switch on harder than the eunuch had the cane. He knew she was well used to being flogged, usually very severely and she had intimated that this thrashing was a test for him to prove that he was a real master to her. But, as far as he knew, she had never been flogged with a switch before. He had no doubt that the slender, supple switch with its whalebone centre would be more painful than a cane.

"Your request is agreed, slave. Now obey my order," he said.

As she rose to her feet, Tanya looked at his face and smiled her thanks. The two girls led her towards a set of raised parallel bars in the centre of the yard. The nearer one was only just wider than her hips and as she reached it she bent forward and laid her arms along the farther bar, which was much longer. The girls tightened leather straps round her wrists and upper arms. Her feet were spread wide apart and tied to rings in the floor. She raised her head and watched as her master strode to a wall where the punishment implements hung. She shuddered as she saw him reach for a very long, very thin switch. The last time she had seen anything like it had been in her father's stable. As he turned and approached her he flexed the switch in his hands until the two ends nearly met. It

was very supple and Tanya shuddered with fear, she knew it would wrap round her taut cheeks and raise livid weals on her bare skin and probably draw blood.

She felt the coolness of the switch held against her backside as he measured his distance.

"Please, my Master," she called out. "Beat your slave well. Make my bottom bleed red tears as proof of my total submission. "

She felt the switch leave her bottom and her cheeks clenched as it whistled through the air. But there was no loud impact, no streak of fire. Instead she felt his hand press on her behind.

"Keep your backside completely relaxed at all times," he ordered.

Tanya forced her behind to obey and again felt the coolness of the switch laid across her cheeks. The butterflies in her stomach went berserk, and she felt her juices moisten the inside of her tunnel. The switch was raised and she heard the 'swish'. This time a searing line of fire burned across the full width of her cheeks and although she gripped the bar tight with her small hands and struggled to hold back the cry that rose in her throat, she felt happier at that moment than at any other time in her life. The man she loved was beating her and actually laying the switch on as hard as she could have wished for.

Pierre laid another five searing strokes across his slave's proffered buttocks, watching her jerk on the impact and her cheeks quivering as the fire spread through them. The erotic sensations he had felt when he had watched her thrashed at the sheikh's again spread through his body and he felt his penis begin to harden and push against the rough material of his breeches. Apart from a slight gasp, which he was prepared to ignore, as each stroke landed, she had remained silent. The two young girls, seeing how quickly the raised weals appeared on her bottom were amazed at the girl's fortitude and the spectacle they were watching. They wondered just how bad, and often, she had been flogged in the past. How any woman could take so much pain in silence mystified them!

Tanya was silently counting the strokes, aware that her body was reacting quicker than usual. The pain was devastating, yet exquisite, and she was tempted to cry out deliberately, just so that she would get the extra ten strokes. She had remained silent as another two strokes lashed her buttocks making eight lines of fire fuelling the furnace blazing in her buttocks. She had only two more to take in silence. Should she cry out or not? The decision was taken from her as the ninth stroke landed, not across her buttocks, but diagonally, crossing the previous ones. The pain broke her control and a loud groan escaped her clenched teeth. The tenth stroke landed exactly on top of the previous one and a shrill scream followed the report of the switch on her bare flesh.

>From then on, she ceased to try and stay quiet, allowing herself to scream loudly

as she focused all her concentration on keeping the threatened arousal at bay. Her squirming bottom received the full twenty-five strokes. Su Lin and Mai Su, unable to drag their eyes away from the spectacle, watched in dreadful fascination as the strokes were laid on, wincing themselves with each impact. They saw the light sheen that broke out on her body turn to a heavy sweat, which ran in thin rivulets over her buttocks to her thighs and fell in droplets from her pendant breasts. They had been astonished as they had seen her exposed sex lips peel open during the thrashing and tiny droplets seep out onto her thighs. Tanya's cheeks were a mass of overlaying raised ridges, quite a few of which had actually broken the skin and thin rivulets of bright red, mixed with her sweat, trickled down her thighs.

Pierre was equally fascinated by the slave's display and congratulated himself on not only having had her abducted from the sheikh's harem but also in agreeing to accept her as a slave and had not taking her to wife. He walked in front of her, grasped a handful of her soaking wet hair, and pulled her face up to look at his. He saw the tears flooding from her eyes and her sweat soaked body still writhing over the bar. He had seen the bright rivers flowing over her bottom and thighs where the switch had drawn blood and was amazed to see a smile appear on her lips.

"You failed to keep silent," he said sternly. "You will now receive the ten penalty strokes." He leaned nearer her ear and added, "You have permission to come."

"Thank you, Master," Tanya answered. She let her body relax over the bar and waited for the remainder of her punishment.

Allowing only a short time between each, Pierre lashed the remaining ten strokes across his slave's buttocks, striking as hard as he could. Her screams rebounded round the yard as her body writhed over the bar. He could see that the movement was escalating her orgasm but, due to her training, a climax had not come when the last stroke seared its path across her throbbing cheeks. He changed his grip on the switch and lightly pressed the thick rounded end against her sex lips, forcing it just inside. He was not aware of it but the tip touched Tanya's clitoris bringing her to a shattering series of climaxes that racked her body as her screams of satisfaction echoed round the yard.

Pierre stood behind the slave, looking at her quivering buttocks. He suddenly had an idea. He would make a record of her first flogging at his hands and of her submission. He whispered to Mai Su, who hurried from the yard. The girl returned minutes later carrying a bowl of water and a bundle in her hands. She set the bowl down on the ground behind the slave and gently bathed her buttocks with a cloth soaked in the water. As soon as the skin was clear, she patted it dry. She handed a piece of pure white cloth to her master.

Pierre took the cloth and looked at Tanya's bottom. Already thin lines of red were again appearing where the switch had opened the skin. He spread the cloth over her cheeks and pressed it hard against her flesh. Tanya was, at that moment,

surfacing from the mist that had engulfed her. The sudden pressure sent fresh waves of searing agony through her buttocks and she let out a loud cry of pain. Pierre carefully eased the cloth away and, when he hung it spread open, it was decorated with a maze of thin red lines. He waited until the cloth was dry and then folded it and put it in his pocket. He had a perfect souvenir of her first beating at his hands. He ordered the two girls to release the slave's bonds and to take her inside and attend to her wounded buttocks.

Tanya felt the bonds removed and using the bars as a lever, eased herself upright. She looked round but her master was no longer in sight. The two girls, supporting her carefully, assisted her from the yard and back into the building to Chantel's room. They helped her lie face down on a couch, as Chantel entered. The woman saw the state of Tanya's buttocks and immediately began attending to her. A gentle wash with cold water, then a soothing cream was applied. Tanya, feeling the cream sting as it entered the cuts, could not suppress a groan.

"Try and lie still, child," Chantel whispered. "The stinging will pass quickly and the cream will take away the soreness. My, but you must have angered the Master very much for him to thrash you so badly." She had attended to Su Lin and Mai Su on many occasions after a beating but never had she seen a bottom so badly bruised and cut.

"It was no worse than I deserved," Tanya said softly, still remembering the switch lashing her bottom.

"But I have never seen anyone flogged so terribly," Chantel said, amazed at the girl's response.

"You forget that I have been a slave in a sheikh's harem," Tanya said. "There, even the slightest offence is severely punished. They value a slave even less than the lowest animal and have no concerns about the results of a thorough whipping. Just as long as the slave is punished and learns from the lesson. My Master has done no more than I am used to."

"Then I hope he does not repeat the atrocity. Your poor bottom can only take so much," Chantel replied. "I can't understand why you did not let him make you his wife instead of insisting you become his slave."

"That is easy to explain," Tanya said, turning her head and looking the woman in the eyes. "For two years, I was a slave with a slaver dealer and in the sheikh's harem. I am no longer able to consider myself as a woman. I was thoroughly trained until I could no longer be anything but a slave. I have been in love with my Master ever since he captured me from the transport ship. I can only be happy if I serve him as a true slave."

"That is all very well," Chantel exploded. "You can serve him in whatever way you choose but there is no need for him to beat you. Especially as cruelly as he

has just done."

"One day you will understand," Tanya said softly. "I want to be his slave. If he doesn't punish me, and severely, whenever I displease him, even in the smallest way, I am not a slave. It is really as simple as that."

"Well, alright, if you say so," Chantel gave in. "But I hope you are never sent to me in this state again."

"Although I will strive to serve him perfectly, I will still give him cause to punish me. Then he will beat me, or have me beaten by Jason, and I have no doubt I will be sent to you many times just as bad, or even worse than today. I hope you will accept that and care for me just as tenderly."

"If you say so, child." Chantel finally accepted the situation. "I will do my best for you, but try and not to make it happen too often."

"I will try not to. But remember. A Master needs no reason to whip his slave. He can do it just because it pleases him to do so, and the slave must submit to it."

"Whip you?" Chantel said, horrified. "He will never use a real whip on your poor body, surely."

"Chantel," Tanya said, shaking her head. "My back was whipped several times by the eunuchs. I know my Master is aware of this and will not hesitate to do the same if he thinks I deserve it."

Chantel could not think of any reply to this and, together with the two girls left Tanya alone to recuperate on the couch.

Tanya managed to sleep for a while and, when Su Lin came to see her some hours later, she was back to her normal self. Her bottom was still sore, but the cream had reduced the pain considerably and the throbbing had ceased. Tanya was a little put out because her master had not used her while she was still over the bar. Her needs had been raging out of control and she had dearly wanted him to possess her then. She had to wait until the evening for him to send for her.

Her usual costume had been replaced by two lengths of transparent, green chiffon, only held in place by two ribbons tied over her shoulders, leaving her arms bare and exposing the full beauty of her body. Thus dressed, later that evening, Tanya knocked at the door of her master's bedroom. On hearing his summons, she entered, closed the door behind her, and fell to her knees. She heard him approach and lean over to grasp her arms.

"Please, Master," Tanya said as sweetly and submissively as she could. "I would serve you as I have been taught to. Please lie on your bed and order your slave to please you."

Keeping her eyes lowered Tanya crawled towards the bed on which her master had reclined at her request. Anticipating her intentions, he had removed his robe and lay naked, his legs slightly apart. On reaching the end of the bed, Tanya leaned forward and began lightly licking and kissing the inside of his ankles. Ever so slowly, she gradually eased her body onto the bed, between his legs, as she progressed her attentions up the inside of his calves. As she passed his knees and began to lick the hairs in the inside of his thighs, she heard his breathing become quicker and heavier. She reached forward with her small hands and made contact with his manhood. She was not surprised to find that it was already hard and erect, pulsating with the desires that flooded through his body. One hand slipped below and found his heavy sac, and the two hard spheres loaded with his sperm. She kissed the hot crown of his lance and opened her lips and took him into her mouth. The saltiness of his arousal sent thrills through her and she determined to give him as much pleasure as she could before he climaxed.

Bringing all the teaching that Fatima had instilled in her into play, plus a few tricks she had invented since, she brought him to the edge of fulfilment time and time again. His breathing was coming in strangled gasps and his body arched under her as she ran her lips up and down his lance, feeling the veins throbbing violently. Although she tried to hold back his ejaculation for as long as possible, she had not taken into account that no woman had ever pleased him in that way before. His desires flowed through him like a torrent until Tanya realised she could hold them at bay no longer. With her mouth and fingers, she massaged his shaft vigorously until his body arched like a bow and, with a loud cry of triumph, his satisfaction jetted deep into the back of her throat. She lay still as he slowly recovered, and licked his manhood clean from the droplets that had seeped from the wide open slit.

"You Jezebel," he gasped. "Where did you learn to do that?"

"All harem slaves are taught that, Master,"

He made no reply. She felt her hair grasped and she was pulled further up the bed. As he turned her onto her back, she reached down and felt his weapon grow erect and hard again. She opened her legs wide, guided him into her, and then wrapped her legs round his waist. He commenced to ride her like a stallion, thrusting his lance back and forth deep inside her, sending delicious sensations through her tunnel and belly. She fought hard to control the arousal she roared within her and just managed to hold it at bay as he suddenly thrust deep into her and his sperm flooded her vagina. As he collapsed on the bed, she slid from under him and licked him clean again.

She got little sleep that night. As soon as he recovered from one climax he used her again, in her sex and once in her anus. She struggled to hold back her own climax although her needs raged inside her like a furnace. She was determined to not only display just how proficient she was but also how well she could deny her

own body in order to pleasure him more. In was in the early hours of the morning that, riding her frantically, he whispered in her ear that she could also come if she wanted to. She needed no encouragement and, just as he shed his load inside her, her body arched, lifting them both from the bed as a series of the most shattering orgasms stormed through her. She was long in surfacing and, when she did so, found him sound asleep at her side. She rose from the bed and left the room. She hastened to the washroom and cleansed her body and made her way quietly to her own bed. The other two were fast asleep and she immediately fell into exhausted unconsciousness.

When she awoke, it was well into the next morning. The other two girls were nowhere in sight and she hurriedly washed, dressed and made her way to the kitchens. Chantel was there preparing the mid-day meal.

"Ah!" she exclaimed. "You have got up at last. Su Lin said you might be late down because you had a busy night, I understand."

Tanya felt her face turn red, which merely made the woman chuckle all the more. Su Lin and Mai Su entered the kitchen, smiling at Tanya with knowing looks in their eyes. They made no comment, which Tanya appreciated, and merely got on with their work. Chantel inspected Tanya's buttocks and put more cream on the weals, which were already beginning to heal and fade. Tanya's duties took her into most parts of the castle and she discovered that there were no females there, other than Chantel, the two Chinese girls and herself. There were several men about, doing repairs to the buildings and gardening, and they hardly gave a second glance at her near naked body as she passed. She did not see anything of Jason and assumed he was occupied in the buildings adjoining his yard, an area she studiously avoided. She would be sent there soon enough!

It was later in the afternoon, when she and the two girls were lazing in the garden, that she received a pleasant surprise. She happened to mention that she was sad she could not dance for her master and entertain him. There were no musicians to play for her. The two girls immediately took her to their own rooms and produced some instruments, which they began to play. Tanya was overjoyed when they agreed to play music for her to dance to. For many days thereafter, when they had spare time, Tanya taught them the type of music to which she had been trained and, when they had grasped it, practised her dancing.

It was a couple of weeks later that Tanya was in the master's study, cleaning, when she saw some strange documents on his desk. She was busy trying to read one of these when Pierre entered, unheard by her.

"What do you think you are doing?" His question made her jump in surprise.

"I was reading this paper, Master," she said. There was no point in trying to deny it!

"You were sent her to work, not waste time reading things that do not concern you. Go over there, bare your behind and bend over." He pointed to the centre of the room.

Tanya moved to where he had pointed, released the clasp that held her skirt on her hips and let it slip to the floor at her feet. Spreading her legs wide, she bent over and, keeping her legs straight, grasped her ankles. Through the gap in her legs she saw him reach to a shelf and take down a cane. He approached her and ran his hand over her taut cheeks.

"Ten strokes, I think, should teach you not to shirk your duties," he said.

Tanya held her ankles tight as he moved to her side. Ten times the cane flashed through the air, each time landing with a loud report across her taut cheeks. She remained in position, her body rocking under each impact, and only a low groan escaped her clenched teeth on the last two strokes. It was the first 'informal punishment', as he called it, that she had received from him. The first of many to come in the future. She watched as he replaced the cane on the shelf and returned to stand behind her.

"I hope that was enough to teach you diligence," he said as he ran his hands over the smarting weals on her bottom. "You may get up and replace your skirt."

Tanya straightened up, refastening the clasp on the skirt and walked across to the desk to pick up the duster she had left lying there. Pierre was now sitting behind the desk, looking thoughtful.

"Permission to speak, please Master?" Tanya said softly.

"You may speak."

Tanya proceeded to tell him how she had discovered the two Chinese girls could play musical instruments, how she had taught them tunes she had heard in the harem and how she had been practising her dancing. As she saw interest growing in his eyes, she asked permission to dance for him one evening. He readily agreed. He had been remembering her performance that evening in the sheikh's palace and had been wondering where he could get musicians to play so she could perform solely for him.

The outcome was that, once or twice a week, in the evenings, they all gathered in one of the larger rooms, which had been cleared of furniture, and Tanya danced for him. All the dances she had learned, and some she made up, she displayed for him. The only one she omitted was the 'Whip Dance'. To the delight of the two girls, she sometimes included the 'Veil Dance'. The latter she always reserved for the last item of the evening. Almost before she had recovered her breath, lying naked and panting at his feet, he ordered the others from the room and ravished her. Tanya was delighted with the reception her dancing got from him. That was

until one morning, again when she was cleaning his study, he dropped a bombshell which took her breath away.

"Tanya, I am well pleased with you and especially your dancing. I have a mind to invite some guests here for dinner in the near future and you can entertain them. Most of them would be captivated by the 'Veil Dance'. There is no entertainment of that sort anywhere here."

"I will dance for you, my Master, anytime but I will not dance before other men ever again," she blurted out. She had been so taken aback by his suggestion, and horrified at the thought of performing slave dances before a lot of strange men, that she completely forgot herself.

Pierre sat there, stunned that she had dared to speak to him in that manner. His face turned dark with anger and, as she looked up at him, she realised her error. She began to shake with fear as she anticipated his next remark. He reached for a quill and paper and hastily wrote something down. He folded the paper and looked at her.

"You will obey me!" His voice was hard with anger. "If I say you will dance, you will dance. You must be taught not to defy me. Take this paper, find Jason and give it to him."

With trembling hand, Tanya took the paper and ran from the room. She was tempted to look and see what he had written, but was too frightened to do so. She found Jason in his workshop, which adjoined the punishment yard. She entered and knelt before the huge man. It was only then, when he was to beat her, that she realised just how massive, and muscular, were his chest and arms. She waited silently until he turned to her.

"What do you want, girl?" he asked in his usual gruff manner.

"Please, Sir," she stammered. "My Master has sent me to you and told me to give you this." She extended her hand, holding the paper.

He took it from her and read it slowly before looking down on her. "So you have displeased the captain." He always referred to her master as such. "You had better go into the yard and remove your clothes."

Tanya rose and, trembling with fear, went through the door to which he had pointed. She entered the dreaded yard and quickly removed her scanty clothes. She stood, naked, waiting for Jason to appear. Although, in the past she had been beaten by many different men, she had still not got used to this hiatus before the deed was done. It was the waiting that was the worst! Especially as she did not know how hard Jason could wield the implements. She felt the usual fluttering in her sex and belly as she saw him enter the yard. He stood and looked at her.

"I understand from the captain that you are well experienced in taking a beating," he said. "So I expect you not to make a fuss. Now get bent over the bars."

Tanya turned and walked towards the bars, over which she had bent when her master had switched her behind. As the narrow bar touched her crotch, she spread her legs wide and bent over, stretching her arms along the far one. Jason secured her wrists and upper arms to the bar and her ankles to the rings in the ground. He stood behind her and rubbed his hands over her bottom.

"You have a nice arse, girl," she heard him say. "If you are nice to me, I will go easy on you."

"I don't know what you mean, Sir," Tanya answered.

"Why! Your little anus is just asking to be poked."

The very thought of a man this huge using her there filled her with horror. But she must be careful how she responded. She didn't want to make matters worse for herself.

"My body is solely for the use of my Master," she replied.

"Alright, girl. You had your chance. The captain says you are to have twenty strokes. He won't know the difference if ten more are added on, and you wouldn't dare tell him, because he would not believe you."

Tanya was horrified as she watched him go to the side of the yard and select a long thin cane. She felt the tingling in her tunnel begin to increase. Whatever happened, she must not come as he beat her! She mustn't give him that pleasure or he might just decide to use her as well as giving her the extra strokes. She shut her eyes tight and waited, trying to stop her bottom from quivering.

The next fifteen minutes were hell. There was no doubt that Jason was an expert in administering corporal punishment. The cane whipped round her buttocks with ferocious force, bending the rattan so that it dug deeply into her taut flesh from one side of her hips to the other. At first, no one stroke landed on top of another and never, during the entire thrashing, did any stroke land above the centre line. Thus, it was the lower half of her cheeks, the most sensitive part, which received the most strokes. He allowed nearly half a minute between each stroke, giving her plenty of time to fully absorb the pain before the next arrived.

Tanya had, from the start, determined to hold out as long as possible and not give him the satisfaction of hearing her scream her distress. But she must, at all costs, prevent her body from showing any sign of arousal. That was one humiliation she could not endure! Consequently, her first cry was not forced from her throat until nine lines of fire raged in her buttocks and she managed to last out until the fifteenth stroke before her first full-blooded scream echoed round the yard. From

then on, she devoted all her concentration to containing the arousal. In desperation, she even tried to make her mind believe it was the young girls beating her. At last the onslaught ceased and she felt Jason release her restraints. Slowly, groaning aloud, she eased her tortured body upright, heaving a silent sigh of relief that, not only was the beating over but she had managed to keep the arousal from manifesting itself in the usual way.

"Next time, slave. Spare your arse some pain and let me expand your anus," Jason muttered at her as he marched across the yard to his workshop.

Tanya collected and replaced her clothes and made her way to the kitchen where Chantel made her lie down on a table. She lifted the girl's skirt out of the way and whistled at the sight that met her eyes.

"How many strokes did you have this time?" she asked as she gently smoothed cream over the raised ridges, feeling the heat that radiated from them.

"Twenty, as the Master ordered," Tanya replied, not daring to tell the woman the truth.

"Your bum looks as if it has had more than twenty, judging from the state it is in." Chantel said as she applied more cream.

Tanya considered it best not to respond to this last remark, hoping that the subject would be dropped. Again, she wondered if Mai Su had taken extra strokes rather than submit to his awful proposal. If she had, and if she had told Su Lin, it would explain why both girls were careful to avoid being sent to Jason for punishment. Tanya vowed that whatever happened in the future, she also would ensure she was never sent to him again. Later that day, her master summoned her so he could examine the evidence of her punishment and ensure it had been carried out. As she bent over, her bottom bare, he thoughtfully ran his fingers over the raised ridges.

"Please, Master," Tanya begged as she flinched at his touch. "I know I am a slave in your harem and must obey your wishes. But I am a slave from choice and I beg you to grant me one favour. When I am to be punished in the future, please do it yourself. Do not let Jason loose on me again."

Her master made no response to her plea but she could tell that he was examining her buttocks carefully. Could he detect that his order had been exceeded? If so, he made no audible comment, merely grunted to himself as his fingers traced the weals on each of her cheeks. From then on, Tanya tried to keep out of trouble, and apart from several 'informal beatings' she was successful. As soon as her buttocks had healed, her master held the dinner he had planned. Needless to say, Tanya danced for his guests, even performing the 'Veil Dance' much to their enjoyment. And to her relief, her master did not have her beaten and display her unusual response to the cane.

Time passed and days turned into weeks and weeks into months. Tanya was happier than she had ever been in her life. Pierre did leave the island occasionally for several days at a time and the three girls made sure they kept out of Jason's way during these absences. One day, after a short absence, Pierre returned with a stranger in tow. The man was closely hooded and whisked quickly into the building. Tanya was impatient to see her Master again, even a day's absence made her yearn for him. She wondered who the stranger could be and why he was there.

She was sitting in her room when Mai Su came and told her to report to the 'The Yard'. Tanya, fearing that she had been displeasing in some way, hurried to obey. She entered the yard, her heart beating wildly. If she was to be flogged, she hoped her master had listened to her plea and would do it himself. Her eyes searched round the yard and there was no sign of Jason. Her master stood near the far wall and the stranger was at his side. Tanya began to shake with fear. Clearly something unusual was in store for her and it was not to be something pleasant. As she approached, she noticed a long slanting bench to one side. One end of this was at ground level and the other raised some four feet in the air. She knelt before her master and bowed her head to the floor.

"I am going to have your beauty increased," he announced to her astonishment. "Stand, remove your clothes and lie, face up, along that bench."

Shaking with terror, Tanya obeyed. To her horror, the stranger removed the cloak to display strong muscular arms and chest. His face was impassive as he approached her. Her apprehension was considerably increased as he tightened wide leather straps round her ankles, her waist, and across her chest. Then something was placed either side of her head, holding her in position and another strap was tightened across her forehead, making it impossible to move her head. She watched in horror as the stranger put a thick leather glove on his right hand. At that moment, Jason appeared from within the building carrying a metal brazier, in which coals glowed white hot. Tanya opened her mouth to scream in terror as it dawned on her that her soft body was to be branded with hot irons. Before she got a sound out a thick gag was forced between her teeth.

She watched in fascinated terror as the stranger pulled a long, white-hot needle from the coals. He held it at the side of her head, she could feel the heat emanating from it, then the stranger used his left hand to hold her ear against the wooden block. She felt a searing pain in her ear lobe as the needle was thrust through. The smell of burning flesh and wood invaded her nostrils and she thought she was going to faint. The stranger replaced the needle in the coals and took a small open silver ring from her master. This he pressed through the hole in her lobe and pressed the ends together. Her other ear then received the same treatment. Her ears had been pierced! The sign of a low class slave girl! Miserably, Tanya waited for her master to signal her to be released.

Instead, he leaned over her and began to stroke her left nipple. Tanya felt it begin to grow hard and erect at his touch and a faint tingling began in her belly. He smiled at her and she thought her was rewarding her for being good. Then her eyes looked past him and she saw the stranger approaching. In one hand was the needle, again white-hot and in the other a small block of wood. She screamed into the gag in her mouth, as she realised what was to follow. She watched, petrified, as the stranger held the block of wood against the underside of her nipple and thrust the needle through. A searing pain surged through her breast. Then the stranger took a short pin from her master and pushed it through the hole he had made in her teat. As her other nipple was treated in like manner, she finally lost consciousness.

When she came round, Tanya found that she was still secured to the bench. The straps round her head and chest had been removed, but more had been tightened round her thighs and hips. Her ears and nipples throbbed and as she opened her eyes, she saw her master and the stranger standing at her side. Her master removed the gag from her mouth and leaned close to her.

"Now to mark you as my property," he said.

Tanya, who had thought that her ordeal was over, looked at him in surprise. What more was to be done to her? Her eyes followed the stranger as he walked to the brazier. He reached out with his gloved hand and pulled another object from the fire. This time it was not another needle but a length of iron. As she looked at the glowing end, Tanya was able to make out the shape of a tiny Fleur-de-Lys surmounting the letters P. D M, intertwined. She felt her body tremble as the stranger moved towards her. She tried to cringe away but was too securely held. In dreadful fascination, she saw the stranger hold the glowing end before her eyes. Then it was moved downwards until she felt the heat from it on her hip. The stranger looked into her eyes, then down at her thigh as he thrust the hot iron against her flesh. A searing pain burst through her whole body and she smelt the odour of burning flesh. Her flesh. And she screamed, loud and long until the pain faded as she sank into unconsciousness again.

For several days after, her hands were manacled behind her back, preventing her from scratching the wounds, until they healed. Gradually the pain turned into a dull ache and then faded away completely as the piercings and the brand on her thigh healed. Then she was summoned to her master's study. He removed the rings from her lobes and breasts and replaced them with gold studs with tiny diamonds at the ends. He inspected the brand on her thigh and muttered his satisfaction as he saw that it had healed perfectly. He made Tanya inspect herself in a mirror and she was pleasantly surprised. The ear and nipple studs seemed to enhance her beauty and the brand on her thigh seemed, to her, very beautiful. She felt proud as she looked at the mark of the man she loved, so clearly etched in her flesh.

CHAPTER 11.

Tanya had been in Pierre Du Morvan's harem for twelve months when two things occurred that gave her great joy. Her master had informed her that he was going to the mainland the following day to make some purchases. Tanya begged him to take her with him. At first he refused but she kept asking so sweetly, and she had pleased him more than usual the previous night, that he eventually agreed. So the next morning, suitably garbed in a long flowing dress, beneath which she was naked, she set off with her master in the boat accompanied by Jason. Tanya, determined that her day was not to be spoiled, did her best to ignore the lecherous looks the man made in her direction when the master was not watching.

They parted from Jason at the quayside, telling him to meet them back there in three hours. Arm in arm with her master, Tanya strolled along the streets, gazing into the shops and marvelling at the displays and variety of goods. As they passed one leather merchant's shop, her glance fell on something displayed in the window. Pierre had stopped to chat to an acquaintance, so she was allowed enough time to study it properly. It was a fearsome looking whip. The handle was beautifully crafted and there was a design of an Eastern harem dancer etched in the leather. The lash, which she estimated was at least six feet long and as thick as her finger at one end, tapering to nothing at the other, was jet black and gleamed in the sunlight. In itself, it was a beautiful object, although the sight of it made her tremble slightly.

The vision of it stayed in her mind as her master went from shop to shop, making the purchases he required and arranging for them to be taken to the boat. He took her into a restaurant for lunch and, for a while, she forgot she was his slave and pretended they were man and wife. She never knew whether he guessed her thoughts, but she was brought down to earth quickly when he leaned across the table and ordered her to unbutton the dress to her waist. With trembling fingers, she obeyed, and the dress gaped open to display her full and luscious breasts. To her surprise, the head-waiter made no comment and she had to sit there, her breasts on display, and try and ignore the many admiring glances she received from the waiters and other diners.

At last the meal was over and Pierre, having paid the bill, ordered her to re-button the dress and they went back out on to the street. He called in at his bank and while she sat in the main hall, he went into the manager's office. When he came out some half an hour later, he was in a very good mood. He had obviously received some very good news and this boded well for the plan she had devised while she had been waiting. It was a daring one that she might have abandoned until she saw what his good humour. As they made their way back to the boat, they approached the leather merchant's shop.

"Master," Tanya said, coming to a halt and speaking quietly so people nearby could not hear. "I have been your slave for one year now and I would like to give you a present to thank you for the happiest year of my life. But I have no money. I know it is wrong to do so, but I have a present in mind which I am sure you

would like, may I please beg for some money to buy it with?"

"I do not see why not," he replied to her astonishment and joy. "How much do you want?"

"Fifteen dinars, please Master."

He took out his wallet and handed her the requisite number of notes. She clutched them tightly. "I will wait at the boat. Don't try and run away. There is a law officer on that corner and I will instruct him to see that you are at the boat in no more than ten minutes." So saying, he crossed the road, spoke to the man and then disappeared round the corner. Conscious that the lawman's eyes were watching her closely, she disappeared into the shop. The owner was very helpful, even if he did give her some questioning looks as she completed the sale. Did he guess that she was really a slave and the whip was for use on her back, she wondered, as he parcelled the purchase up in a box as she requested.

She made her way directly back to the boat, clutching the parcel tightly. Her master looked at it questioningly, but made no comment as they waited for Jason to join them. Some fifteen minutes after the appointed time, Jason had not appeared and her master's jovial mood was beginning to evaporate. Then three lawmen came hurrying round the corner and made straight for them.

"Chevalier Du Morvan?" the senior man asked politely.

"I am he," her master replied.

"I believe the man known as Jason works for you."

"That is correct. What has he been up to now?"

"I am afraid he got involved in a drunken brawl and killed a man. He has been taken into custody."

"That is his own fault. I have warned him many times to keep off the drink. This time I wash my hands of him. I leave you, and the Justice to deal with him as you think fit. Do you require me any further?"

"I do not think so, Sir," the man replied. "You may return to your island. Should we need to contact you again, we will let you know."

The journey back to the island passed in silence but her master's jovial mood returned before they disembarked. Although Tanya did feel a little guilty at the thought, she was overjoyed at the news about Jason. It would mean that he would not return to the island and she would not have to be careful to keep out of his way any longer.

As soon as they reached the castle, Tanya sought out Chantel and explained to her the scheme she had formed during the short trip back. At first, the woman was horrified at the plan but, when Tanya convinced her that it was what she really wanted, she agreed to go along with it. She then tackled Su Lin and Mai Su and explained their part in the matter and they were also persuaded to play their part. The remainder of the day was taken up with her duties and making plans for the next afternoon, which was when she had decided that her scheme would be put into operation. As the evening progressed, the excitement built up inside her until she was afraid that she would not sleep at all that night. Fortunately, her master did not send for her and she slept well enough.

Next morning, there was an air of expectation in the kitchen as Tanya went over the plan with Chantel and the girls again. She had a moment's panic when, during the morning as she was dusting the study, her master entered.

"Well, Tanya," he said. "When am I to receive this mysterious present?"

"If it is alright with you, Master," Tanya replied. "This afternoon."

Pierre looked hard at her and she thought for a moment that he was going to demand she give it to him there and then. Rather than risk the subject arising again, she quickly finished in the study and went and attended to her tasks elsewhere. She ate the little food she had allowed herself for the mid-day meal and, as the two girls were busy serving the master, she went to the large room where she usually danced and completed the preparations. She placed the wrapped present, together with a pair of wrist manacles joined by a short chain that she had found, where the girls would sit as they played for her. The seat her master would occupy was already in position. Satisfied that all was in order, she went to her room to prepare. Mai Su had already depilated her that morning and trimmed her bush, so all she had to do was have a quick bath. She dried herself and spent some time carefully applying cosmetics and perfume to her face and body. Then she dressed herself in the veils ready for her dance.

Pierre had suspected that something was afoot in the house but, since it seemed to revolve round Tanya, he decided to say nothing and let her have her way. If by any chance she overstepped herself, he would see that she was well thrashed. It was strange the effect she had on him. Until he had seen her on his boat, he had never entertained the idea of having a slave of his own. He had also been a little unsure about subjecting a young girl to corporal punishment. He knew that the courts dished out such sentences readily, and his crew had served under the same threat, but he had never enjoyed witnessing such things, until he had faced her that day in his cabin, cane in hand, and seen the strange look in her eyes. Since then his attitude had changed and he enjoyed having her at his mercy and decorating her luscious backside with a cane or strap. On the occasion he had sent her to Jason, he had nearly run to the yard to do the deed himself.

That afternoon as he was sitting back enjoying a glass of wine and a cigar after his

lunch Chantel entered the dining room. He looked up and saw the worried expression on her face.

"What is wrong, Chantel?" he asked.

"Nothing, Sir," she replied quickly. "There is something you should see in the dancing room. May I request you go there at once."

Pierre was rather surprised at the request. Chantel was no slave, more a friend than a servant, yet she had seemed unusually subdued. He decided to see what it was all about. He rose and followed her to the room mentioned and was taken by surprise when he found the two Chinese girls sitting to one side, their musical instruments at the ready. In a slight daze, he allowed Chantel to guide him to his usual seat. No sooner had he settled down, than the door at the far end of the room opened and the girls started to play.

Tanya, her heart thumping wildly, sidled into the room and slowly danced towards where her master was seated. Letting herself become absorbed in the music, she called upon all her expertise and imagination, trying to ensure that her performance was better than ever before. She glided round the room, her eyes rarely leaving those of her master, smiling coquettishly at him at every opportunity. She saw the amusement in his eyes and her heart filled. As she gradually shed the veils, disclosing more and more of her seductive body, she saw the amusement turn to lust. Only one veil remained! One veil of finest gossamer that covered, but did not hide, her charms. As the music rose to a crescendo, she stood perfectly still except for her belly that undulated rapidly and her arms, which slowly rose and discarded the last barrier to her nakedness. As the veil floated away, she sank to her knees before her master, panting with the effort and the desire that surged through her body.

Pierre pulled his eyes away from her body as Su Lin approached with the parcel in her hands. Kneeling, she extended her slim arms, offering it to him. He reached forward to take it as Tanya began to speak.

"Master," she said softly. "It is a year since I first entered your household. On this first anniversary, I wish to renew my vows of submission. May I please have your permission to proceed?"

Pierre was taken by surprise at the request. He was on the verge of taking the parcel when he stopped. "You have my permission," he said.

"Master," Tanya began, striving to keep her voice from betraying the excitement that raged within her. "I beg you to accept this small present as a token of my submission. If it pleases you to accept me as your slave, please signify this by granting the request written on the piece of paper inside the parcel."

As the last words passed her lips, she pushed her legs backwards until she was

prone on the floor and extended her arms sideways. She placed her mouth on his feet and kissed them passionately.

Pierre was completely startled by what she had said. He took the parcel from Su Lin's hands and watched, bewildered as the girl crouched down beside Tanya, pulled her arms together and fastened the manacles to her wrists. He unwrapped the parcel and stared at the whip. He held it close and scrutinised the beautiful etching on the handle and let the plaited thong slide through his fingers. Then he saw the piece of paper, picked it up and read it, his astonishment increasing with every word he read.

Master.

I have renewed my vows of submission. If you are pleased to continue to let me serve you as your slave, I beg that you will show your acceptance as follows. Order me to follow you to the punishment yard, chain me to the whipping post and use this present on my back in the appropriate manner, I would suggest at least twenty lashes. Your slave will judge the degree of your satisfaction, both with her submission and the present, by the force with which the strokes are applied.

I love you, Master, and love being owned by you.

Pierre read the words through a second time. He was momentarily speechless as he assimilated what she was asking. He looked at the lash, shining bright black in the sunlight that streamed in through the windows. It looked cruel and wicked and he wondered that she could ask for it to be laid across her back. Her back! He looked down to where she lay. She had moved backwards, away from him, and now her arms were stretched forward in front of her, the chain taut between her wrists. Her hair had fallen to each side of her, exposing the white smoothness of her back. His eyes wandered slowly along her body, over the seductive swell of her buttocks to her shapely legs. Did he notice that she was trembling slightly? Was she already anticipating the cruel lash curling across her back?

For the first time in his dealings with her, he was momentarily undecided. She had declared her love for him, despite the pain that he frequently inflicted on her behind. She had said she loved being his. It seemed to be too cruel to reward such devotion with more pain, especially the agony she had asked to be inflicted on her. He shook his head. Was he becoming soft with her? He certainly desired her body, it gave him infinite pleasure. Mentally he kicked himself. She was, after all, only a slave. Further, she had dared to say she would judge him by the effect of the whipping. A slave had no right to judge her master! He rose to his feet. Yes, he accepted her submission and the present and he would show his satisfaction in the manner she had requested. He called Chantel to him and whispered in her ear. With a sigh of relief, the woman made her way from the room.

Pierre looked down on the naked body of his slave. "Rise and follow me, slave," he ordered. Signalling the other two girls to accompany them, he strode from the

room.

Feeling the excitement and dreadful anticipation rising within her, Tanya gracefully rose to her feet and, flanked by the two Chinese girls, followed her master. She saw the wide expanse of his shoulders and the evil whip curled in his hand. Instead of going straight to the yard, he went via the garden, where two gardeners were at work. They stopped what they were doing to stare at the naked girl, submissively following the master. They saw the new whip in his hands and knew that they would soon be hearing her screams echoing from the punishment yard. Tanya was aware of their stare and it sent fresh shivers of excitement through her belly. Let them stare, let them hear her screams of submission but never would their fantasies of having her be fulfilled!

The small procession entered the punishment yard and Tanya, with halting steps now that the time of her ordeal had arrived, made her way towards the thick wooden post. She halted in front of it and raised her arms high, reaching towards the top. She stood stationary as her master released the manacle on one wrist, took the chain behind the post, running it over a hook high above her head, and bringing it forward again and re-locked it on her wrist. She was pulled up on her toes, her body an inch or so from the post against which she pressed the palms of her small hands. At a sign from the master, Mai Su stepped close and, dividing Tanya's long hair in the centre, pulled it forward either side of her neck. The time had come! For only the third time in her life she was to be whipped across her back. The first time with a wicked single lash whip! But this time it was at her own request!

Tanya saw her master walk slowly behind her and her body tensed. She shut her eyes and pressed her hands hard against the post. Although she was terrified of the pain to be inflicted on her tender, soft body, she had no doubt that she was supremely happy. She was a slave to the man she loved and he was about to mark her again, with the signature of his ownership. She heard the whisper as the lash slithered along the ground, then the sharp hiss as it sped through the air. There was a heavy thud across her back that drove her body against the post, separating her breasts to either side, and forcing the air from her lungs in a loud 'whoosh'. For a second or two, she felt nothing then a terrible searing line of white-hot flame erupted across her back and shoulders. She had known it would hurt, and hurt terribly, but she had not anticipated her back could feel such agony.

Another heavy thud and, this time, the agony seared instantly, forcing a shrill scream from her throat. She felt a fine sweat break out all over her body and was shocked to find that the arousal that had been simmering in her belly had been extinguished. The next stroke broke across her shoulders, slamming her breasts round the post, and another scream echoed round the yard. She had vowed to take this whipping bravely, but could not control her screams nor stop her body writhing against the post as the pain boiled through her back.

The two Chinese girls watched the whipping with astonishment. How Tanya

could endure those terrible lashes was beyond them. The weals were appearing instantly as dark red ridges across her back, standing out clearly against her milk white skin. They saw the fine sheen on her body rapidly turn into a steady flow of sweat that dripped from her raised breasts and ran over her buttocks and down her legs. They watched as her slender body writhed and squirmed against the post each time the lash was applied. All the time they were aware that Tanya was not being punished for some grave offence, but had actually asked to be flogged in this savage manner. They looked at their master's face as he wielded the whip and shuddered as they saw his eyes glowing with satisfaction each time the lash etched another red weal of agony across the girl's back.

Tanya had been concentrating on keeping count. Not having to exercise effort to control an orgasm or to keep silent, it was the only thing she could do to ensure she remained conscious.

As the pain of the furnace raging in her back reached the limit of her endurance, she jerked her head back and screamed out that she loved her master, loved him, loved him. At last her body could take no more pain and, as the thong laced across her back for the eighteenth stroke, her head sagged forward, chin on chest, as she lapsed into unconsciousness, her slim arms supporting all her weight and stretching her back taut.

Pierre Du Morvan, Chevalier of France, watched the stripes gathering on his slave's white back. A feeling of power and satisfaction swept through him as she screamed and writhed under his whip. He owned this delicious creature, could do what he willed with her, and she would always submit to him as her master. He enjoyed the feeling of ownership that swept through him as he lashed her. She was his! Other men may have owned her, used her body for their pleasure and flogged her, but it was to him that she had, without duress, totally submitted herself.

He saw her lose consciousness on the eighteenth stroke and the enquiring look that Su Lin gave him. Did she expect him to stop while she revived the slave? He waved her away. This was not a punishment, when the miscreant must be aware of every stroke. Tanya still had two more strokes to come to complete the sum she had requested. Let her take them while she was unconscious. He raised the whip and sent the lash curling across her back twice. The slave's body jerked but no sound escaped her open mouth. He looked at the whip and then at her back. The twenty lashes had been applied and, due to the care he had taken, not one had broken the skin to leave a scar. Then he remembered that it had been his slave that had had the temerity to suggest the number of strokes. At least twenty, she had written. It should be he, not her, who made that decision! Quickly, before she began to resurface, he lashed another five strokes across her stretched back.

"How many strokes has she had?" he asked, turning to Mai Su.

"Twenty five, Master," the girl replied; puzzled. Surely he had been keeping

count of how many times he laid the whip to her back!

"Precisely," Pierre said. "You will make sure that she is aware of that when she recovers."

He reached up and released one of the manacles from Tanya's wrist. Su Lin and Mai Su rushed forward and gently lowered the unconscious girl's body to the ground. As Pierre walked from the yard, they searched in what used to be Jason's workshop and found a long wide plank. They carried it to the post, laid it on the ground and gently lifted Tanya's body on to it. She began to recover consciousness and they soothed her brow and whispered that it was all over and that she should lie still while they carried her indoors.

They took Tanya to their room where Chantel waited and laid her face down on her bed. The older woman looked at Tanya's back and clucked disapprovingly to herself. While she gently bathed the weals and lightly massaged a liquid into the skin, the two girls washed Tanya's face with cloths soaked in cold water. Gradually the whipped slave regained full consciousness.

"Is it very bad?" she asked tentatively. The one thing she had been frightened of was that the whipping might leave permanent marks on her body.

"It looks worse than it is," Chantel replied. "You may relax though, there will be no scars, if that is what you are frightened of."

"Did I take it bravely enough?" Tanya asked, turning to Su Lin.

"You were very brave," Su Lin replied. "It was only to be expected that you would scream straightaway, but you stayed conscious until the eighteenth stroke."

"Why did you ask to be hurt in this terrible way?" Mai Su asked. It was she who had found it most difficult to understand Tanya when they had discussed her attitude in the first place.

"Because I love him!" was all Tanya could find to reply.

"The Master ordered us to tell you that he gave you twenty five lashes, not the twenty you asked for." Su Lin said, remembering the Master's last command.

"Twenty five!" Tanya said quietly. "Then he must have been really pleased with my submission and the present."

Chantel, who had finished ministering to Tanya's back, chose that moment to usher the girls from the room, saying it would be best for Tanya to try to sleep for a while to let the potion do its work.

Almost as soon as they had left the room, Tanya did, in fact, slide into an

exhausted, if restful sleep. It was some hours later that she awoke. Her back still throbbed and burned but the worst had passed. She rose and bathed her face and put on her skirt. She tried the bolero jacket on but it was too sore on her back. She decided to leave it off. Anyway, by doing so she could leave on show the weals that she was suddenly so proud of. She made her way down to the kitchen where Chantel and the girls were preparing the evening meal. The gardeners were also there, having a drink before they departed for the day. Tanya was not sure whether this made her happy or not. They must have heard her screaming as she was whipped, so what did it matter that they saw the evidence of her ordeal on her back. Little did they know that it had not been done as a punishment and that she had asked, no begged, to be whipped.

Still with her back bare, she insisted on serving her Master's evening meal. She was aware of his eyes, filled with lust, feasting on her bare breasts and back as she moved about the room. She smiled frequently at him, letting him see how happy she was to be owned by him. When the meal was over, before she made her way back to the kitchen with the last of the dirty dishes, she sank to her knees in front of him.

"Thank you, Master, for whipping your slave so thoroughly. I am happy you renewed your ownership of me and also that you found the present acceptable," she said, softly and submissively. "May your slave be permitted to attend upon you tonight and show you her gratitude?"

"You may certainly come to my room when I retire for the night," he replied. "Now go and attend to your duties, slave."

"Yes Master," Tanya replied, delightedly.

She rose to her feet and, collecting the remainder of the dishes, departed to the kitchen. The remainder of the evening passed too slowly for her and it seemed ages before she heard her master say that he was going to retire. She hurried to her room and checked her appearance. She removed her clothing and made her way to his bedroom, knocked on the door and, on hearing his summons, entered and fell to her knees at the foot of the bed. She waited for his order to commence her ministrations.

"I am very pleased with you slave," she heard him say. "The present was delightful and you submitted to its kiss perfectly. As my present to you, in honour of the anniversary you so cleverly remembered, for this evening you will forget that you are a slave and behave like a normal wife. For this evening only, mind! Get up and come here."

Tanya rose to her feet and walked to the side of the bed. His arms reached up and pulled her down beside him. She reached for his penis and found it already erect and throbbing. He took her in his arms and kissed her passionately. She just seemed to melt in his arms. Somehow, she managed to forget all the training she

had undergone and made love to him as she would have done in the past, before she had been enslaved. Not just as she would have done in the past, though. Then she had been inexperienced compared with her expertise now.

Neither of them got much sleep during that night. Their passion was released and nothing could halt it until it had been completely satiated. She was even able to enjoy the streaks of pain that flooded through her back as she writhed beneath him on the sheet.

When the dawn broke through the window the next morning, Tanya was dozing at his side with his arm lying over her breasts. Both they and her sex were delightfully sore from his lovemaking and the bed clothes were damp from the perspiration that had run off their bodies. She felt him stir at her side and turned to look at him.

"Is it not time you were about your duties, slave?" he said, looking at her sternly but with a smile curling the corners of his mouth.

"Yes, Master," she replied and leaned over and kissed him fervently on his mouth. "Thank you for a lovely night." She slid off the bed and knelt at the side. "Permission to speak, Master?"

"Permission granted," he said, raising himself up on one elbow to see her better.

"Please, Master. May I renew my vows every year, exactly as I did yesterday? Exactly the same as yesterday but with five strokes added each year."

"That would mean forty strokes in three years' time," he said. "I don't think even you could manage to take that many."

"Ah! Master," she said, smiling sweetly at him. "By then I should be much more experienced."

"Must an order be repeated, slave? Get about your duties. Or I shall be adding to your experience this very day." The threat in his words was nullified by the smile that lit up his face.

Tanya hurried from the room. She quickly washed and made herself look presentable, put on her costume and descended to the kitchen. Chantel and the two girls were already there and gazed in amazement as she entered. For a young girl who had been so thoroughly whipped the previous afternoon, they had not expected her to be so cheerful. In fact they had never seen her look so happy before.

POSTSCRIPT (AUTHOR'S NOTE).

Tanya Crawley had been just eighteen years old when she was sentenced to

transportation. She was twenty when Pierre Du Morvan had her abducted and installed in his castle as his slave. She was twenty-one when she stood at the post and received twenty-five lashes of the whip she had presented to him as a present to celebrate the first year of his ownership.

He was never to find out whether she could take the forty lashes that would have marked four years in his hands. Fate, that unpredictable element in anyones life, had been jealous of her happiness and cruelly contrived a more suitable future for a female that had been earmarked for the ordeals and hazards of a life of slavery and servitude. The one thing that she kept and which, in the years to come would remind her of the happiness she enjoyed serving Pierre, was the tiny but distinctive brand on her thigh.

But, as they say, that is another story which, dear reader, may, or may not, be unveiled to you in the future.