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CHAPTER ONE

April never knew the names of the two men who held her and Niki naked and chained in the cellar. The few times she was not blindfolded in their presence their faces were always covered by hood-masks and they were smart enough never to refer to each other personally. After a while in her mind she named them Thug One and Thug Two: a pair of large, at times carelessly brutal men who usually smelt of sweat and beer, and who were their de-facto masters.

It was a strange truth that she would probably recognize their erect cocks if she saw them again. Every orifice of her body had become intimately familiar with them. She knew their length and girth, each fold of skin and pulsing vein, how fully they filled her mouth, how far up her vagina they reached, how much they distended her anus and how completely they plugged her rectum. She even recognized the distinctly different taste of their sperm in her mouth.

Neither did she know where the cellar they were held in was situated, beyond that it was somewhere in Riddlemouth, which was a city that occupied much the same the physical location in the parallel world of Nethervale as Bristol did in her own version of England. They had been brought to it blindfolded, bound and gagged and had not seen the sun since except for the glow that filtered through the thick, grimy glass of a high, narrow, recessed and heavily barred window.

The window was their only link with the outside world but it offered no more chance of physical escape from the cellar than did the only other possible means of egress: the heavy ironbound door situated at the top of a flight of stone steps through which they had been brought. Nor was there the possibility of calling out when they were left alone in the cellar in the hope somebody outside might hear them. When their mouths were not filled with their captor's cocks or briefly freed for the purposes of eating or drinking they were kept securely closed with thick strap and plug gags, which were held in place by additional crown and chin straps and padlocked behind their necks. Their captors had no interest in anything they wanted to say and reserved their tongues and lips for their own pleasures.

Even if they had the means they could not reach the window to break it and raise the alarm, always assuming there was somebody on the other side to take notice. Heavy chains connecting their thick leather collars to rings set in the wall confined them to a bed of straw and a waste bucket in one corner of the cellar well away from the window. Such restraints were not unusual when confining bondmaids and it might have made little difference to their conditions even if they had been the legal property of their captors. Any owner could confine them like this if he so wished. In Nethervale bondmaids were regarded as little better than animals who could talk... when and if they were permitted.

Not so many months ago back in her world undergoing such an ordeal would have driven April mad. She would have cried herself to sleep and lived each day in fear. Had she been rescued she would have undergone therapy and trauma counseling and been expected to bear the mental scars for years. Now she simply accepted and endured, finding any small crumb of comfort or pleasure along the way. She did not like her situation and longed to be almost anywhere else, but she knew it would not destroy her. After all, she was a trained bondmaid and expected a measure of suffering as natural. What counted was that she still had Niki. While they were together she thought she could take anything.

At night as she slept curled up against Niki's warm body she dreamed of Marvell's bondmaid carnival from which she had Niki had been accidentally stolen by the two thugs, along with Marvell's caravan, for the purpose of discovering its concealed strongbox. "Kidnapped" would have been the wrong word as it had not been the thugs' intent to take them. Since they were mere bondmaids and therefore legal property in Nethervale, "stolen" seemed the more appropriate term.

She wondered if the Marvell's missed them. She hoped the carnival was doing well and had triumphed in its battle with their business rival Harry Carlo, who had been trying to sabotage their tour and ruin them so he could take over their show. It was he who in desperation had finally hired the thugs to steal Marvell's caravan. The last April knew he had been setting about tearing it to pieces in search of the strongbox, not knowing that she and Niki had already thrown it into the front garden of a house as the thieves had driven the caravan through the city in the dark small hours.

She wished she could have seen Carlo's face when he discovered he had been wasting his time. In retrospect it was probably lucky the thugs and taken her and Niki away with them to sell on after the excitement had died down and make a little extra cash on the side. She shuddered to think what Carlo would have done to them had he found out it was they who had cheated him of his prize.

Thugs One and Two at least had no personal reason to hate them. To them she and Niki were, like all bondmaids, simply living sex toys existing for their personal amusement. They were a collection of hot tight orifices arrayed for their cocks to plunder and spill their seed, pliant flesh they could mould and pinch and slap, pretty faces they could watch crumple in pain, soft eyes they could see fill with tears until they pleaded mutely to serve them by any means, and lovely bodies that they could confine, twist, stretch and bend to serve their pleasure.

Yes, April admitted without false pride, they both had attractive bodies seemingly made to suffer.

April had lightly olive-tinted skin, shoulder length straight dark hair, deep brown eyes, a full mouth and straight narrow nose. Large brown erect nipples capped her full, proud breasts. Her hips wide, her navel deep and her bottom cheeks strong and well rounded. Hard labour had filled out the feminine curves of her thighs and calves with underlying muscle. The lips of her sex were fleshy and pouting and perfectly smooth and hairless.

Niki by contrast was a blonde of slightly lesser build with a mass of waved honey-blonde hair. Her eyes were blue, her nose a little broader than April's and her lips red and full. Her skin, at least at the start of their captivity in the cellar, had borne a light golden even tan that showed off the prominent conical pink nipples that capped her neat, high breasts. Months of vigorous exercise and a carefully controlled bondmaid diet had left her waist trim and her stomach flat, displaying her deep navel to its best advantage. Like April her prominent sex was perfectly smooth and quite bare.

They were also alike in one other respect. Both bore a purple scar brand on the upper slopes of their right buttocks in the shape of the letters RW set inside a circle. This stood for Ramswold, a market town some miles to the north on the other side of the Papswell Rises, the equivalent in Nethervale of the

Cotswold hills, where she and Niki had first unwittingly emerged into Nethervale and been captured and condemned to bondmaid service.

Up until recently they had also worn brightly jeweled carnival piercing rings through their nasal septum, nipples, labia and clitoral hoods, together with colored carnival collars and cuffs. Their captors had removed all these distinctive items and the perforations in their flesh were left to close-up in preparation for their eventual sale. The thugs did not want them recognized as stolen property.

It was the prospect of their sale that April both feared and longed for. Her fear was that she and Niki might be separated. Her hope was at some point during the process of sale and the ensuing change of owner they would have a chance to speak out. She had heard the thugs talking about selling them openly. Surely a reputable auction house would not want to deal with stolen goods.

They might even be returned to their last legal owners. The Marvell's had grown fond of herself and Niki and they had foiled Carlo's plot against them. April imagined there might even be a reward for their return to the carnival. All they had to do was explain to somebody who they really were and they would be saved. April clung to that possibility with all her heart. Life as a carnival girl with Niki had probably been the happiest time she had spent in Nethervale.

In the meantime, however, they had to accept their lot and make the best of it.

The thugs at least had the sense to keep them exercised since they wanted them fit and healthy so they would fetch the best price. Their method was simple but effective, employing the sort of device commonly used in Nethervale to control and discipline bondmaids.

In one corner of the cellar was a heavy wooden upright frame reaching almost to the ceiling supporting between it horizontal rollers at the top and bottom, fitted with large wooden cogs at each end. Looped over the rollers were two heavy ropes between which wooden slats were tied, rather like a continuous rope ladder. The teeth of the roller cogs engaged with the ladder slats. Climbing up one side of the ladder caused it to run about the rollers in the other direction, the speed determined by adjustable friction brakes.

For at least an hour twice a day April and Niki each climbed that interminable ladder. Even when the thugs were not there to monitor them they could not slow down or step off the device. There was nothing to cling to on the frame on either side. Slack chains hanging from a ceiling ring hooked to their collars prevented simply stepping off. They might have grasped these chains above their heads and briefly hung from them to rest, but that would have caused them to sink too close to the ground and that they dared not do.

While on the ladder machine they were impaled on a large plug-headed anal dildo mounted on the end of a long rod that was fastened to a pivot set in a heavy base plate. Just under the flared dildo base flange there was a telescopic sprung section in the rod. Below this was a set a wooden disk bristling with upward facing nails. If they slowed their rate of climb and sank down the ladder the rod compressed and the nails jabbed their bottoms, warning them to climb faster.

At the end of each exercise session they were lathered with sweat and utterly exhausted. Their bottom cheeks stung and smarted from nail scratches, while their anuses ached from clenching the dildo inside them.

They spent much of their days huddled together on their bed of straw. If they still had the energy after exercise they made love with sticky fingers twirling within their hot wet slots, wishing they could use their tongues instead. Mutely they gazed into each other's eyes over their gags and reaffirmed their love. But they had to keep some passion in reserve, for when the thugs visited them to take their pleasure they expected a show, however unwillingly given, of unbridled bondmaid lust.

April hung upside-down from a ring set in the ceiling beam. Her legs were parted in a "V" and held in place by the cuffs of a spreader bar. Her arms were bound behind her back. A ring gag held her mouth wide, which was also stuffed by a smaller ball plug. A metre away from her Niki hung bound in the same manner. She could not see her as their backs were turned toward each other so they faced outwards, but she could feel her every move. A short taut chain with a hook on each end passed between their splayed legs, the links running through their clefts and plunging into the mouths of their vaginas. The hooks themselves were lodged deep inside them, their tips turned outward so that they dug into the front walls of their passages, pressing into the roots of their clitorises and making their pubic mounds bulge even more prominently. As they hung from the beam rings the slightest twist or turn of their suspended bodies tugged on the chains and pressed the hooks deeper into them.

It was painfully arousing even when they were at rest, but rest was what they were not permitted.

Armed with lashes their captors mercilessly flailed their exposed torsos from hips to dangling breasts, which jutted out oddly as they tried to flow down towards their shoulders. Leather thongs curved between their thighs and licked across their chain-cleft slots. They stung their palpitating stomachs and set their soft mammaries jumping and bouncing from side to side as they went from pink to cherry red. The impact of the blows and the stinging pain made them buck and arch their backs, as though performing a strange inverted dance. Every movement jerked on their crotch chain and increased their torment. Their clits stood out like little plumbs as their bulging, clenching slots overflowed with their juices that tricked down their stomachs. It complimented the saliva that ran about their gags and into their hair, as did the tears from their bulging red-rimmed eyes.

The thugs did not use lashes that would cut their captives' skin since they wanted them in good condition for sale. But their flesh still glowed and burned. Such screams as got past their gags mingled with the crack of the lashes. If any of this escaped the confines of the cellar it would hardly raise any comment. The sound of bondmaids being punished was mere background noise in Nethervale.

Inevitably the moment came when the pain became something else and April and Niki began to jerk and writhe in their bonds independently of the lash strokes. Their eyes became filled with desperate need as instinct took over. At this point April imagined the thugs grinned knowingly under their masks.

The men pulled out the girls' ball gags and, clasping their suspended bodies, rammed their cocks through the rubber rings and into their mouths. April and Niki nearly choked as the invading cockheads

probed the backs of throats and their gullets, using them as they would their sister passages currently filled with hooks. Bending their heads between the soft splayed thighs the men nipped at the helplessly erect clitoral buds and then bit down.

April and Niki screamed in agony. Yet still they sucked and gobbled on the shafts that spouted hotly down their throats even as they were racked by helpless slavish orgasms. That was the unholy wonder of it. Despite everything they still came. As they had learned all too well bondmaids knew no shame.

Then one day, a month after they had been taken down into the cellar, the routine changed.

Judging by the light at the cellar window it was morning as they heard the key turn in the lock of the door at the top of the stairs. Immediately April and Niki scrambled into their submissive postures, kneeling with legs spread wide to display their naked pussies, heads down and hands clasped behind their necks.

Thugs One and Two clumped down the stairs and lit the oil lamps that dispersed the gloom in the cellar. Then they went over to their captives.

Rope leashes replaced their collars, balls of rag and rope their strap gags. They were blindfolded with more strips of rag and taken up the stairs and out into the open once more. From the echoes and the feel of the stones under her feet April guessed it was probably an enclosed yard. But it was still outdoors. It was so good to feel warmth and fresh air on their skins even if they could not see the sun.

The thugs set about cleaning them up. They were soaped over and hosed down. Enemas flushed them out and Jympson's grease was applied to their rears and smoothing cream to their pubes. Their hair was dried and combed through.

'You're going to Flauntwell for auction,' Thug One growled. 'You don't give us any trouble or else, understood?'

April nodded. She was not interested in retribution against them. They had simply been Carlo's tools and the sooner they got away from them the better. As long as she and Niki stayed together that was all that counted.

Properly fresh and clean for the first time in a month, they were loaded onto a small cart. More of the same coarse rope that formed April's leash was used to bind her wrists behind her back and tie her ankles. Her leash was pulled down between her thighs to her ankles, then up through the cleft of her buttocks to her wrists, binding her doubled-over in the foetal position. She felt the warm reassuring pressure of Niki's body butting up against hers as she was bound in the same way.

A covering of what both felt and smelt like old sacking was thrown over them. This was not done to spare their modesty, of course, nor would anybody in Nethervale be shocked either by their nudity or state of bondage. It was done because they were stolen goods. They heard the two thugs climb aboard and with a jerk the cart started off, carrying them away to be sold like animals.

CHAPTER TWO

After an hour rattling along what seemed to be a country road April heard the bustle of a city gradually envelop them once more. Presumably this was Flauntwell. Finally the cart turned off into an echoing enclosed space. It drew up and April heard one of their captors call out: 'Hallo, Charlie. We've got the goods.'

A new voice replied: 'Bring 'em through here, then, so I can have a proper look...'

The sacking was pulled back, their ankles were untied, and they were pulled off the cart onto their feet and led across a stretch of cobblestones and through a doorway.

'Hook them up there,' said the new voice.

April felt herself stood in a corner and a hook from some ceiling-hung chain passed through the loop of her rope collar at the back of her neck and pulled tight, drawing her painfully upright. She felt Niki being similarly secured by her side. Then their blindfolds were pulled off.

They were in what looked like a small neat workshop with pebble-glass windows. There was a sturdy strap-hung workbench, a hand-operated printing press, a large magnifying glass on an adjustable stand and rows of shelves crammed with boxes, pots and bottles. A couple of inner of doors led off to other rooms.

The hulking forms of the two thugs who had held them captive were standing before them. As always hood masks concealed their faces. Beside them was a smaller man with a black cloth mask covering the upper half of his face, through the eyeholes of which shone sharp blue eyes.

'There we are, Charlie,' the first thug said proudly. 'A pair of prime maids. Real hot cunnies.'

'Worth a pretty penny on the block,' his companion added.

'All right lads,' Charlie said. 'Let me look them over first...'

He assessed April and Niki with practiced hands and eyes. Their breasts were lifted and pussies probed. He examined their brands carefully, muttering as he did so: 'Yes, I can do something with these...' Then he squeezed and pinched the muscles of their buttocks, thighs and calves to test their strength. They might have been horses being appraised for sale. In Nethervale the process was much the same.

'I'll give you seven and six each for them,' Charlie said at last.

April shivered. It was quite a lot of money by local standards, but still it was the price of their bodies and all rights to them.

'They'll fetch ten bob on the block easy, maybe more!' the first thug protested.

‘Seven and six,’ Charlie repeated firmly. ‘Which I’ll wager is seven and six more than they cost you. Who’s got to provide the paperwork to make them legal? Who has to fix their brands? I’ve got to turn a profit. Take it or leave it, lads.’

After much grumbling the pair agreed and coins changed hands. Without a backward glance the thugs went outside. In a minute April heard the cart drive off.

Meanwhile their new owner took a lash from a hook and held it up for them to see. ‘I don’t want to mark you but I will if I have to. Now, are you going to give me any trouble?’

They shook their heads.

‘Good girls.’

He untied their gags and then selected a small brown bottle from a shelf. Unscrewing the lid that held the rubber bulb of an eyedropper he drew up some of the yellowish fluid from the bottle.

‘Open your mouths and put your tongues out,’ he commanded.

They obeyed. Carefully he applied three drops of fluid to their waiting tongues.

‘Swallow!’

April felt the fluid burning on her tongue, making her eyes water, and she gulped down saliva as she swallowed. For a moment her throat burned as well, then it seemed to go icy cold, making her gasp. The intake of breath seemed to chill her lungs. Slowly the cold became a spreading unnatural numbness below the base of her tongue. In a panic she tried to voice her alarm but no words came, only a rasp of breath. By her side Niki was making feeble incoherent croaks. It was as if their vocal chords had been paralysed.

Charlie held out the bottle for them to see. The label read: JYMPSON’S FINEST BONDMAID MUTING MIXTURE. And in smaller writing: Apply three drops twice a day.

‘This is the latest thing,’ he said. ‘Everyone’s using it. Keeps girls quiet without gags. Worth every penny I say.’

April and Niki looked at each other with frightened eyes. They had become used to gags but this was something new and an even more intimate restriction on their freedom. Niki opened her mouth and strained to shape words but all that came out were ragged rasps. She shook her head miserably as her eyes filled with tears of frustration.

Charlie chuckled at their efforts. ‘You better get used to it. I should think nine out of ten bondmaids in Flauntwell are being fed the stuff by now.’

April stopped fighting to speak and hung her head mutely. It seemed that Jympson’s had finally established control over the last orifice of their bodies. They had Jympson’s grease up their bottoms to ease anal intercourse, Jympson’s depilating cream on their pussies to keep them smooth and hairless

and now Jympson's drops in their mouths to rob them of speech and render them true dumb animals. But then in Nethervale bondmaids always had been regarded as little better than female animals that could talk. Now even that ability was being denied them.

Briskly Charlie went about his work with the sureness of long practice. As he did so he chatted to them in a not unkindly way, as one might talk to pets, without expecting any answer but knowing he had their undivided attention.

'Let's get you into proper harness,' he said, selecting two sets of worn but serviceable leather collars and cuffs from a box. He cut the ropes from their wrists and replaced them with locking cuffs. Unhooking them one at a time from the ceiling chains he replaced the loops about their necks with real collars, clicking his tongue in disapproval as he did so. 'Cheap hemp! Look at the marks its left... those two are idiots... that could lower your block price.' He applied some soothing cream to the chaff marks.

Leaving Niki hooked up he took April over to the bench, bent her forward across it and fastened her in place, immobilising her hips with broad straps across her waist and about the tops of her thighs, which were held spread and pulled tight against the side of the bench. Her breasts flattened against the rough wood of the bench top.

Charlie pushed a thick rubber bit between her teeth. 'The muting drops don't stop you biting and we don't want you damaging yourself, so we?'

He took a tray down from a shelf. By twisting her head round April glimpsed its contents as it was set down beside her. There was an array of small bottles, lint pads, several fine brushes and a glittering selection of fine needles and rasps of different sizes.

Charlie seated himself on a high stool between April's legs, swung the pivoting magnifying glass over her haunches and minutely examined her scar brand.

'Yes... should be no trouble there...' he muttered. He opened one of the bottles and dipped a needle-tipped tool into it. 'This'll hurt a bit...'

April screeched and whimpered, straining against her straps, her eyes filling with tears. It felt like he was burning her brand with acid. But there was no escape. All she could do was endure.

For fifteen minutes he worked on her with his tools and fluids and she shuddered and moaned as she felt her soft flesh pricked, abraded, stained and remodeled. Stimulated by the pain and her posture her sex engorged and grew moist, aching to be used. It was an instinctive reaction by now and she was quite helpless to stop it.

When Charlie was done he stood between her splayed legs and fingered her sopping cleft. 'You're a needy slut and no mistake. I think I'll do well out of you...'

He unbuttoned his flies and slid his hard shaft into her. There was no preamble or foreplay. None were needed. She was ready for penetration and he was her de-facto master using her for his pleasure. That was what a bondmaid expected.

April gasped and groaned as he used her, the lingering stinging throb in her altered brand melting away. The feel of a cock inside her was natural and calming, the normal sequel to punishment, almost like a reward. It was virtually the only kind a bondmaid knew. She felt a sudden wash of helpless gratitude to her master, even though he had been the cause of her suffering. Bondmaids were so pitifully easy to please...

When he was done Charlie pulled out and buttoned up, checked his handiwork was still sound, then freed April from the bench and hooked her up on the ceiling chain again. Unhooking Niki he strapped her down across the bench in April's place.

April watched while Charlie worked on Niki's brand, making her whimper in pain in the process. She hated to see her lover in distress and yet she could not look away. Slavish suffering was darkly fascinating, and watching Niki's lovely body bound and helpless being so meticulously tormented filled April with desperate desire.

She was also able to see what Charlie was doing to their brands. The tail of the "R" was bleached out in some way and blended into a new tinted scar loop that curved back into the upright to form a "B". The skin within the circle was then lightly roughened to hide the change.

If there were a description of them as stolen property circulating in Flauntwell, then it would inevitably mention their brands. Now they had been changed, like stolen cars having false number plates fitted.

When Charlie was done he found Niki was as aroused as April had been and took his pleasure in the same way. Niki's protests turned to little grunts of helpless joy. April watched his cock pumping in and out of her lover's sex with jealous longing.

Once he had spent for the second time, Charlie freed Niki from the bench and secured Niki beside April once more. Taking a pair of custom-made leather and metal chastity belts from a hook he locked them about their waists. Perforated metal cups with narrow tooth-edged slots closed over their pussy mounds. These linked to metal rings that encircled their anal mouths, held in place by the straps that ran up between their buttocks to the belts. They could still pass their wastes but no longer touch themselves or rub their sexes against anything.

'No spending for you two until the auction,' he told them. 'I want to see you dripping to please. The more eager you are in the pens the better price you'll fetch on the block.'

Unhooking them he led them through one of the side doors to a small room with a high barred window, in which stood half a dozen bondmaid cages. Three were empty and three had curtains drawn across them. From behind them April heard the sudden stir of bodies shifting within the confined spaces. Evidently they were not the only bondmaids Charlie was handling. How big was the black-market in bondmaid flesh she wondered?

The doors of the empty cages were small and low, forcing a girl to enter or leave on her hands and knees. They had barred roofs but solid wooden boards partitioned the cages from each other. Each cell

was floored with a straw-stuffed palliasse. A water bottle hung on the bars and there was a bucket for wastes with the luxury of a sheaf of cut newspaper sheets hung by it.

Charlie pushed April and Niki into adjacent cages and locked the doors. 'Cuffs,' he said and they pushed their cuffed hands against the bars for him to unlock them. 'I'll bring you some feed later.' He pulled the curtains across the front of the cells and April heard him leave the room. Now all she could see was the ceiling.

April pressed against the partition that divided her from Niki. On the other side she heard Niki do the same. She tried to say: 'I love you...' but all that came out were feeble squeaks and distorted throaty grunts. She heard Niki struggling to reply, but the results were so futile and depressing they soon gave up trying to form words. April tried to combine all she felt and would like to say in one plaintive whimper and Niki responded in kind.

They had been reduced to communicating at the level of animal sounds, which was the most that was usually required or permitted of bondmaids anyway. Presumably if a master wanted them to be able to speak he only had to wait for the drug to wear off. But it was different to simply being gagged. Their very bodies had been altered from within.

At least we're still together, she thought, but I wish we could touch. After a while she thought she heard Niki crying softly.

A few hours later Charlie brought them bowls of plain but filling food that they ate like dogs direct from the bowls. Last thing that night they had to stick their tongues out through the bars and take another dose of muting solution.

Apart from meals and an hour's exercise Charlie kept them in the cage all the next day while the swelling subsided from their reworked scar brands. They could hear him bustling about his workshop. Once she heard the voices of a man and woman in the workshop. Charlie came in and took a girl out of one of the other cages. She did not come back.

Later he came in and pulled back the curtains of their cages. He held up papers to the bars. They were bills of sale, convincingly creased and worn, that described April as "Isabelle" and Niki as "Caroline" and stated they had been bought a year ago in a place called Brampton Wood. He also had metal dog tags with the same names stamped on them, which he clipped to their collar rings.

'Those are your names now,' he told them. 'Tomorrow those are what you will respond to when I take you to the auction.'

April and Niki gave miserable whimpers of understanding. Now even their names had been taken from them.

That night was agony for April. It was not simply longing for Niki's physical company, but for any sort of sexual stimulation.

Six months ago April would never have imagined it would have been so hard to go without sex for a day and a half. But that was before she had been indoctrinated into the life of a bondmaid, where constant usage was the norm. Her body had become attuned to regular penetration by every orifice, usually preceded by the stimulation of at the least a good spanking. Now her pussy dripped through its imprisoning mesh and her nipples rose painfully hard from the hot mounds of her breasts as she ached to be used.

The next morning Charlie re-cuffed them, pulled them from their cages and stood them on the floor side by side. April's heart gave a leap of delight as she looked into Niki's face once more. They nuzzled together until Charlie slapped them apart.

He removed their belts, checked their reworked brands, fingered their slippery sex lips and grinned. 'Well aren't you a passionate pair of bitches?' he commented.

He prepared them carefully for sale. They were freshly depilated, combed and re-muted. A careful beating with a flat paddle blade brought a light blush to their rears and disguised any last traces of his alterations to their brands.

In addition to their cuffs and collars he added sets of blinkers. It was not unusual to blinker girls in Nethervale, especially when pulling carriages, but these had gauze flaps covering their eyes, which dimmed the narrow field of view remaining to them and turned their surroundings into vague blurs. They could just see enough to put one foot in front of another, but that was all.

Charlie left them for a few minutes leashed to a wall ring. When he returned April could tell he had changed his clothes and removed his mask but the gauze over her eyes reduced his features to a fuzzy pink blob.

'If you don't try your hardest to please the buyers or if you make any fuss at the auction rooms there'll be no sale and you'll be returned to me,' he told them. 'Then I'll make you wish you'd never been born, understood?'

They nodded.

He led them out into the cobbled yard, through a small gate into a back street. They stumbled along half-blind after him. The buildings, traffic and passers-by were no more than shadowy blurs. Even if they had the chance they would never be able to tell anybody where Charlie lived. How many times had he done this before?

It was only when they reached a small park that Charlie removed their blinkers. They saw him clearly for the first time: a well-dressed, eminently respectable middle-aged man with a full beard, heavy brows and tinted round spectacles. He wore purple gloves and carried a silver-topped cane in his hand. April was sure all those details would vanish again as soon as his business was completed. They would never know what he really looked like.

As Charlie led them out of the park and along a broad street April took in her first proper impressions of Flauntwell.

She knew it occupied roughly the same location in Nethervale as the city of Bath did in her England, and it had something of the same elegance of style. There were sweeping terraces of tall, town houses, tree-lined roads and parks. It must be a wealthy place, April decided, because there were more bondmaids on the streets than she'd so far seen in any town in Nethervale.

There were matched teams in highly polished harness pulling elegant carriages with high prancing step that set their breasts bouncing. There were living bondmaid display mannequins parading in luxurious shop windows. More maids trotted along on two legs and four behind their smartly dressed masters and mistresses just like pet dogs. Fake tails wagged, dangling breasts bobbed and swayed, ringed nipples stood out red and hard, bottoms glowed pinkly after their morning spankings, naked pussy clefts were closed by golden padlocks that reserved the delights of their hot wet depths for their owners' use alone.

Charlie led April and Niki up the steps of an imposing bow-fronted building. Chained stone caryatids supported its portico, which bore the inscription: THE BONDSLAVE EXCHANGE. And the date: 1759. Clearly these were very high-class auction rooms.

Naked bondmaids serving the function of living actuating mechanisms operated its double doors. Chained with their backs to the hinges with one wrist and one ankle fastened to the wall by the doorframe and the other wrist and ankle to the door itself, they pulled their arms and legs together across their bodies to swing the doors open.

Within was a large round lobby tastefully decorated with paintings of bondmaids in chain coffles or standing on sale blocks. Charlie strode up to the reception desk behind which resided a very superior looking clerk.

'Ah... good morning,' Charlie said, his voice now amiably vague and cultured. 'I was wondering if I might sell this pair on. Not bad girls and passionate enough, but they need somebody to give 'em a bit more stick, don't y'know. Thought I'd look for something a little more docile.'

'Of course, we shall be delighted to act for you, sir,' the clerk replied. 'In fact we are just about to close the list for today's sale.'

'Oh, you've a sale today, have you?' Charlie asked innocently.

'In a couple of hours, sir.'

'We fancy that.'

April was sure Charlie had timed his arrival to perfection. He wanted the shortest space of time between handing them over and getting the proceeds of their sale.

The clerk had been looking April and Niki over with a professional eye. 'They appear to be a quality pair so I'm sure we can fit them in. If you have their papers, I'll enter them on the list...'

'What? Oh, yes, I've got them here somewhere...'

Their fake documents were handed over. April glance sidelong at Niki. If the deception were discovered now what would happen? But the clerk appeared to accept them at face value and entered the details in a ledger. Charlie produced a calling card that no doubt he had printed himself, giving the name of Samuel Oliver of 3, Montague Mansions. The terms of the sale were explained and Charlie signed a contract with a flourish.

In an anteroom behind the reception desk April and Niki's cuffs, collar and leashes were swapped for auction house sets. Ring gags were fitted, forcing their mouths wide so their teeth could be inspected. A valuer looked them over, pronounced them fit for sale and agreed a reserve price with Charlie. The clerk produced numbered cards that were hung on their collars. A steward carrying a peculiarly notched cane took charge of their leashes. As he led them away April heard Charlie saying he might take a look around for a more docile pair, perhaps something in the oriental line... They never saw him again.

The steward took them along a corridor and into a great echoing round hall with a domed ceiling. The heat and smell of perfumed female flesh filled April's nostrils, together with the familiar pussy scent of excitement mingled with fear. The hall was ringed about with ranks of what looked like hay-lined cattle pens. Each pen held two or three cuffed and gagged bondmaids, who were being examined by potential buyers. In the middle was a parade ring and auction block of dark wood, polished smooth over the years by countless bondmaid feet and stained by their sweat and juices, overlooked by a small platform on which stood an auctioneer's lectern. A large chalkboard hung behind it with a list of lot numbers and female names.

It was a cattle market for bondmaids April thought: horrible and yet perfectly natural. Why not? They were just girl flesh: a commodity to be traded like any other.

The steward took them to a corner where there was a neatly tiled row of squat toilet holes being flushed by a steady trickle of water.

'Pee,' he commanded. 'We don't want you wetting yourselves in the ring...'

As they squatted to obey April felt her stomach suddenly churn as the full impact of what was to happen struck her. She was going to be sold to the highest bidder. But what was far worse was the realization that they were not listed as a pair. She might not be sold to the same buyer as Niki.

The steward rinsed and wiped them dry and then led them over to an empty pen and shut the gate behind them. People began to gather round the rails looking them over. They huddled together like fearful beasts, feeling many eyes upon them.

Commands began to snap out: 'Bend over!' 'Turn!' 'Come here!' Miserably they obeyed, showing themselves off.

Hands reached over the rails and felt them over, weighing their breasts, squeezing their buttocks and probing their clefts. Strange fingers were wriggling within their vaginas and up their greased rectums, testing their warmth and tightness as though they were dumb animals in a market. But then that was what they had become.

Yet despite the humiliation and their fear April and Niki responded like slaves to their needs and instincts, moaning and jerking their hips as they were fondled. After their days of enforced abstinence they could not help themselves. Their examiners laughed approvingly at their evident need and their lot numbers were noted down. A man climbed a set of steps behind the lectern and their names of “Caroline” and “Isabelle” were added to the end of the chalkboard list.

All around them pliant flesh of every hue was being pinched and prodded.

Eyes grew round in fear and some wet with tears, dripping in sympathy with their pussies. It was the fear, uncertainty and raw need of bondmaids without masters. The heady smell of female discharge grew stronger.

Then a bell rang and the crowd drifted away from the pens to the banks of tiered steps around the sales ring. The auctioneer mounted the podium and called the sale to order. A blonde girl was taken out of a pen by a steward carrying a cane, leashed and led into the ring where she was marched round before the crowd.

‘And here we have Lot One: “Janice”,’ the auctioneer began. ‘A fine reliable blonde bondmaid trained in all forms of domestic service but well capable of pulling a light carriage as part of a team. Note her strong legs and pleasingly high breasts with fine cherry nipples.’

Janice was made to kneel on the block with her legs spread wide. Her head hung and her eyes were shyly downcast. Very deliberately the steward drew the notched shaft of his cane through the deep pink gash of her vulva. Janice gave a shrill whimper, bucked her hips and threw back her head, eyes fluttering in a spasm of sudden delight.

‘And as you can see she is highly responsive. I’ll start the bidding at five shillings...’

And one by one the girls were paraded and then knelt on the block as the bids were made. Expertly the stewards wielded their canes, teasing clitorises into straining shameless erection and leaving the girls groaning with need. As their prices rose the canes continued to saw and prod at their swollen pubes, making them writhe and squirm in desperate need, showing the bidders her raw inner passion, mutely begging them to buy her. Some girls actually orgasmed as the hammer fell which brought forth a round of applause. Then they were led away, red-faced and trembling, thighs shiny with their discharge, to start a new life with another owner.

Finally, with the crowd thinning, there was only April and Niki left.

‘Lot Number seventy-three...’ the auctioneer called and, with a last despairing glance back at April, Niki was led into the ring.

‘Here we have a fine trim blonde maid by the name of Caroline. Described as passionate but in need of strict discipline.’

Niki knelt on the block. April could just glimpse her through gaps in the crowd. The steward ran his cane through her cleft and she groaned and rolled her eyes, swaying slightly. His cane came away shiny with her juices.

‘As you can see she is eager and willing to please. I shall start the bidding at eight shillings...’

April watched the bids steadily rise, feeling sick and also perversely proud that her lover should command such a price. Niki was straining on the block now, practically riding the cane as it slid between her glistening pussy lips.

‘I have seventeen and six on my left... all done?’ The hammer fell. ‘Sold to Mr Vivian Vernon!’

A trembling, glassy-eyed Niki was led out of the ring and vanished from April’s sight. A steward opened the gate of the pen and, heart thudding; April was led towards the ring. Who was Vivian Vernon? She had not seen his face. He must buy regularly to be known to the auctioneer. Would he want another girl? Please don’t let me lose Niki...

Then she realised she was being paraded round the ring with fifty pairs of eyes on her. Automatically her nipples sprang up and her clitoris pulsed and tingled. She could not help it. She was a bondmaid on display before her potential masters.

‘Our last lot of the day, number seventy-four: a fine strong maid by the name of Isabelle. A highly sensuous creature also suited to hard work, in need of firm handling. I’ll start at eight shillings...’

April knelt on the block with her legs wide. The steward’s cane began its work and her sick fear suddenly melted away as instinct took over. She did not fight it. The more appealing she was the better chance she had of attracting the attention of Vivian Vernon. Buy a pair please buy a pair, she prayed.

‘Ten and six...’ ‘Twelve shillings...’ ‘Fifteen...’ ‘Nineteen...’

She was sucking on the cane and dripping onto the stained wood between her legs. Her nipples felt like they were going to burst. There was nothing more degrading or exciting than being sold on the block. She was going to cum...

‘I have twenty-two shillings on my left...’

Yes!

‘All done?’ The gavel banged. ‘Sold... to Mr Osbert Black.’

She had lost Niki!

CHAPTER THREE

Niki did not recall the ride from the auction house to Vivian Vernon's establishment.

All she could think of was the stark fact that April was not with her. Vernon had taken her away with his three other purchases and had not waited for the end of the sale. She had no idea who had bought April except that it was not her new master. For the first time in all the long months she had spent in the madness of Nethervale she felt utterly alone and lost. So far they had survived together. April had kept her going with talk of escaping and convinced her to find whatever pleasure she could in her bondage. They had even managed to joke about the perversions they had endured and the characters they had met. Now April was gone and she was helpless to do anything about it. This was the true cruelty of slavery, far worse than the pain of thrashings and forced sex. Would she ever see April again?

Vaguely she was aware of the door of the cage built into Vernon's carriage being opened to reveal a high-walled yard set at the back of one of a terrace of substantial three story buildings. A young man dressed in respectable black-curved wig, black coat and britches appeared in the yard.

'Did you find the ones you were after, Mr Vernon?' he asked eagerly.

'Well help me unload them and you can see for yourself, Percy,' Vernon replied genially as he stepped down.

Percy rolled a wooden ramp over so that Niki and the other girls could climb out. They could not simply step down but had to shuffle awkwardly along the ramp on their hands and knees. This was because metal rods linked their wrists to straps about their knees and ankles.

Their auction house cuffs and collars had been changed for the restraints Vernon had brought with him. He had not bothered to replace their ring gags but none of them had spoken. Niki guessed all the girls were muted as she was. She had nothing to say even if she had been able. Pleading for her freedom was pointless and her new master could not reunite her with April.

They were led through a green door and into a room half lined with storage shelves and harness racks and half enclosed by a waist-high cage. Adjacent to the cage was a squat toilet and shower pan, with a low-set showerhead. On the other side was a large mirror set at floor level. A slightly worn but good quality rug covered the floor and on this they lined up like dogs on display with their legs wide and heads up.

Two of the girls were blondes and the other a redhead. Abstractedly Niki registered the fact that they were all pretty and petite and, had they been standing, would have been at least half a head shorter than her. They knelt trembling slightly while Vernon and Percy gazed down on them.

Apart from the presence of a grey wig in deference to his maturity Vernon's dress was as sober as his junior assistant's. By local standards they were both models of traditional middle-class respectability, and yet here they were happily contemplating a row of naked young slave women. But then in Nethervale that was a perfectly normal and natural thing for respectable gentleman to do.

‘Well, Percy,’ Vernon said. ‘You’re suppose to be learning the trade. How would you assess them?’

Obediently Percy inspected the row of girls, checking their teeth and cupping their breasts and tweaking their nipples in a businesslike manner. However a faint blush came to his cheeks as he slid his hands between their thighs to probe the tightness of their anal mouths and pliancy of their pubes, which suggested he was still not used to handling bondmaids so intimately.

‘Um... well, Mr Vernon,’ he declared at last, looking slightly embarrassed, ‘these three look fine to me. Good skin, the right colouration, perky titties, tight waists. I think we can find customers for them with no problem. But this one,’ he pointed at Niki, ‘well, no disrespect to you, Mr Vernon, but I’d say she’s too big. I mean look at her shoulders and those haunches. I thought ladies only wanted small neat maids for pets. She could pull a plough on a farm.’

The words penetrated the veil of misery shrouding Niki’s mind and a faint flicker of resentment stirred within her. The way he was talking made her sound like she was a horse.

Vernon smiled indulgently. ‘That’s a little unkind, m’dear boy, though it’s true she is heavier than the usual fashion. But I saw her respond on the block and she has true animal passion! She was born to life on four legs. Besides, we have to move with the times. I have her in mind for a young, vigorous modern woman who knows her own mind and likes to walk briskly and feel a strong pleasure bitch tugging on the leash. It may take a little time but we’ll find the right owner for her, you mark my words.’

‘As you say, Mr Vernon,’ Percy replied doubtfully.

Vernon consulted his pocket watch. ‘Nearly closing time. Tell Mr Jenkins to lock up. I want to show them the shop, so they’ll know what’s expected of them.’

‘Yes, Mr Vernon,’ Percy said, scurrying off.

Vernon turned back to his new purchases. ‘Now you shall see how girlpets should be displayed in a quality emporium. If you’re good and attentive in a few days you’ll be out there with them and we can find the master or mistress for you. Nose to tail now and move neatly! This way...’ and they shuffled after him.

He went through a short hallway to the front of the building. They followed with their noses nearly brushing the bottom-clefts of the girl in front with Niki in the lead. Emerging from behind a counter they found themselves in a shop such as Niki had never seen before.

A double row of back to back straw-lined mesh pens ran mounted on a long raised dais ran down the middle of the room. These were full of bondmaids on their hands and knees. There were a couple of slender Orientals and a black girl, while the rest were blondes or redheads. As Vernon appeared they pressed their faces up against the mesh and made excited little whimpering sounds or else lolled their tongues and panted. All were petite and pretty, with shiny hair tied back with ribbons. Their hands were encased in fingerless rubber mittens. Tails of different sizes and colours curled up from between their buttocks.

The shop was fronted by double bowed windows, in which more of the dog-girls were on display. On one side a pair knelt on coarse mats dyed to look like grass with their leashes tied to the stump of a tree, while on the other they rested on boards painted to resemble flagstones and were chained to the base of a mock lamppost.

Besides Percy, an older man and a shop girl were just pulling down the window blinds. She was dressed like all the female workers and servants Niki had seen so far in Nethervale in a respectable modest dress but with her breasts bared, nestling amid ruffles of dark gauze.

She turned to look at the shuffling line of new stock with interest. 'Oh, they look very pretty, Mr Vernon,' she observed brightly.

'Mabel!' the older man with her admonished.

'Sorry, Mr Jenkins.'

'I'm glad you approve of them, Mabel,' Vernon said with a smile.

The walls were lined with hooks and shelves on which were displayed a bewildering variety of girl-size kennels, baskets and cages, collars and harnesses, blankets, rubber balls and bones, dildos of all sizes, muzzles and masks, leashes, plug tails, feeding bowls, cage water bottles and jars of ubiquitous Jympson's products. There was also a shelf of books with titles such as: How to Train Your Girlpet and

The Obedient Dogmaid.

Despite her misery Niki found herself gaping at it all in horrified wonder. It really was a bondmaid pet shop. No, she corrected herself, it was a shop for the pleasure animals that bondmaids could be forced to become.

'This is Vernon's Petmaid Emporium, the premier such establishment in Flauntwell,' Vernon said with pride, indicating the shop with an expansive gesture. 'We supply the best people in the city with girlpets. Here you are going to be taught to deport yourselves the Vernon way. Before you are fit to be sold you will learn to live and move on four legs as naturally as two. You will never use your hands for any purpose that your mouths can perform instead. The language of the gentle whine, the excited yelp, the wagged tail and the soulfully rolled eye will replace words. You will no longer be bondmaids but pleasure bitches: the most adoring and perfect pet a gentleman or lady can possess!'

He rubbed his hands and beamed at them as though they should share his evident delight at their fate. 'Tomorrow we shall begin your transformation...'

After their supper and dose of muting mixture, they spent the night huddled in the backroom cage. Niki ached for April's company and felt sick with worry not knowing where she was. The only hope she clung to was the thought that if she was still in Flauntwell they might meet again. Until that moment she knew she must somehow face her new challenge alone. She, like the other new girls, had a strong incentive. They were all wearing chastity belts. There would be no relief for any of them until they satisfied Mr Vernon that they were fit to go on display. Once there they were free to come over the

customers' hands to show what passionate animals they were. Her experience in Charlie's workshop had shown her how much she would suffer until then. She eventually fell asleep thinking of the jokes April would make about her new doggy lifestyle.

Early the next morning their training to be Vernon's pets began with the fitting of broad black leather collars. These enclosed their necks practically from collarbones to chins. They had some give and pliancy but were intended to brace their necks and help them keep their heads up as they went about on all fours.

Nametags hung from their front collar rings. From these Niki found out that the other new girls were called Ellen, Tansy, and Millicent. Her own of course read: "Caroline" and there was nothing she could do to change it. If she were sold presumably her new owner would also call her by it. If she was kept muted would she ever be able to tell anybody true name? Had that been stolen away from her forever?

"Paws" replaced the metal rods confining their arms and legs. These were lockable padded fingerless mittens for their hands and matching lockable "bootie"-like versions for their feet. These had padded and reinforced toes and a cruel but ingenious means of ensuring they did not stand upright. A layer of small inward-facing tacks was sewn into the soles. As long as no weight was put on them they did not penetrate to the inner layer of the bootie, but if they tried to stand the tacks stabbed into them. Pads strapped about their knees made shuffling about on all fours a little more comfortable.

Except that merely shuffling about was not acceptable. A Vernon's pet, as Vernon himself made clear that morning, moved with ease and natural grace, especially when on the end of a leash being led about like a dog. They practiced this for hours in the backroom and about the yard walking to heel and then stopping and sitting back on their heels attentively when their master halted. A rubber paddle that put a stinging blush on their bottoms but did not break their skin enforced the lessons. They would go on display unblemished.

Then there was the matter of peeing in public.

Niki had become used to the fact that bondmaids had no privacy to perform their natural functions, but as dogmaids they were expected to copy their namesakes if they had to do so outdoors. There was a peeing post in the yard to practice on. It was a black metal pole incorporating a small fountain with a broad pan around its base that it regularly flushed out. Niki vaguely recalled passing one on their way to the auction house. That Flauntwell actually maintained such luxuries was an indication of the number and wealth of local dogmaid owners.

One by one the new girls practiced pausing by the post, delicately cocking one leg while staying balanced and peeing accurately into the bowl. The yard rang to the delicate tinkle of water for most of the morning. Niki wondered at the need since unlike dogs bondmaids could suppress their animal instincts and hold it in until a more suitable moment. But then it struck her that their owners might like them to pee on a street corner. It was a small humiliation that further emphasised the master/slave divide and showed who had the power. Also it confirmed their lowly status by forcing them act more like dumb animals. Perhaps eventually they would believe they really were animals.

They were taught to lay down in neat dog-like postures. A Vernon's pet did not simply sprawl about untidily. She might rest neatly curled up in her basket or at her master's feet, or lying on her side with her arms and legs stretched out together, or on her stomach with her head and shoulders raised, her arms before her and legs crooked and splayed out flat with the soles of her feet pressed together.

Once they had become used to moving about on all fours at a pace suitable for the house or garden, they were moved onto using specialized accessories that would allow them to keep pace with their owner when they were taken to the park or the countryside. They could have lifted their bottoms, straightened their legs a little and gone along on toes and palms, but Vernon judged this to be inelegant. Their speed was also limited by the disparity in length between their arms and legs that true four-legged animals did not suffer from. While bent over with their shoulders down it was hard to bring their legs forward under their bodies quickly enough to maintain pace.

There were two main methods of getting round this limitation.

One involved walking on their knees with their ankles strapped to tops of their thighs. Pads were strapped to their knees with large coiled compression springs sewn into them. The bounce the springs gave lifted their hips and gave them time to swing their thighs forward. It felt strange at first walking on her knees with her legs doubled back but with practice Niki found the walking rhythm was easier to maintain than she had imagined.

The second method was to keep their legs bent under them and walk on their padded toes. To support their legs in this posture they had metal and rubber devices strapped to outsides of their thighs and calves that contained heavy torsion springs bent at angles of about forty-five degrees. The support of these again gave bounce to their steps while lowering their hips. This meant their torsos were more nearly level with the ground and reduced the strain on their necks.

They practiced wearing both types of support while chasing and retrieving rubber balls and bones about the yard. Their leg and buttock muscles ached from the unnatural postures but soon they were moving much more freely. In fact, Niki realized despairingly, they were moving very much like a pack of dogs.

This impression was accentuated by their tails, which had been plugged into their rears on the first morning and which they wore them at all times except when they needed to void their bowels. They were made of thin moulded rubber and came in different colours that Vernon chose to match their hair colour. They were held in place by rubber plugs within their rectums and short vertical rubber bars on the outside that rested along the cleft of their buttocks. These prevented the tails from twisting round as they moved and so kept them curving jauntily upward, bobbing over their haunches.

This motion churned the plugs inside their rectums, constantly reminding them that a major orifice of their body was being used for an unnatural purpose. Though to a bondmaid, Niki conceded wryly, very little that was done to them could be called unnatural. Measured by frequency the normal function of their rectums came well down the list of uses to which they were put.

Vernon had them practice tail wagging before the mirror in the cage room. It only took a slight regular wiggle of the hips to get their tails swaying from side to side. Coupled with a plaintive throaty whine and upturned eyes they looked irresistible.

Eyes also played an important part in the matter of dogmaid sex.

They were all experienced bondmaids who knew how to please both men and women, but there were certain ways a Vernon's girlpet went about it. Like a dog, for instance, they should always be taken from the rear and this was how they should offer themselves, preferably with an eager wag of their tails. It was when it came to oral sex that proper eye contact became important...

Percy sat back in a chair in the cage room with his legs wide, his flies unbuttoned and a good-sized erection jammed into Niki's mouth as she knelt between his legs. The other girls were lined up behind her. As she sucked dutifully away Vernon was standing over her saying critically: 'Roll your eyes up at his face, girl. Show him how much you love to have him in your mouth. More soulfully... Now a little whine... good. Now a wag of your tail...'

Niki was dripping onto the carpet. Another minute and she come herself...

'Mr Vernon...' Percy gasped, his eyes bulging.

Vernon flicked his paddle across Niki's haunches and she released Percy's cock and shuffled quickly to one side.

'Next!' Vernon said.

Niki also had the chance to practice her eye-rolling on Mabel. She wondered if being tongued by the livestock while the boss stands over you giving directions was in her job description. Perhaps. This was Nethervale and they did things differently here...

As Niki lapped at Mabel's plump ginger-haired sex while gazing up at her over her rolled up skirts with the most puppy-like expression she could muster, the shopgirl seemed only mildly disconcerted, as if it was a slightly risqué necessity of the job. How many times had she done this before?

'Oh... Mr Vernon... this one's very good... oh! But... uhu... she looks so sad...'

'They often do after they've been sold, Mabel. They get over it once they learn a new routine... Eyes and tail, girl, eyes and tail!'

That was in part true. Niki was letting the routine smother her feelings as much as possible, at least during the daytime. Not that she had any choice of, course, but she did not fight it. It helped take her mind off April and the mounting incredible ache in her loins that longed for April's tongue, or failing that any cock that could be shoved into her. At night their cage reeked of unrequited bondmaid need.

After a week Vernon at last judged them fit to go on display. The four of them were tethered in the bow window display settings, Niki with Ellen on one side and Tansy and Millicent on the other. Novelty

dildo tails, which stuck up black, shiny and desperately desirable from between their buttocks, replaced their regular tails. A perversion of the old song came into Niki's mind:

"How much is that dogmaid in the window?

The one with the rubbery dildo tail..."

Two minutes after opening, the windows of Vernon's Petmaid Emporium were filled with two pairs of frantically coupling bondmaids yelping wildly as they each tried to mount the rear of the other and screw themselves into insensibility.

Niki knew what she was doing but had no time for shame. She had been turned into a rutting animal but she could not help it. The fact that it was in public only gave it a perverse extra thrill. Her extra weight and strength told in the fight to be first. She forced Ellen down to the ground, straddled her rear and impaled herself on Ellen's dildo and rode herself to a climax with a howl of pleasure.

A small crowd was still watching when the girls finally recovered. Niki felt shocked by the intensity of her orgasms. It was all so sick yet at the same time there was nothing quite like an all-out slavish screwing, she admitted ruefully. At least the terrible need was lifted for the moment, though she knew it was never far away.

Mindful of Vernon's instructions she and the other girls went down on their knees and gazed soulfully up at the onlookers, wagging their tails hopefully. Please buy me, they begged mutely.

But all the while Niki was scanning the street in the desperate hope of glimpsing April.

Where was she?

CHAPTER FOUR

April hung spread-eagled and belly-down over the tray of spikes. A ring-gag held her mouth wide. A broad black leather collar encircled her neck to which was riveted a metal strip stamped with the words: "GIRL 7. PROPERTY OF BLACK'S HOUSE OF RESTRAINT AND CORRECTION"

Her wrists and ankles were cuffed to chains that ran through pulley blocks bolted to the tops of upright wooden posts, arranged rather like the corners of a small four-poster bed. Also bolted to the posts were lengths of sprung chains with crocodile clip ends. The posts rose to about head height from a base frame that supported between them a tray little over half a metre along each side mounted on an adjustable stand. The tray held wooden rods the thickness of rolling pins studded with stubby metal pyramids. The rods were free to rotate and set in parallel rows rather like those supporting the model players on a table football game. The uppermost spikes brushed the soft bow of April's stomach and the tips of her pendant nipples as she breathed.

Blossoming from her anus and vagina and clearly visible between her spread thighs were the heads of single red carnations.

All about her in the big display room leather creaked and chain clinked as the other girls shifted in their restraints. Occasionally muffled groans or faint whimpers got past a gag. Intricate devices of dark wood, heavy straps and oiled cogs rose menacingly from their stands or else hung from walls or ceiling. In the window counterweights pulled chains over pulleys, forcing Girl 5 to impale herself on a glistening shaft time after time.

After over a week of serving in Black's shop "Girl 5" was still all April knew about her as an individual. The girls on display were nameless: referred to only by their individual collar numbers. To think she had felt miserable about being given a false name. Now she had none at all.

Herbert the shop assistant went round with a duster putting a shine on wood and metal and the occasional rosy backside. He was a plump young man with spots and a face only a mother could love who nevertheless smiled all the time. He had much to smile about.

As April had learned on her first day, whenever possible Herbert took advantage of their helpless state. But then what lad could resist indulging his fancies when he had eight young women at his mercy? In truth they were not always ungrateful.

Highly sexed bondmaids tormented all day on display but not allowed to orgasm, then bound all night in their sleeping cages so they could not touch themselves were by morning desperate enough even for Herbert's attentions. They would press their breasts and hindquarters to the bars, whining and whimpering as pleadingly as their muted voices allowed, greasing the bars with their juices. Herbert would pinch, tweak and tease their flesh until he selected whatever orifice pleased him most and then rammed his thick stubby cock into it. He also fed them by hand, making the most of his power over them, and they would have to beg open-mouthed for every spoonful.

Yes, Herbert was a happy lad.

His employer, Osbert Black, was quite different. He was a thin scarecrow of a man, dressed as darkly as his name, with a high brow and a thin mouth. He looked more like a professor than the proprietor of a bondage shop. The only colour about him was the pink carnation in his buttonhole.

This was taken from a large spray of pink and red carnations delivered daily and kept in a black gilt vase that rested on the desk where he made out his orders and wrote receipts. The red carnations were for the display girls. Every orifice not actually plugged by some means he carefully filled with the stem of a red bloom, turning them into fleshy vases.

In the process anuses clenched tighter, vagina lips glistened and the air became a little heavy with arousal. But he delved no deeper. Black's interest in the girls was actually quite clinical. To him the girls were simply a means to show off his ingenious devices of torment and restraint. By the degree of their squirming and intensity of their gag-muffled moans he gauged the effectiveness of his creations.

April could see Girl 2, a pretty blonde girl with lightly freckled skin, suspended in the bell cage hanging from a wooden gibbet. The cage was a teardrop of metal mesh just large enough to enclose her head and torso, with a slot for her breasts to squeeze through and paired holes in its side for her arms and legs. Her arms were pulled round behind her back and cuffed to the cage frame. Her legs were pulled out to the sides, splaying her thighs wide, then bent almost double, allowing her ankles to be cuffed to the underside of the cage. In the bottom of the cage was a hole through which her buttocks and pubic mound bulged. Beneath them, slung between her feet, was a bucket half-filled with water.

This was not to catch solid wastes in the confines of the shop and her anus was plugged with a carnation. It was all the urine that she expelled which helped demonstrate the purpose of the device.

The bucket was suspended from a pair of fine chains that ran through eyelets up the sides of the cage to more eyelets set in ends of a crossbar that incorporated the big ring from which the cage hung. From there they ran down to Girl 2's breasts where they hooked on to screw clamps fastened to her nipples. These were currently taut and upward-tilted red-brown cones that were drawn so tight they were beginning to lift her pale rounded breasts after them.

As the bucket got heavier, of course, so her nipples would be stretched even higher. Girl 2's face was a mask of dismay and her teeth showed white where they were clamped about the thick rubber bit strapped into her mouth.

April was not gloating over the girl's suffering, but looking was something no bondmaid could help doing. Briefly it took her mind off thoughts of Niki. Their eyes met and Girl 2 forced a smile about her bit. April did her best to smile back, sympathising with her discomfort.

The door of the shop opened to admit a well-dressed man and woman. April twisted her head round to observe them. It was another distraction from the burning ache in her limbs and the ache of loss in her heart, even though she knew it might mean she was shortly going to suffer even greater misery.

Black stepped forward. 'Welcome to Black's House of Restraint and Correction,' he said, bowing slightly. 'And how can I be of assistance?'

‘We were looking for something to help keep our bondmaids in line,’ the man said. ‘Recently they’ve become quite slovenly but the normal beatings don’t seem to work any more.’

‘They’re really getting quite willful,’ his companion admitted in a whisper, as though confiding a shameful secret. ‘I’m worried our friends will notice. We really don’t know what to do.’

‘Have no fear, madam,’ Black said reassuringly. ‘This is a common problem that I have encountered many times before. Bondmaids naturally become accustomed to the strap, cane or tawse. In fact they almost seem to derive pleasure from their application. The pain only stimulates their base animal lust. Quite useful for preparing them to give passion, to be sure, but too much self-pleasure dulls their instinct to obey and unquestioning obedience is after all the primary quality we require in them. They need a demonstration of total mastery through a combination of sustained confinement and precisely administered pain. What you should employ is a device or mechanism that will not only break their spirit, but the mere presence of which, in future, will be a constant reminder to them of the penalty of disobedience.’

‘That sounds just the sort of thing we’re after,’ the man exclaimed. ‘What would you recommend?’

‘Well, sir, we have many devices that might suit. Ideally you should bring your maids here so we might gauge their reactions. Usually there is a particular device that arouses the most instinctive fear. That is of course the one to use on them. But meanwhile if you would like to see what we have on offer... this is a simple device yet quite amusing and affective.’

He guided them over to where Girl 4, a curvy brunette, was unwillingly demonstrating the breast press and impaling bar.

She was standing bent forward from the hip with her legs held wide by a spreader bar hooked to her ankle cuffs. Her full breasts as they hung beneath her bulged invitingly, unnaturally uplifted by the pressure from below of a double scalloped wooden block about the size of a broom head, held in place by a rod hooked to the middle of her ankle spreader bar. The cupping curves of the block in which Girl 4’s breasts rested were studded with more of the pyramidal spikes over which April hung. Chains from the ends of the block went over the upper slopes of her breasts and angled inwards to clip to her collar ring, holding the device in place. A spanking paddle also hung invitingly from her collar ring.

Girl 4’s arms had been pulled tightly round behind her until her wrists and elbows touched. These were strapped to a wooden rod. A ring in the end of this rod was hooked to a ceiling chain by way of a heavy tension spring. A second sprung chain ran at an angle down from the ceiling chain to her head where it divided into two, going across each cheek from behind to her mouth where a pair of black rubber hooks was jammed between her teeth. These forced her jaws wide and drew her lips back into a fixed grimace. The tension pulled her head up, forcing her to stare straight ahead. A third sprung chain ran down from the ring at the end of the rod to the cleft of her buttocks where it was anchored in her rectum by a large hook. A pair of crescent-shaped toothed clamps bit into her labia, pulling them wide and a carnation peeped from the dark pink glistening valley between the distended lips. The clamps were linked to a pair of sprung chains that ran down to her ankle cuffs.

‘As you can see she is in a state of tension she cannot escape,’ Black explained. ‘Any movement merely shifts the focus of her greatest discomfort.’

After a few hours the pain becomes considerable. She is disciplined with no additional effort on your part, and yet this posture still leaves her breasts and posterior accessible for punishment...’

As he spoke he unhooked the spanking paddle and swiped it across the girl’s upthrust globes. They flattened and bounced under the impact of the blow. Girl 4’s eyes bulged and filled with tears and a shrill yelp sounded from behind her gag.

‘The studs are a patented design of my own,’ Black admitted modestly. ‘They cause the maximum pain while inflicting the minimum of lasting damage to her skin. The other advantage of this posture is that her orifices are also available for pleasure service...’

He clicked his fingers.

Girls 3 and 6, who had been standing unobtrusively in an alcove all this while now shuffled forward. Their feet were hobbled, their hands cuffed behind them and their mouths ball-gagged. Large black phalluses rose stiffly from their vaginal mouths, held in place by internal plugs and rings through their outer labia. Carnations peeped from between their bottom cheeks.

They positioned themselves in front and behind Girl 4, lined up their phalluses with her mouth and gaping clamped vulva and slid into her. The carnation in her vagina was crushed and rammed deep up inside her. As she sucked desperately at the two shafts the tears began streaming down her cheeks. The force of the thrusts was making her hips rock forward, causing the rod and scalloped block to shift up and down, setting her breasts rising and falling even as the spikes dug deeper into their undersides.

‘Of course, while this is stimulating for the girl as you can see the motion has its consequences,’ Black said. ‘She will soon learn she cannot have pleasure without pain and that her owners control both.’

‘Highly ingenious,’ the man said. ‘What do you think, my dear?’

His wife was gazing in fascination at Girl 4’s jiggling breasts with their treacherously stiff nipples. ‘Yes... quite remarkable.’

‘If you wish for something a little more elaborate and substantial, then such devices can be made an attractive feature of your home and a novel talking point,’ Black continued. ‘You can turn the disciplining of your maid into a regular entertainment. Some of my customers place them in the dining rooms and put a girl through torment as accompaniment to a guest supper. I think the process is more effective with an audience. It deepens the girl’s sense of shame... at least what passes for shame in a bondmaid.’

‘I have often wondered about their feelings,’ the woman admitted, tearing her eyes away from Girl 4’s painfully heaving bosom. ‘After being condemned to servitude do they still feel like us? The church has it that a change of nature takes place and they lose their soul.’

‘I have always felt, madam, that is scarcely matters,’ Black said. ‘There can be no return from a condition of absolute servitude and so no meaningful comparison can ever be made.’

‘And that’s enough philosophizing, my dear,’ her husband said hastily. ‘Now what about this over here?’

‘Of course, sir,’ Black said.

As they turned away from Girl 4, the other pair ceased their demonstration and pulled their shafts out of her. Girl 4 closed her eyes in relief and sagged in her sprung bonds. April saw drips of fluid on the floorboards beneath her groin mingled with carnation petals. Unbidden Herbert stepped up with a cloth and wiped the floor and Girl 4 clean, then took a fresh carnation from the vase in slipped it into her now red-lipped pussy.

Black and the potential customers now stood before a cartwheel of polished dark wood mounted on an upright post supported by a sturdy base frame so that it was free to turn. To the wheel was strapped red-haired and pale freckle-skinned Girl 1, with her arms and legs spread-eagled along the spokes. The boss of the wheel hub pressed into her bottom, pushing Girl 1’s hips forward. Her hands and feet, strapped at the wrists and ankles and protruding beyond the rim, were held clear of the baseboards. To one side was a smaller crank handle connected to the back of the main wheel by a gear train. Two smaller wheels were mounted on the main wheel on either side of Girl 1’s chest. Leather straps trailed from them. Between her legs, hinged at about knee height, a wooden arm hung down. Its weighted paddle tip bristled with more of Black’s patent studs. Girl 1’s red-fringed sex was held open by adjustable clamps, exposing her shiny pale pink inner labia, the carnation-plugged mouth of her vaginal passage and the swelling bud of her clitoris.

‘I call this the Wheel of Chastisement,’ Black said. ‘As you can see it requires an external source of power. This could be a servant or another bondmaid...’ He snapped his fingers.

Girl 3 shuffled over, stepped onto the base, turned her rear to the bulbous handle of the crank and pushed her bottom onto it, crushing her carnation and driving it up inside her, until the crank handle popped through her anal ring. Flexing her knees and swaying her hips from side to side she began to turn the crank. The cogs and chain whirled smoothly and the wheel began to turn. This set in motion the gears linking the lesser wheels to the main hub. They began to spin rapidly, far faster than the main wheel. Under centripetal force the leather straps extended and began to lash the sides of Girl 1’s pale freckled breasts, setting them jumping and painting red blazes across their sides and heavy undercurves. The high-speed mechanical crack of leather on flesh filled the shop. The tormented girl whimpered behind her gag and screwed up her eyes, but she could do nothing to prevent herself being turned with the wheel.

As she turned sideways her breasts responded to gravity, the lower one swaying even closer to the whipping wheel, which lashed her red nipple as it batted the globe from side to side. But there was worse to come. As she was completely inverted the hinged arm swung down between her legs and the spiked head smacked into her peeled-back and exposed sex. Her eyes bulged and she gave a shriek of

pain as it dug into her most sensitive organ. The wheel turned on. Her other breast received its most intense lashing. The spiked arm fell away from her gaping pussy, leaving her tender flesh patterned with scarlet stud marks and the remains of her crushed carnation. Then she was upright once more.

The man applauded. 'I must say I like that. Most ingenious! What do you think, my dear?'

His wife was staring at Girl 1's squirming rotating body as though hypnotized. 'Yes, its very clever...' With an effort she looked aside, her cheeks flushed and her chest heaving. Her eyes fell on April. 'What about this one?' she said quickly.

'Ah, yes the bed of Bed of Pain,' Black said. 'A severe punishment for the most recalcitrant of bondmaids.'

He snapped his fingers again. Girl 3 pulled her bottom off the crank handle and joined Girl 6 as they obediently took up their places with Girl 3 standing by April's head and Girl 6 between her legs. Probing with their bobbing phalluses they entered her mouth and vagina. April tasted Girl 4's juices on the shaft as it was pushed over her tongue even as her own vaginal carnation was pushed up inside her.

'The girl mounted on the bed can of course be used for giving pleasure to her master or mistress at the same time as suffering her corrective torment.' Black explained. 'But it can also be arranged as an entertainment involving an extra pair of girls. Observing her suffering at close quarters is highly motivating...'

As he spoke Herbert had taken up the sprung chains dangling from the posts and stretched them across the bed over April's back. He clipped Girl 3's nipples to the rear posts and Girl 6's to the front pair. The two girls whimpered as their nipples were stretched into cones. Pulled inward by the tension they pushed their shafts deeper into April. Herbert worked a foot pedal on the bed platform and the tray rose upwards, pressing the spikes into April's breasts and belly until Black signed him to stop.

April gave a shriek, muffled by her ring gag and the rubber shaft in her mouth, and jerked on her chains, swinging back and forth as she tried to lift herself off the spikes. Her struggles pushed against the other two girls, jerking their nipple chains. They responded by pushing back against her and each other.

Thus the seesaw of pain began, pushing April across the spiked rollers that gouged her breasts and belly. She sobbed as her breasts were pummelled and scraped as they bounced in and out of the dips between the rollers. The spikes jabbed deep into her flesh leaving painful stud marks but without ever quite cutting it.

Yet even as her tears dripped so did her pussy from Girl 6's shafting. Briefly she could embrace the pleasure and the pain, blanking her mind to thoughts of Niki, channelling her unrequited need. The pressure was building inside her. Her loins were churning with liquid fire. It was too much to bear...

April convulsed, a pleasure bomb bursting in her brain even as a stream of hot pee hissed from her slit over the edge of the tray, splashing over Girl 6's thighs.

As April hung limp from her chains, for the moment too dazed to feel the stab of the spikes, she heard the man exclaim: 'Ha, she's wet herself! And look at her face! I think I'll have one of these.'

'And she's spent as well,' his wife observed. 'What a... remarkable creature.'

'Yes, she's a highly responsive maid, madam,' Black agreed. 'Tomorrow I think she should go in the window...'

April's heart gave a small leap of fear and joy at his words.

The water-powered gears concealed under the dais of the bow window clinked and whirred, turning the wheel that April straddled.

She knelt with widespread thighs. Her arms were pulled out to her sides and chained to bolts in the walls and doorframe. Her ankles were cuffed and chained to ring bolts in the flooring. A rod rising up from a socket screwed to the floor behind her, capped by a dildo buried deep in her rectum, ensured she held her place over the wheel.

The wheel itself was studded with rubber fingers, hooks, knobs and serrations. One by one they grated, slithered, tore and teased their way through the trembling, clenching, slippery gash of her sex.

It was agony and ecstasy. Her clitoris felt like it was going to burst. Already her juices and the results of two orgasmic discharges stained the wheel. Several people had entered the ship just to get a closer look at her, which had pleased Black. She was doing her duty as a living window display.

None of that mattered to April.

She was in the window. She could look outside at last. What consumed her now was the desperate hope that if Niki were still in Flauntwell she would go past. Perhaps it would be as a girlpet on a leash or pulling a carriage.

But as the hours passed that slim hope began to fade. Where was she?

CHAPTER FIVE

‘Well what about this one, Nesta?’ the young blonde woman asked, bending over the side of the shop pen and ruffling Niki’s hair as though petting a dog.

Her friend shook her head. ‘Oh, Lucy, I already said she’s far too big. You’re not buying a pony! You want something much daintier... like Akira.’ She tugged at the leash of her own girlpet who was kneeling by her side, and patted her head fondly.

Akira was a delicate oriental girl with neat porcelain features. Glossy brown nipples pierced by silver rings capped her perfect conical breasts. An ornate silver padlock was threaded through the bare pouting lips of her pubic mound, locking them together across the mouth of her vagina. Her small buttocks were as round and smooth as apples, with a reddish blush on each cheek. A wire muzzle was strapped over her nose and mouth. Black rubber paw gloves and spiked booties enclosed her hands and feet. Light leaf springs connected cuffs above her knees to a belt about her tiny waist, preventing her from straightening her legs fully. Her dark hair was tied into bunches with pale green ribbons that matched the color of the clip-on bow on her high silver filigree collar. This in turn coordinated with the colors of her mistress’s dress and bonnet and the bow tied about the handle of the light cane that hung from her waist.

The woman called Lucy was wearing a similar style of dress, which had a high waist tied just under her breasts, but in pale pink. Blonde curls showed under her bonnet, while brown showed under her friend’s, who looked to be a couple of years older. Both girls carried matching parasols. They had been in the shop for nearly half an hour. It soon became clear that Lucy had never owned a girl before and her friend had appointed herself as her guide in matters of taste. Mr Jenkins had politely offered his advice and was now waiting patiently to one side while they argued over the ideal girl.

Niki pressed up against the wall of the pen, making puppy eyes at Lucy, wagging her tail and lolling her tongue eagerly. She was the picture of an ideal Vernon pet pleading to be bought. The doglike mannerisms came to her quite automatically now. But then she had been getting plenty of practice.

In the ten days that had passed since she had been put on display all the other girls Vernon had bought with her had been sold. Every time Percy looked at her and then his employer he had an “I told you so” look on his face that he was too polite, or embarrassed, to put into words. It looked like they were going to have a pet on their hands nobody wanted to buy.

Niki shared his concerns but for different reasons.

She desperately wanted to be sold because she had to get out of the shop. On the streets there was more chance of finding April than watching from the window on the slender chance she might go by. Any owner would do but Lucy seemed nicer than some who had looked her over. There was a slight mischievous upturn to the corners of her mouth that was quite appealing. To her surprise she felt a tiny flutter of desire in her loins.

Lucy patted her head and Niki contrived to twist round so she could rub her cheek against her warm palm. She had a nice perfume.

‘What does it matter if she is big as long as she’s obedient?’ Lucy persisted. ‘When she’s on all fours it’ll hardly show.’

Nesta looked at her almost pityingly. ‘Really, Lucy, a big girl is simply not the fashion, at least not for a lady. People will think you have no taste. Or worse, that you could not afford anything better.’

‘Fashions change,’ Lucy mused, still stroking Niki. ‘She has a nice face and looks quite intelligent. She’s a bit different from the others.’

“Different” is not the same as appropriate or suitable for a lady to own,’ Nesta warned.

‘Well it was you who said I should get a pet because “everybody who is anybody has one”,’ Lucy retorted. ‘Keeping one was “an acceptable pastime for a lady”. You said it would help me take my mind off Lawrence because a girlpet would be more reliable than a man.’

‘Yes, but not one who’ll risk your position in society.’

‘Oh bother my position! What do I care? I have my own money and I can do what I like. Would you shun me if I bought her?’

‘Well no, of course not, but other people might think you... a little odd.’

‘She’s only a girlpet!’

‘But these things matter.’

They were talking about her over her head as though she was a dumb animal: a mere fashion accessory, Niki thought. But she was long past feeling insulted by such behaviour. It had occurred enough times when she had been a bondmaid standing on two feet and she was simply a little more of an animal now she had been forced down onto four. In any case Lucy seemed to be something of a rebel and she liked that.

‘Well I don’t think I’d want to have anything to do with anybody who’d take against me just because my girlpet was too large to be fashionable.’

‘If you haven’t got a man, Lucy dear, you only have the company of your own set left,’ Nesta warned. ‘And they notice such things, believe me.’

Lucy had been stroking Niki’s back and flanks. Observing this Mr Jenkins now stepped forward with a polite cough. ‘If you will allow me to suggest, madam, that you tickle her cunny. Her response to touch of potential owner on her most sensitive organ tells you much about the suitability of a girlpet...’

Colouring slightly, Lucy slid her hand over Niki’s buttocks and between her thighs to cup her pubic mound, tickling it gingerly.

As she had been taught Niki gave an ecstatic shiver and rolled onto her back. She pulled her paw-encased hands up to just under her breasts, bending her wrists as she did so, at the same time crooking her legs and splaying her thighs to show off her smooth sex peach with its hungry cleft. She put all the yearning she could into her eyes, panting eagerly. Please buy me...

Lucy looked surprised and then smiled. 'Oh, look at her offering herself. That's rather sweet. And see how wet she is?

'I believe she likes you, madam,' Jenkins observed.

'Didn't you say to get a passionate animal, Nesta?' Lucy said.

'She may be passionate,' Nesta conceded, 'but you'll have to put her on such a heavy leash for walks.'

'So I'll use one.'

'She'll pull you off your feet.'

'No she won't. I'll be firm with her. She'll soon learn to be good.'

'If this is your first girlpet then may I point out that we have several authoritative books on the subject of training, madam,' Jenkins interjected smoothly, 'together with a variety of disciplinary aids. I'm sure we can find a suitable leash for her. Perhaps you would care to take her for a walk to try her out?'

A leash was clipped to Niki's collar and she was let out of her pen. Lucy walked her round the shop. Niki's legs were not bound in any way so she moved in the approved indoor shuffle on her palms and toes, never lifting her head above Lucy's waist and trying to look as neat and graceful as possible. She brushed against Lucy's skirts while not getting under her feet and kept looking up at her with adoring puppy eyes. When Lucy halted she squatted down alertly by her side, wiggling her hips just enough to keep her tail wagging.

'You see, Nesta, she's perfectly fine. I will buy her!' Lucy declared, patting Niki's head.

Niki's heart gave a leap of joy and with a happy whimper she bent and rubbed her cheek across the toes of her new mistress's shoes.

Half an hour later Niki was loping along by Lucy's side on the end of what Nesta declared to be an unfashionably heavy braided leather leash. A wire muzzle covered her mouth and nose. Pin boots covered her feet, though for the moment their soles only faced upward because her ankles were strapped up to the tops of her thighs and sprung pads protected her knees. It had been decided that Niki should be confined to these until Lucy had got used to handling her. Then she would be switched to a sprung leg brace system such as Akira wore which would allow her to move more freely.

Nesta walked with them, Akira padding along with fluid ease by her side, her step made bouncy by the spring strips between her knees and belt. Niki envied her neat movements and tried to match them. By comparison she knew she was a big pet, but at least she could be a graceful one.

A brand new collar encircled Niki's neck. From it dangled a freshly stamped nametag bearing her new owner's name and address: Lucile Drinkwater of 33 Staunton Crescent.

The collar also bore her false name of "Caroline". Would she have to get used to being called that? Of all the things she had been stripped of since she had come to Nethervale, such as clothes, dignity and freedom of movement, her name was in a strange way the most personal.

'And you must get her pierced,' Nesta was saying. 'They look so much prettier like that. And of course it makes them much easier to control.'

'Please, Nesta,' Lucy protested. 'Let me get used to owning her before I make any changes. I've got to read all about training first.'

A large package of girlpet accessories, including a basket and cage, blankets, assorted items of harness, a cane, spanking paddle and crop, food and drink bowls, a selection of Jympson's products and a copy of How to Train Your Girlpet, would be delivered to Lucy's home that afternoon. Vernon's gamble had finally paid off. His emporium had turned a very handsome profit on Niki's sale.

However Niki was not thinking of money. She was simply pleased to be out of the shop. As they proceeded along the neat tree-lined streets she looked about her eagerly, taking in every pet on a leash, ponygirl, bondmaid mannequin in a shop window and naked girl hung out as a sign, hoping one might be April. As she did so she was half-aware of Nesta continuing to give advice. She was evidently one of those people who thought they could run other people's lives far better than they could themselves.

'Be firm from the start,' Nesta said. 'Discipline her everyday so she'll learn to obey you.'

'Even if she's not been bad?' Lucy wondered.

'That has nothing to do with it. Girlpets need a little pain to help them learn how you wish them to behave. They must always be in slight fear of you. Then, if they're very good, you can give them small treats.'

'That's rather cruel.'

'They're not like us, Lucy,' Nesta chided gently. 'They're very simple creatures. It's what they understand.'

Number 33 Staunton Crescent was a tall, elegant terrace house, set back from the tree-lined road behind wrought-iron railings. In the large hall, a pretty bare-breasted maid hung up their hats and parasols, glancing over Niki with interest as she did so.

Through an open side door Niki glimpsed a large, well-furnished sitting room, with pale blue walls with plaster mouldings picked out in white. A mantelpiece displayed a few tasteful ornaments. Everything looked clean and elegant. Her new mistress was clearly comfortably off.

‘You can unstrap her legs and take off her kneepads and muzzle,’ Nesta suggested to Lucy. ‘Keep them by the door for walks but leave her front paws on. Remember to keep her on her knees at all times so she has to look up at you. You don’t want to allow her to stand upright for any reason.’

‘Not even to climb the stairs?’ Lucy wondered, as she fumbled with the straps.

‘Of course not. She’ll learn. They all do. Just like dogs...’

Niki stretched her legs gratefully, taking care not to show any sign of trying to stand.

Lucy and Nesta went upstairs to Lucy’s day room. Despite her leg springs Akira mounted the steps gracefully in the wake of her mistress, while Niki made the ascent in a less elegant scramble, trying not to press her spiked slippers to the ground. From the top the flight looked frighteningly steep. How would she get down again? She understood now why dogs sometimes stood at the top of a staircase looking apprehensive.

The day room, adjacent to Lucy’s bedroom, was comfortably but simply furnished with three easy chairs, a low coffee table, a bookcase and a writing bureau. It was obviously intended to be a more intimate and private space than the ground floor reception room.

Lucy and Nesta took their seats. Akira crouched down beside her mistress with her head raised so Nesta could drape an arm over the side of the chair and idly stroke her. Niki copied her posture as she couched down beside Lucy, lying on her belly with her elbows tucked into her sides under her breasts, her forearms and paws together. Her legs were turned outward, crooked and splayed flat, so that the soles of her feet were pressed together. Most people would not have been able to rotate their hip joints so wide but Niki was quite comfortable. She felt brief perverse gratitude to the Sisters of Saint Theow who had a few months earlier methodically bent, stretched and twisted her and April’s bodies in their desire to create perfect bondmaids. It had been hideously painful but it meant they could now adopt almost any slavish posture.

‘At least she knows how to lay down properly,’ Nesta conceded, looking at Niki with a critical eye.

Lucy laughed. ‘Well I’m glad she can do one thing you approve of.’ She patted Niki’s head. Niki lolled her tongue and gazed lovingly up at her mistress, making her eyes as large and round as she could. Lucy laughed again and ruffled her hair. ‘You see, Caroline is going to make a fine pet.’ She frowned. ‘Hmm... perhaps I should call her Carrie. Yes, that seems more of a pettish name. Here, Carrie! Fetch, Carrie! I can imagine calling that out in the park when I take her out for exercise.’

‘Don’t let her off the leash in public until you’ve got her well trained,’ Nesta warned. ‘Teach her how to behave indoors first, especially in bed. It’s not hard. They’re very grateful to be allowed to sleep in

your bed and not in a basket so they try hard to please. It's so nice to have a soft warm body cuddled up against you and much more convenient than a hot water bottle.'

Lucy was blushing faintly. 'I'm not sure about having her actually being in my bed. I mean, it would be like sharing it with another woman...'

'She's not a woman she's your pet!' Nesta reminded her. 'Really, Lucy, you must get this silly thinking out of your head. Bondmaids aren't like real people and once they're been made into a girlpet they're even more like animals, just like the pony girls you see pulling carriages. She's your property. She is here to please you in any way you wish... especially bodily.' She saw Lucy's blush was deepening and went on: 'It's perfectly natural and there's nothing to be embarrassed about. Even the church approves. Bondmaids have no shame so neither should you. Look... Akira: Onto the table face up and display!'

Akira scrambled to obey. She lay back on the polished wood, slid her arms between her slender thighs, hooked them under her knees and pulled her booted and sprung legs up to her chest and splayed them wide. The soft pale mound of her pubic pouch, its lips pinned together by the silver padlock, rose up between the taut twin swell of her delicate pink buttocks. The deep dark well of her anus stood out below her slot like the dot of an exclamation mark. Holding her posture with practiced ease, Akira turned her dark eyes expectantly to her mistress.

Nesta stood up, took a small key that hung on a ribbon by her cane and unlocked the silver padlock. Slipping the metal "U" from its fleshy mount she peeled Akira's labia wide, exposing a tiny, glistening coral pink valley within. Dipping a fingertip into the tight oily cleft, making Akira shiver, she brought it out shiny with her slave's exudation.

'See how wet she is?' she said to Lucy. 'They're like that all the time, like animals in heat. They enjoy this sort of thing. Now tell yours to tongue Akira's cunny slot. But you must order her properly!'

In anticipation Niki rose from her sprawl, sitting back on her heels and lifting her head up. She was the perfect picture of a bondmaid ready and eager to respond.

'Uh... Carrie... put your tongue in Akira's cunny!'

'Until she spends herself,' Nesta added.

'Until she spends herself!' Lucy confirmed.

Niki knelt down between Akira's spread thighs, letting her gaze pass over the lovely delicate hairless cleft mound offered so meekly just inches from her nose. She could smell the spicy scent of her arousal and felt her nipples growing harder.

She dipped her head and lapped, letting her tongue trail through the furrow, crossing the mouth of her vagina and up to the hard dark pink bud of her clit. Akira tasted clean and sweet but how she wished it could have been April's vagina. However instinct was taking over. Though they had never met

until an hour ago they were both bondmaids and knew what was expected of them. She licked deeper, twirling her tongue. Akira lifted her hips and gave a tiny moan.

‘Here, use my cane to make her try harder,’ she heard Nesta say. ‘It makes it more fun and gets her used to you disciplining her.’

Niki felt a slight sting across her buttocks and buried her face in the hot wet cleft under her.

‘Harder than that, Lucy!’ Nesta admonished. ‘A light caning is nothing to them. It’s like flicking a horse with a crop. They expect it. It gets their attention. They need the pain to perform at their best.’

Niki gasped as a hot line of pain burned into her bottom, accompanied by the crack of bamboo on flesh.

‘That’s better,’ Nesta said. ‘Now another across her cunny pout!’

Swish crack! The cane cut low across Niki’s buttocks so that it kissed the puffy wet lips of her bare sex. A hot thrill surged through her. Her first punishment at the hands of her new owner...

Blinking back the tears Niki kept her face pressed into to Akira’s sopping vulva, lapping and sucking for all she was worth. Akira was brimming over. Niki knew she did not need any additional stimulation to cum. How long had her pussy been padlocked? As for herself pain had become so closely associated with sex in Nethervale that the melding of the two had become a frighteningly normal sensation. Mingled with a large dose of humiliation and helplessness and it inevitably led to...

Akira bucked and came, spraying her juices across Niki’s face and bouncing her hips in the table. At the same moment Niki felt the shiver of a modest orgasm course through her. For a few precious seconds it washed over her fears and longing for April and all was perfect bliss. Savouring the brief sense of contentment she rested her cheek on the flesh pillow of Akira’s groin and looked up at her mistress.

Lucy stood over her with the cane still in her hand. There was a look of wonder on her face as if she could not quite believe what she had done.

‘You see what fun it is to play with them?’ Nesta said to Lucy. ‘Everybody does it and nobody cares because it doesn’t count if it’s with a slave. She’s there whenever you want her and she’ll never complain. And she knows how to please even better than a man.’ She pointed at Akira, whose eyes were fluttering dreamily as she made soft sighs of post-orgasmic delight. ‘That could be you...’

The delivery from Vernon’s came shortly afterwards. While Nesta enthusiastically unpacked, explaining how every item should best be used as she did so, Lucy began leafing through *How to Train Your Girlpet*.

‘It says here that to make my pet more dependent on me I should be there each time she relieves herself and wipe her clean afterwards,’ Lucy said in surprise.

‘Oh, yes, that’s how I trained Akira,’ Nesta replied brightly. ‘It’s quite easy when you get used to it. Not allowing them to use their hands is very important. It makes them think and behave even more like animals. It also stops them secretly playing with themselves. They mustn’t be allowed to do that. That’s why you must get your girl pierced and have a chastity cup put on her as soon as possible.’

‘Do you still wipe Akira clean?’ Lucy wondered.

‘Oh I don’t need to. Now she’s fully trained I usually get my maid to take care of that sort of thing.’

When Nesta finally left, after inviting Lucy to some sort of social gathering the next day, Lucy sat amid the scattered pet accessories and looked at Niki thoughtfully as she knelt at her feet.

‘Well I don’t see the point in owning a pet clever enough to wipe her own bottom and then doing it myself and I won’t ask the servants to do it for me,’ she said, stroking Niki’s head. ‘You’re my pet and I’ll do it myself or not at all. Besides, I’m sure I can control you well enough with all these straps and canes without such fuss. Suppose, while we’re at home, you come to me when you need to relieve yourself and I remove your paws. Be good and do your business quickly and then I’ll put them on you again and nobody need be any wiser. Can you do that?’

Niki nodded eagerly.

‘Good girl. What Nesta does not know won’t hurt her.’ She frowned. ‘Talking of hurt... how is your bottom?’

Niki went up onto her toes and lay across Lucy’s lap so she could see for herself. Surprised by the move, Lucy hesitantly stroked the stripes crisscrossing Niki’s bottom cheeks. Niki wriggled her hips slightly, enjoying her touch. Lucy’s hand slid down to cup her pubes. Her fingers soon found a warm slick exudation welling up around them.

‘My, it’s true you really are a passionate animal,’ Lucy exclaimed.

Niki grinned and wriggled her bottom again.

‘Do you like being touched like this?’

Niki nodded.

‘I think this is much more fun than wiping you clean,’ Lucy said, still stroking her.

Niki nodded again.

‘But... did it hurt when I caned you?’

How can I explain how pain feels when its part of sex, Niki thought? She shook her head.

‘I think I have a lot to learn about girlpets,’ Lucy said. ‘And even more about owning one...’

That night, by the light of a single pink-tinted lamp in the privacy of her bedroom, Lucy lay naked on her bed with her legs parted. Niki knelt between her feet facing her.

Lucy had a pretty body with clear creamy skin, womanly rounded breasts and a delta of tight golden brown curls framing the round-lipped slot of her pussy. There was a blush on her cheeks and she appeared excited but nervous, her normal self-possession temporarily having deserted her. She really was a virgin mistress. Niki felt the absurd need to reassure her but robbed of speech all she had to offer was her devotion.

With the new harness devices from Vernon's Lucy had cuffed Niki's hands behind her and secured her to the footboard by a long collar chain. Her feet were still encased in the spiked slippers. How long would it be until she was permitted to stand upright again?

Breathing deeply, her eyes wide with anticipation, Lucy swiped the spanking paddle she was holding across Niki's breasts with crisp smacks left and then right, making the fleshy cones with their India rubber-hard nipples shiver and jump.

'Lick my... my cunny and don't stop until I cum!' she commanded.

Niki bent her head, slipped forward between Lucy's legs and obeyed.

If Akira's sex had exuded a hint of spice then Lucy's excited cleft smelt of honey. Niki inhaled the scent with delight, then began to lap and tongue and tease her mistress's half-risen clitoris into full pulsating erection. Lucy swatted the paddle across her buttocks to encourage her efforts. Niki delved deeper, rimming the widening mouth of Lucy's vaginal tunnel. The soft pubic lips pressing against her cheeks began swell and grow slippery with lustful juices.

At first Lucy was silent except for her heavy breathing. Then gradually she began to sigh and moan, biting her lip with her white teeth. The light flicks of the paddle across Niki's bottom became harder and faster.

After another few minutes Lucy's hips began to lift and her thighs closed about Niki's head. Her moans became words: 'Oh...oh! Oh my!' The paddle beat a frantic tattoo on Niki's buttocks. Her words melted into an indistinct: 'Ahhh!'

Lucy's thighs clamped about Niki's head as with her free hand she grasped a fistful of Niki's hair and ground her head into her groin. Hot juices drenched Niki's face and for few seconds she was nearly smothered by her mistress's liquid lust. Then Lucy released her hold, sank back on the bed and laid still, her eyes closed, her chest heaving, breathing raggedly.

Niki also lay still, happy to pillow her head on the soft pubic mound between her mistress's thighs. That had been lovely.

When at last Lucy began to stir from her blissful daze Niki gently wormed upwards until she reached Lucy's hot breasts and lovingly kissed the rising and falling globes. Then, settling into the hollow of one

armpit, she took a brown nipple into her mouth like a comforter, sucking on it gently while gazing up at her mistress with adoring eyes.

Lucy looked at her in dizzy surprise for a moment then she smiled and stroked her hair. 'You're... a very good girl,' she said.

It was nice to be appreciated.

She was safe and warm and seemed to have found a kindly owner. Outside the wind keened and the rain spattered against the windowpanes in a rare display, for Nethervale, of inclement weather. Niki suppressed a shiver. Wherever she was she hoped April was as comfortable as she was right now.

CHAPTER SIX

With a squeaking of wet metal rings, April swayed helplessly in the wind and darkness. Driving rain had plastered her hair flat across her brow and down her neck. She would have shivered with cold but she was bound too tightly. She would have cried aloud but a tongue clamp filled her mouth and choked her sobs of despair. As she screwed up her eyes against the storm her tears mingled with the rain that soaked her naked body.

There was a gibbet-like right-angled metal bracket outside Black's House of Restraint and Correction that could be cranked up a channel set in the wall so that it overhung the display window. During business hours a girl occupied one of a variety of frames that could be hung from the bracket as a living demonstration of the shop's stock in trade. They were usually brought in when the shop shut.

Tonight April was the only living sign left out in the street. It was past eleven o'clock and the street was wet, windswept and deserted. A few curtained windows glowed with warm light from within, mocking her exposure.

April was confined in a skeletal mummy case. A framework of thin metal hoops linked by heavy gauge wire was clamped about her body like a jelly mould, pressing her arms to her sides and forcing her into a posture of rigid attention. The frame hung on chains running from the gibbet head to heavy rings riveted to the shoulder rims. The front and rear halves of the case were fastened together by bolts and wing nuts that had been screwed down until April was pressed painfully tight between them, the lattice of hoops and wires cutting into her flesh until it swelled up through the gaps. There were larger openings in the latticework over her pubic delta, breasts, buttocks and mouth, but only to enable other devices to be clamped about or inserted into her.

A chain that looped tightly about them in a figure of eight bound her unnaturally pale and cold breasts. Every other link of the chain was a small four-pronged version of Blacks patented spikes. Each one gouged the roots of her shivering globes even as they forced them out onto bulging fleshy mushrooms. Her crinkled shrunken nipples were clamped and hung with lead weights.

Another chain cleft her groin. Strung on it was a larger spiked ball that pushed her pubic lips wide even as it stabbed into their tender inner faces. Perversely the pain stimulated her juices that ran away with the rain. As the chain ran up between her buttocks it held in place a thick dildo that plugged her rear. It had as ring of spikes about its base that dug into the soft inrolling flesh of her buttocks.

Her lips gaped wide, forced into an expression of helpless exclamation. A rubber ball filled her mouth with a slot cut through its middle. Through this her tongue had been pulled, held in place by yet more spikes ringed about the slot's inner face. The pink tip of her tongue protruded nakedly from the centre of the wide ring of her lips. Every time she gave in to the pain of her restraints or clamped her jaws with the cold, the spikes jabbed deeper into her tongue.

April had slept in bondage many times before but despite her exhaustion there would be no chance of that tonight. She was wracked by a sense of utter hopelessness more acute than she had ever felt

before in Nethervale. She would never see Niki again. She would never go back home. She was a cold, wet, miserable, wretched bondmaid, being punished for an offence she did not commit.

She should have known something was odd that morning...

Every morning and evening, at Black's direction, Herbert fed the girls their regular dose of Jympson's muting drops. They were usually then gagged when they were put out on display, because, as April had heard Black explain to Herbert, gags added to their discomfort and made them dribble in an attractive show of helpless loss of control, mirroring the leakage from their nether mouths. Black had no desire to hear them speak. Whimpers and moans of pain were all they needed to utter. The drops ensured they remained mute when their mouths were not plugged.

However that morning, though Herbert had made as if to drop the fluid onto April's tongue as she stuck it through the bars of her cage like the rest of the girls, he had not done so. He had squeezed the bulb but the dropper had been dry. Then he had quickly pushed a gag into her mouth and passed on to the next girl, leaving April wondering if he knew what he had done.

That afternoon Black had gone out on business leaving Herbert in charge. At six o'clock he put the "Closed" sign on the door, pulled down the window blinds, took the sign girl down and one by one freed the other girls from their displays and took them through to their cages. He left April for last.

Being the newest girl in the shop she had been aware of his eyes upon her for days, though so far he had not had the opportunity to make use of her intimately. Now it seemed he had his chance.

She was bound to Black's latest creation that had been set up next to the shop desk that morning. He called it Pneumatic Chastiser, and was intended as a cure for lazy and inattentive bondmaids. Black had secured her in it before he left and had been well pleased with her response.

From each end of a heavy baseboard a metre across stood two head-high tubular posts. In the middle of the board was a shorter telescopic pole. On either side of this was a set of common fire bellows. April stood with one foot strapped to the top half of each of the bellows and her hands cuffed behind her and a ball gag in her mouth.

Her anus was impaled on the end of the telescopic pole. A second slimmer telescopic piston on a hinged mount angled upward from the front of the board into her groin. On the head of this was a spiked ball. Rubber tubes ran from the bellows to the base of the side poles and the angled rod. Light chains ran up from clamps screwed to April's nipples up to the tops of the side poles where they passed over pulley wheels and vanished into the hollow interiors of the posts where they hooked to weights that fitted the tubes like pistons.

The weights were fitted with valves that let the air slowly out, so as they gradually sank down the tubes they pulled upward on April's clamped nipples. By stamping alternately with her feet she could pump air into the tubes and prevent the weights falling too far. But some of the air also went to the piston angled up between her legs, extending it against the tension of an internal spring so that its spiked head ground into her bare pubes. The only way to make it pull back was to stop pumping.

The various valves in the device could be adjusted so that there was a fine balance between the two sources of pain. Desperately April watched the chains to her nipples clamps tighten even as the spiked ball unstuck from her sore, indented and sticky cleft. Then she pumped frantically, trying to maintain the equilibrium. It certainly kept her active and attentive.

It was also painful and yet horrible stimulating. Soon her thighs were wet with her discharge, much to the amusement of the customers. Yet the stimulation of her labia and swollen clitoris never lasted quiet long enough to allow her to orgasm. After a few hours she was hollow-eyed and desperate, which was exactly the state intended.

And now Herbert had her to himself. He looked excited yet furtive, checking the clock. Black might have excused him paying with the girls in the backroom cages during their rest times, but he did not want his carefully arranged shop displays spoilt by external sexual activity. He intended that their degree of arousal would be controlled entirely by the devices they were modelling, enhanced only by the forced attentions of the phallus girls.

However the sight of April's anguished suffering had clearly roused Herbert, as the bulge in the front of his trousers showed. Now he was free to play with her properly and not in snatched moments through the bars of their cage.

Herbert locked off the weights, allowing her to stop pumping and folded the groin piston down flat. She was still held in place by the straps on her feet, the nipple chains and the rod up her rear. He spent a few minutes walking round her bound form stroking and fondling her appreciatively.

Even though she did not like Herbert, April could not deny there was dark thrill in being handled by a lad a few years younger and a few inches shorter than she was. Not that it mattered whether she liked him or not. Frustrating hours on the chastiser had brought her to such a state of need that she would welcome even his cock inside her.

'You're quite a big strong maid, aren't you,' he said, stroking her thighs. 'Look like you could pull a carriage pretty well. I think we're going to get a lot of work out of you.' He squeezed and kneaded her full heavy breasts with their clamped nipples. 'Nice hard thick nips,' he observed with satisfaction. He tugged on the chains, stretching her nipples and lifting her globes. April screwed up her eyes and whimpered. 'Oh, bit sore, are they? Never mind.' His hand slipped between her legs. 'See how wet you are. Bet you're ready for a good shafting.'

April nodded miserably, unable to deny it.

Herbert grinned at her expression and fingered her slit. 'So you want my cock up inside you?'

She nodded once more acutely aware she was oozing her need over his fingers. Please screw me, you little toad, she thought miserably.

'Well you won't get it until I hear you beg.' He took the bottle of muting drops from his pocket and put them on the desk. 'Then, when I've had you, I'll mute you again.'

Now she understood. He'd been planning this all along.

He took out Black's spanking paddle from under the desk and swished it meaningfully. 'I'll keep paddling you until you sound like you mean it.' He pulled the ball gag from her mouth and let it hang round her neck. Then he stepped back, opening his flies and freeing his stubby, eager manhood.

As April gaped at it he swiped the paddle across the undersides of her breasts, making them jump. 'Go on, beg to have me up you!' he commanded.

But even though the drug had worn off she could hardly speak. For a month the thugs had kept them gagged except to eat and suck them off, and then without a break Charlie the Fence had started them on the muting drops that she had been dosed with ever since. Her tongue had got lazy and vocal cords weak from disuse.

'Uhhh... mahh... eh... she slurred.

Crack! The paddle swung up between her legs to spatter into her sore wet pussy, briefly flattening the full rounded lips of her mound and ramming the hard bud of her clitoris back into its hood. The anal rod held her hips rigid so she felt the full impact of the blow. April screeched in pain.

'I said I want to hear you beg!'

Her eyes brimming with tears she forced the words out: 'Phh... please... yhh use me... ma... master...'

Herbert was licking his lips at the sight of her struggling to speak. It was a bizarre new perversion the fashion for using muting drops had created: To hear a bondmaid begging for sex.

'I... nhh... need it...' she gasped.

'You can do better than that!'

He circled round her, belaboring her bottom. Her anus clenched about the rod transfixing it even as fresh exudations ran down through the folds of her labia and began to trickle down. She really was such a pain slut. Now she was truly desperate to be penetrated.

'Screw me... please... I wh... want you cock up me... master... I beg you to fuck me hard... now... please!'

He stood in front of her, grasped her hips and shoved his rampant and dripping penis into her gaping sex. Now she was filled both fore and aft. She gasped and clenched it tight inside her hot wet love tunnel, wanting to suck it dry, wanting every last inch inside her.

'Yes... harder... harder please!'

He thudded up against her so that she swivelled about the rod on which she was impaled, bumping his head on her chin, slobbering over her breasts. He spurted hot and hard in her depths even as she

convulsed. The shameful slavish orgasm ripped through her and for a few brief moments they were one.

For a minute he lay against her, breathing heavily, then slowly, reluctantly pulled out of her. As he took a step backwards, doing up his flies, he tripped over the groin piston that lay folded back on the floor.

As Herbert stumbled he made an instinctive grab for the desk to keep his balance. His hand struck the carnation vase, sweeping it sideways. There was a shattering crack and rattle of breaking china mingled with the splash of water and the vase lay in a thousand pieces on the floor amid a damp tangle of carnation stems.

Even as Herbert looked down at the shattered remains in horror, April distantly heard the sound of the side door of the shop opening.

April saw Herbert's eyes dart round in fear until desperate inspiration struck. Snatching up the muting drops he pried her jaws open, squirted them onto her tongue and stuffed her gag back in place. Then he ducked down, wrenched open the strap securing April's right foot to the bellows, wiped his handkerchief through her cleft to remove the tale-tale dribbles of his sperm and stepped quickly backwards, stuffing the handkerchief back into his pocket.

A moment later Black came through the door that led to the back storeroom. Instantly his eyes fell on the mess on the floor and his brows knitted. 'What's this, Herbert? Explain yourself!'

'Not my fault, Mr Black. I was just freeing Girl 7 to take her back to her cage and she kicked me, sir. I sort of fell backwards and knocked over the vase.'

Black frowned. 'Why would she kick you, Herbert?'

'Well sir, she didn't respond too well to a couple of the customers while you were out and sort of went all cold and limp when they played with her mountings. I knew you wouldn't like that so I gave her a few swats with the paddle, to try to encourage her, like. I think it made her angry. She's still a bit high-spirited, like you said when you bought her.'

April was shaking her head in denial and making frantic rasping mewling sounds, but even if she had been ungagged the power of speech had been taken from her once more. To Black it just looked like futile pleading not to punish her.

Black looked at her gravely and then cocked an ear as rain began to patter against the shop windows. 'Cold and unresponsive, eh? I think she needs a lesson in discipline.'

April twisted and swayed in her mummy sheath out in the cold and dark.

The only words she had been allowed to speak for weeks had been to plead for sex with a spotty boy who's cowardice had won her a night of utter misery. Now the cold seemed to be burrowing into her.

She couldn't feel her hands or feet anymore. Her breasts were like bags of ice. It was getting hard to think...

Dimly through the wind and lash of rain she became aware of approaching footsteps ringing out along the deserted street. They paused below her. She squinted down through raindrop-beaded lashes. A man in a hooded cape was looking up at her. In the streetlight she had the impression of an aquiline nose and a saturnine close-trimmed black beard, but she could see no more because seemed to be having trouble focusing her eyes. She whimpered pitifully.

The man turned to the shop door and banged the knocker until eventually the curtains of a first floor window were pulled back revealing Black's silhouette. He opened the window a crack and called out angrily: 'What is it? We're closed!'

'There's a girl out here who must be brought in before she becomes seriously ill,' the man called up.

'She's a dumb bondmaid there by my will as a punishment, sir,' Black replied stiffly. 'She belongs to me and how choose to discipline her is my affair.'

'Discipline and punishment are one thing, maltreatment is another,' the man persisted. 'If she is at fault punish her honestly and swiftly and be done with it. This lingering torment is both unjust and dangerous. I've seen what conditions like this can do to strong men, let alone bondmaids. Now take her in before she suffers serious harm.'

'In my own good time, sir,' Black retorted. 'She caused an item of some value to be broken. This will teach her to serve with more care in future.'

'Leave her out here any longer and she will be unfit for any sort of service.'

She may just be a dumb bondmaid, but this is careless cruelty that I would not inflict on a dog. Surely she has suffered enough?

'That is my choice to make. Now leave me in peace!'

'Will you take her in, or must I continue banging on your door until the whole street is roused?'

'Are you mad, sir? All for a bondmaid?'

'Mad or not it is my intention. Now will you bring her in?'

'Oh... very well!' Black snapped, and slammed the window.

Thank God, April thought, feeble tears of relief filling her eyes.

In a minute the shop lights came on. A scowling Black, holding an umbrella and leash, opened the door. With the stranger watching on impassively he cranked down the bracket from which April hung. Once the frame was resting on the ground, Black undid the screws holding the halves together and

threw it open, exposing April's pallid mottled body crisscrossed with a lattice of even paler indented stripes where the frame had pressed into her flesh.

Trembling, half senseless and numbed with cold, April fell forward onto the wet pavement. She hardly felt the impact. The cold stones began to suck out what little warmth there was left in her but she could not move.

'Stupid girl!' Black exclaimed, and swiped the leash across her back.

'That's enough!' the stranger said.

Dimly April was aware of a scuffle of feet and then a grunt of pain from Black.

'She is incapable by your own actions, sir,' the stranger said. 'To punish her further is beyond reason. There are standards of proper behaviour, even with bondmaids.'

'Unhand me!' Black gasped.

'Not until I know what you intend to do with her.'

'She's my property. That's none of your business.'

'But now I have made it my business. Here, take a shilling. Now she's my responsibility.'

'Are you truly mad, sir? I do not sell my maids on the street in the dead of night for a twentieth of what their worth!'

'I think you will find it a fair price. There is some league I have heard of; a Society for the Welfare of Bondmaids, I believe. I shall inform them of your treatment of this girl. They send inspectors round I think, and petition local chambers of commerce. I'm sure your establishment will not suffer too great a loss of trade...'

'Damn you, sir! Very well, take her and be gone!'

'A receipt and her papers, first, I think...'

Then to April things seemed to go very dark, but at least she no longer felt so cold.

At some point she was vaguely aware of her collar being exchanged for a loop of rope and her hands being bound behind her and stranger wrapping her in his cloak. He was big and strong and she was so very weak. Then it was only disjointed impressions with darkness in between. The clatter of carriage wheels... being carried up a flight of stairs... the sound of running water... not more water! But it was hot water, shocking but wonderful, the heat penetrating her numbed body. She was lying in a bath. How long since she had done that? Her blood began to flow, melting the frigid mush in her brain. She blinked the tear crust from her eyes.

She was in a big enamel bathtub an old fashioned bathroom with a copper hot-water tank on the wall with an oil heater under it. The air was full of steam and the scent of soap. The leash from the rope collar about her neck ran over the side of the bath and was tied about one of its feet. Not that there was any need to secure her. At that moment she would not have left the bath for anything.

Her rescuer was frowning down at her. He was wearing a loose white shirt with the collar open and black dress trousers. He had narrow grey eyes, crinkled at the corners, and a firm square jaw.

‘I hadn’t intended to come back home with bondmaid,’ he said, in the way Nethervaler’s had with mute bondmaids, of more than half talking to themselves. Then he chuckled as though amused by the consequence of his own actions. ‘Truth be told I’m not sure what I’m going to do with you. But I wouldn’t see the most wretched creature put out in a storm to suffer. Now you’re here I’ll have to make the best of it, I suppose. You just lay still and get warm...’

He left her for a couple of minutes. When he returned it was with a steaming mug of chocolate. He knelt by the bath, took her by the hair and raised her head so she could drink. It was the most wonderful thing she had ever tasted.

When she had drained the cup he laid her back. He splashed water over her breasts and still shrunken nipples and kneaded them until they tingled.

‘Glad to see you’ve got proper womanly teats on you...’ he mused. He squeezed her thighs. ‘Yes, you look like a good strong animal. I can’t abide these slips of girls they take for pets nowadays. No use for anything but show.’ He stroked her hairless pubis and fingered her cleft. ‘A nice smooth keel...’ he observed.

I don’t know his name but I think he likes me, April thought. The knowledge brought with it a new wave of inner warmth.

Her nameless master untied her improvised leash, pulled her from the bath and towelled her off vigorously, then led her through to a sitting room lit by oil lamps and bathed in the glow of a real fire. Beside the hearthrug were a blanket, rope and three leather belts.

‘I don’t have any proper harness to hand,’ he said, pushing her down onto the rug. ‘I suppose I’ll have to make some better arrangements in the morning. Until then you can stay here and get your strength back.’

He tied her rope leash to one end of the heavy brass fender that framed the fire. He replaced the rope about her wrists with a looped belt cuff and then used a second belt to bind her arms to her sides.

Though the materials were improvised his touch was sure and his knots, despite his large strong fingers, were dexterously tied. The bonds were firm but not too tight. He was ensuring, as any bondmaid owner would, that she would stay where he put her until morning. After the extreme restraints she had suffered recently they were almost comforting.

However there was something she had to do before he restrained her totally. With the last dose of muting drops still numbing her vocal chords she could not say what she wished, so she must offer the only gift she had instead.

She rolled onto her front, resting her head on the rug, drew up her legs, lifted her bottom into the air and spread her knees wide. Her full sex pouted in naked invitation. Even as she pushed her bottom out she felt the familiar churning in her loins and slick warmth flowing between her labia. She twisted her head round and looked up at him, trying to put her gratitude into her eyes and meek smile.

The man laughed lightly. 'It seems it takes more than a soaking to keep a lusty bitch down. And that is a fine looking cunny. Well, since you offer so politely...'

He undid his flies and knelt between her spread calves. Taking hold of her hips she felt the rapidly swelling head of his cock rub through her cleft before plunging inside her. After Herbert he felt delightfully big and manly inside her.

He used her with masterful assurance, each thrust hard, firm and deep. She braced herself to receive them, all the time squeezing on his pistoning shaft, trying to show how grateful she was for rescuing her. Away from Black's shop she had a chance to find Niki. As he was only her master by chance she had to cement his affection to ensure he would keep her. It was vital that she pleased him. When she felt him spurt his hot seed inside her until her pussy overflowed she knew she had made a good start.

He gave an approving sigh of contentment and ruffled her hair. 'Good girl,' he said simply. 'I think you may turn out to be quite a bargain...'

Pulling out of her he buttoned himself up. She felt his sperm begin to trickle down her thighs. He slapped her bottom lightly. 'Down!' he commanded.

She lay flat and he strapped her ankles together and then roped them to the other end of the fender. Finally he covered her with the blanket.

As he stood up April squirmed round and kissed the toe of his boot. She wished she could speak, but she looked up at him with eyes that said: 'Thank you, Master.'

CHAPTER SEVEN

The next morning Lucy took Niki for a walk to the park local park. It was here she had agreed to meet Nesta and then go on to the gathering she had mentioned.

It felt good to get out in the fresh air, which Niki inhaled appreciatively through her muzzle. This was a cup of heavy wire strapped across her nose and mouth. How to Train Your Girlpet had recommended using one. Niki wondered why it was considered necessary. It was not required to prevent her speaking, of course, since Lucy had dosed her with muting drops that morning also as recommended. It did prevent her from eating or drinking unless Lucy took it off, so it emphasised her helplessness and her mistress's power over her. Perhaps it was simply there to make her seem exciting wild and even a little dangerous, therefore requiring strict training and total control. It fitted in with the attitude to bondmaids that seemed to permeate life in the city. They had been reduced as nearly as possible to the status of exotic animals.

Compared to some of the gags she had worn since coming to Nethervale the muzzle was quite comfortable. In fact she felt smart for the first time since the carnival. By bondmaid standards she was dressed up, with a new leash and pink bows in her hair, the base of her plug-in tail and on her new collar that matched the colour of Lucy's dress. Lucy was in the same costume she had worn yesterday, but with the addition of a pet cane hung from a light ribbon belt. Every so often she touched it self-consciously.

Niki trotted along on her leash at Lucy's heels, her breasts jiggling prettily under her, feeling happier than she had since the day of the auction. Being out and about also increased her chances of seeing April, which gave her renewed hope. Her longing for her lover had not diminished but it was tempered with an undeniable sense of relief at being with a mistress she liked and felt safe with. That very concept would have seemed like madness not so long ago back in her home world, but here it was a simple fact of bondmaid life. Now having found an ideal owner, Niki was desperate not to lose her, and determined to be the best-behaved bondmaid in Flauntwell.

However Niki had far more practice at being a bondmaid than Lucy had owning one. Virtually every trace of shame had been systematically beaten and screwed out of Niki until trotting along in public naked on all-fours, leashed like a dog with a rubber tail stuck up her rear actually gave her a perverse thrill. The problem was at the other end of her leash. Niki had never had a truly novice owner before. Every time Lucy met an acquaintance along the way they naturally asked about her new pet, which brought on a blush and awkward response.

Niki knew what Lucy was thinking. What they really wanted to know was what she had done with her pet last night...

Lucy's reticence of the previous evening had returned with the morning light. Although she had undoubtedly enjoyed the experience, the expression on her face showed that waking up in the shared warmth of the bed to find Niki snuggled against her breast would clearly take some getting used to. What was nice was that she did not blame her embarrassment on Niki.

‘I liked what you did and I want to do it again,’ Lucy assured her, stroking her hair, ‘but I’ve never had any... relations of that sort with women. I know you’re just a girlpet which does not mean the same thing, but it still feels, well, very odd.’

For her part Niki smiled back, made throaty pleasure noises and rubbed her cheek against Lucy in an animal-like manner. She was trying her best to reassure her mistress and act as if it was all perfectly natural, which it was. In Nethervale relationships with a bondmaid were not classed in the same way as those between free people. Sleeping with one’s girlpet was no more unusual than letting a dog sleep on the bed in her world. Much of the time they were treated simply as living hot-water bottles. But as she had discovered individual people evidently got used to this state of affairs in different ways. Lucy was on a steep learning curve.

They had eaten breakfast together in Lucy’s day room. The maid had set out a traditional meal of bacon, eggs and fried bread for Lucy. Niki got the same chopped up in her new bowl that had been put down by Lucy’s chair. She ate in the approved bondmaid manner, which was with her lips and teeth, only using her paw-sheathed hands to steady the bowl. With her head down and nipples brushing the floor this ensured her bottom was raised in a provocative and submissive manner.

Instead of a morning paper Lucy was reading more from How to Train your Girlpet. “Your pet should get used to taking food from your hand to reinforce her feelings of dependence on you,” she read aloud.

She looked down at Niki thoughtfully, broke off a piece of toast and held it out in her palm. Niki nipped it up neatly.

“You may also train your pet to beg for titbits...”

Lucy held out another piece of bread and looked down at Niki uncertainly. ‘Beg!’ she commanded.

Niki sat back on her haunches, lifted her arms up under her breasts with pawed hand crooked over, lolled her tongue out and rolled her eyes up imploringly, giving a pleading whine.

Lucy giggled uncertainly at this humiliating display of need. ‘You make it look so natural. I could never imagine doing anything so... degrading. I suppose its just as people say. Your kind doesn’t feel shame. You really are like animals.’

Lucy had taken the book with her to the park, which was a well-manicured expanse of rolling grass crossed by winding paths, dotted about with mature trees, all bounded by a high railing fence. A sign by the gate read:

PETS MAY BE LET OFF THE LEASH WITHIN THE PARK

OWNERS MUST ENSURE THEY USE THE FACILITIES

PROVIDED AND DO NOT FOUL THE GRASS.

A few other pet owners were already out exercising their girls. Niki saw one trot proudly by with a stick clamped between her teeth. Eagerly she scanned the park for April. There was just a chance she would also be brought here.

Finding a shaded bench Lucy sat down with Niki kneeling attentively before her. She read out: ““Play regular energetic games with your pet. This will not only keep her exercised but it will get her used to obeying your commands in public and at a distance. Be sure to reward her when she does well.””

Lucy had a red rubber ball with her. Removing Niki’s muzzle and unclipping her leash she threw the ball across the grass and said: ‘Carrie: fetch!’

Niki bounded away after the ball as fast as her bound legs would let her with her tail wagging wildly about and slapping across her bottom. She snapped up the ball in her mouth and trotted back to Lucy. She held out her hand and Niki dropped the ball into her palm.

Lucy patted her on the head. ‘Good girl, Carrie!’

Niki waited with eager lolling tongue for another go.

After ten minutes of this Niki’s cheeks were rosy and she was genuinely panting for breath. Running about with her legs bound was hard work. Lucy consulted the book again.

““To avoid embarrassment when away from home or while attending social functions you must be strict with your pet’s toilet training,”” she read aloud. ““Ensure her bladder is regularly emptied. Make it a regular part of her exercise routine so she becomes used to relieving herself on command. Such phrases as: “Do your business”, “Make water” or “Sprinkle the flowers” are popular. Praise her when she does this neatly and punish her when she is careless or messy.””

Just like a puppy, Niki thought.

There was an ornate pet fountain nearby where water tricked down through a series of cantilevered pans to a ring-shaped drain at the base. From the higher pans pets could get a drink, lapping it up through their muzzles, while they could pee up against the central post of the drain.

Lucy looked at the fountain and then at Niki. ‘I think you’re clever enough to know what to do if I took you over there now, without me having to use any of these silly phrases. I’m also sure that you won’t try to wet your legs on purpose, so scolding you won’t do much good.’

Niki nodded, delighted her Mistress understood.

Lucy clipped Niki’s leash back on and led her over to the urinal. Though she half looked away, trying not to seem embarrassed, Niki felt her watching out of the corner of her eyes as Niki cocked her leg. You can’t help being fascinated, Niki thought.

In fact peeing in the open while harnessed like a dog was still quite new to Niki. Thankfully her training at Vernon’s enabled her to manage to do so neatly, balancing with one leg crooked up as high

and wide as possible to open the lips of her labia, squeezing hard to reduce dribbles and aiming her hot clear stream accurately into the bowl. It was such a basic function yet so degrading performed in this manner, she thought. She really was no better than a dog. Even though she no longer felt humiliation in the normal way, the sensation of passing water in public bound as she was did give her a buzz.

She knew she had become a pain slut, but could you also be a shame slut?

By the time Nesta, with Akira trotting along at her heels, joined them half an hour later, Lucy was reading the handbook with Niki sprawled happily at her feet on the grass.

‘Now you’re eligible to join Marjorie’s girlpet circle,’ Nesta said, once she had made her greetings.

‘You mean Marjorie Freeman?’ Lucy said with mild surprise. ‘I didn’t know she ran a pet club.’

‘Not a “club”, a circle,’ Nesta corrected her. ‘It’s very exclusive. That’s the little lunchtime soiree I told you about.’

‘Is that why you were so anxious that I got a pet?’ Lucy asked. ‘Simply so I could join you in Marjorie’s pet circle?’

‘Well, it was one of the reasons,’ Nesta admitted. ‘It will be a new interest for you and help you get over that disappointment with Lawrence. But I still believe you aren’t anybody unless you’ve got a girlpet.’ She looked at Niki critically. ‘Preferably of a fashionable type, of course. Still I suppose she’s better than nothing and she does look more presentable than she did yesterday... but her bottom’s quite pale. Haven’t you given her a spanking this morning?’

‘She’s been perfectly well behaved,’ Lucy said.

‘That has nothing to do with it,’ Nesta said. ‘I can see you’ve a lot to learn. Now, did you try her out last night as I suggested?’

Lucy coloured and lowered her eyes. ‘Well, yes...’

‘And did she give satisfaction?’

Lucy took a deep breath. ‘Yes, she did. In fact she was... very good.’

Niki felt a thrill of pleasure at this praise.

‘There’s nothing to be ashamed of, silly,’ Nesta said, patting Akira’s head. ‘We all do the same in the circle. It’s perfectly natural and such fun. That’s what girlpets are for when they’re not on show. You don’t think men keep their pets in a kennel all the time, do you?’

‘Well men are men. They can’t help themselves...’

‘... and ladies like to have their games as well,’ Nesta continued. ‘You must remember that. And as long as your pet shows the other members of the circle that she can perform properly, I’m sure she’ll fit in perfectly.’

‘What do you mean? Is she expected to do tricks?’

‘Something like that. You’ll see. Come on now...’

The gathering of the pet circle was held in an even more imposing house than Lucy’s, set further back from the road behind a high wall that enclosed a carriage drive. A couple of light two-wheeled ponygirl drawn carriages were parked on the gravel.

A dignified butler admitted them into a large hallway hung with oil paintings of girlpets in doglike poses, bounding through woods, chasing sticks, crouching at their mistress’s feet or begging. Here they unstrapped their respective pets’ leg restraints and muzzles and put them on a rack holding several other similar sets of harness.

Before them was a broad staircase up which another pair of recent arrivals were ascending with immaculately groomed pets in tow. Nesta greeted them familiarly as they caught up with them and introduced Lucy. Niki watched the neat rounded bare bottoms of the girlpets in front as they wiggled up the steps beside their mistresses. One had a tale with a fluffy pink poodle tip to it and the other a small silver bell. Both sets of cheeks bore the delicate pink blush of a recent tanning.

Entering a spacious upstairs room they joined a small party of well-dressed Flauntwell ladies in their twenties and thirties standing talking. All had girlpets on leashes crouching at their feet.

Lucy hesitated for social reasons while Niki felt suddenly self-conscious. Not because of her nudity or bondage but her appearance. From her view near ground level what filled her eyes were the bobbing breasts, pert bottoms and peeping vulvas of a dozen girlpets, whose bodies were compact, slender and perfectly groomed. Their hair had been artfully styled, shampooed and combed until it shone. Their skins were flawless and they had been delicately perfumed. She squirmed, suddenly feeling big and awkward. Had she got grass stains on her knees? Did she smell of sweat? If only Nesta had told Lucy where they were going. She did not want to let her new mistress down.

A slender woman with silver blonde hair, perhaps in her late thirties, stepped forward. ‘Nesta... and Lucy too. I’m so pleased you could come. Nesta did say you might.’

‘I thought perhaps Lucy might benefit from our advice, Marjorie,’ Nesta explained.

‘Quite so,’ Marjorie agreed. ‘It’s been simply ages since we last met, Lucy.’

‘Yes, sorry but I was...’

But Marjorie was looking down at Niki with critical eyes. ‘And this is your new pet, I see. My... yes, she is a little larger than usual. Well, let’s have a proper look at her.’

Before Lucy could say a word she was ushered over to a table with a padded top that stood in the middle of the room. It had a matching stool beside it clearly intended to allow a pet to mount.

Niki clambered up and knelt with spread knees, dipped back and raised head. The ladies of the circle gathered round her. Hands cupped and squeezed and prodded just as judges at a dog show would examine a new exhibit.

‘What made you choose such an... interesting type?’ Marjorie asked.

‘I... well I thought she looked intelligent,’ Lucy said defensively... ‘and she has a nice face...’

‘But hardly petit.’

‘I like her sturdy.’

All the while muttered comments of the rest of the members washed over Niki.

‘...still, good breasts...’

‘They’re virtually udders!’

‘Those thighs...’

‘And calves...’

‘Not a bad face...’

‘...a nice pliant cunny mound...’

‘... lubricates nicely...’

‘But how she must pull on the leash...’

‘Something of the Dane in her...’

‘Look at those nipples rising.’

‘Might take chastising well...’

‘Perhaps one can forgive her size if she has passion and serves well,’ Marjorie allowed. ‘Has she a good tongue on her?’

By now Lucy was vacillating between embarrassment and annoyance. ‘Yes she has!’ she said quickly and loudly, her cheeks flushing. ‘It was like nothing I ever felt before. I nearly fainted with pleasure!’

Perhaps to her surprise this outrageous and intimate declaration was greeted with appreciative smiles and murmurs of interest.

‘Well, our new member seems to have brought us a most talented pet,’ Marjorie said. ‘Shall we go through?’

She led the way through to another room, the other members following with their pets shuffling along at their feet. Niki clambered down from the table.

‘Come on,’ Nesta said excitedly, dragging Akira after her. ‘Just do as I do...’

Looking bemused, Lucy followed on after her friend with Niki at her heels.

There was a circle of a dozen inward-facing upright chairs with leather-padded seats. A small matt was laid on the floor in front of each chair. At their focus was a waist-high hollow barrel-like construction. About its upper rim was a broad wooden ring set between channels so it was free to rotate. To the outer face of the ring were screwed a dozen pulley blocks. Through these were passed lengths of rope. One end of each rope hung almost flush with the barrel and had an iron scale pan weight tied to it, while the other divided into four thinner cords, each of which was tied to a long coil spring which in turn was hooked to a screw clamp lined with serrated teeth.

Just below the pulley ring, wooden blocks the size of broom handles were mounted on horizontal telescopic rods protruding through holes in the sides of the barrel. Each block bristled with stubby pyramidal metal spikes. From within the barrel ropes ran up from the interior through ceiling pulleys and came down to a ring handle dangling over each chair.

There was a brass plate screwed to the side of the barrel, which read:

“THE DUODENTRIC PERSUADER”

BLACK’S HOUSE OF RESTRAINT AND CORRECTION,

DOWER STREET, FLAUNTWELL.

PATENT APPLIED FOR.

At the sight of this strange device Niki felt her loins churn in anticipation. So it was that kind of circle. They might be smartly dressed but this exclusive gaggle of Flauntwell ladies were regular perverts at heart.

Nesta and the other women formed their pets into a shoulder-to-shoulder ring about the post with their rears facing it, almost touching the spiked blocks, and began fastening the clamps. Lucy looked down at Niki anxiously, clearly embarrassed and uncertain. Niki smiled back and lolled her tongue out and gave an eager reassuring whine. She’d endured far worse before and she didn’t want to let Lucy down after the build-up she’d given her.

‘Come on Lucy, I’ve saved you a space beside Akira,’ said Nesta.

Taking a deep breath Lucy positioned Niki, her shoulders and flanks brushing Akira's and the pet on the other side, and began fitting the clamps. One pair went on her inner labia while the second, on longer cords, went over her shoulders and fastened to her nipples.

Niki winced as they bit into her flesh. Lucy hesitated but Nesta said briskly: 'Make sure they're good and tight. You don't want them slipping off.'

Lucy looked into Niki's eyes again, which were already watering. Niki gave a tiny nod. Lucy screwed the clamps tighter.

Finally they were secure, a ring of nervous, expectant girlpets, trembling from the pain of their clamped nipples and labia. Niki was aware of their fleshy warmth about her and scent of their arousal. They were going to suffer and they could not help being excited by the prospect. That was their purpose.

Their owners found seats opposite their pets. However before they sat they hitched up their long skirts and petticoats to their waists, exposing thigh-length stockings held in place by garters. Niki saw the flash of many tinted pubic triangles as bare buttocks kissed the leather.

She also saw the blush deepen on Lucy's face, but there was no going back now. Biting her lip helplessly she raised her skirts, exposing her own honey-coloured bush. Ladies in Nethervale did not wear anything as common as panties.

'Ready?' Marjorie said, gasping the handle above her chair. The others did the same. 'Begin!'

They pulled on the ropes. Inside the barrel counterweights were lifted, pumping hydraulic fluid. The spiked blocks extended outward as their rods expanded and jabbed into the rumps of the kneeling girls. They whimpered and shuffled forward. The clamp cords drew taut, lifting the weights off the ground. Inner labia began to stretch out from their enfolding parent lips and nipples were tugged painfully upward. Snuffles and whimpers of pain filled the air. Their owners looked at them hungrily, licking their lips and spreading their legs a little wider. Another tug of the ropes forced the girlpets between their waiting thighs.

Lucy was looking down at Niki in helpless fascination while Niki was gazing lovingly at her mistress's vagina. She could smell her special scent now. There were sighs mingled with muffled soft lapping, squelching sounds as a dozen pairs of dogmaid lips met the lovemouhths of their mistress's. Lucy moaned helplessly, grasped Niki's hair with her free hand and pulled her into her groin.

A minute or so passed like this and then Marjorie gasped: 'Change to the right!'

The pads were allowed to retract. Their faces now shiny with their mistress's juices, the pets shuffled backwards out from between their mistress's thighs, the cords to their clamped nipples and labia drawing back with them, then edged sideways to kneel before the next pussy in the ring. The pulley handles were tugged down and the spikes jabbed their bottoms again, driving them towards a fresh sex cleft.

For Niki this was Nesta. She had a close-cropped bush that framed pale pink sex lips and a prominent clitoris rising from its hood that Niki lapped and sucked for all she was worth. She'd show them if she had a good tongue on her or not!

Before the next change Nesta was making little whimpers of delight and seemed loath to part with her.

After the seventh change the first of the ladies began to orgasm. Niki saw them out of the corner of her eye. They eased forward in their seats as they grasped the hair of the pet between their thighs and ground her face into their groins. With their other hands they tugged again and again on the pulley handle, stabbing the pet's bottom with the spikes even as her labia were drawn out like pink tongues from her glistening pubic mound and her nipples were stretched into tortured cones, lifting her breasts unnaturally close to her collar bones. The pet's sobs of pain as she brought her tormentor to climax were muffled by the engorged and clinging pussy lips in the hot wet depths of which their faces were buried.

Niki shuffled on, tonguing out cunny after cunny with all the skill and passion she could muster. Three came in her face, a testament to her determination. Yet all the while her nipples felt as if they were going to be torn off, her inner pussy lips seemed about to snap and her bottom stung from repeated spiking. Even so, in true perverse bondmaid fashion she herself was wet with arousal, leaving drips on the floor that mingled with those of her sister pets.

Suddenly she found herself burying her face in a pussy with a familiar honey scent. She had made the full circle and was resting between Lucy's thighs once more.

Perhaps inhibited by embarrassment Lucy was now one of the last in the circle to cum. She could not let her be the only one. Niki redoubled her efforts, sucking and teasing her mistress's lovely cunny for all she was worth. She felt Lucy's hand in her hair, pressing her deeper, even as the spiked ram jabbed her bottom.

Then Lucy's hips bucked, her thighs clamped about Niki's ears and she discharged over Niki's face. And such was Niki's joy that with an unexpected shudder, she orgasmed herself.

Distantly it seemed that she heard the sound of applause...

CHAPTER EIGHT

‘Hallo there, Swan. Good to see you. Do come through...’

April looked up as her new master ushered a man of about thirty into the sitting room of the flat.

The newcomer was slim and very smartly dressed, with an amiable expression on his round pink face. Catching sight of April, with her wrists tied behind her and tethered to the arm of a chair by a rope halter, he gave a start of surprise.

‘Oh! I didn’t know you had a bondmaid.’

Her master smiled wryly. ‘Nor did I until last night.’

He waved Swan to a seat and returned to his own. April rested her head on his knee and he stroked her hair absently.

Swan frowned uncertainly at April. ‘I say, Maitland old chap, when I suggested you come to Flauntwell to find a companion I meant a lady. Not to say this one doesn’t look a fine specimen, but you know what I mean.’

“Maitland”. Her master’s surname was Maitland, April thought. She’d been his for nearly half a day and he had screwed her once and this was the first personal detail she had learned about him. There was a pleasant sturdiness about the name, she reflected.

Maitland chuckled. ‘I wasn’t planning on acquiring one either, and in case you’re wondering it wasn’t out of sudden need. I can hire perfectly good girls for a night from Benson’s Bedmaids. It came about like this...’ He related his encounter the previous night with Black. April gave an inner shiver recalling her misery.

When he was done Swan chuckled. ‘Well, quite the gallant, eh? Rescuing mistreated bondmaids and getting a bargain to boot. But what are you going to do with her now?’

‘Well I suppose the first thing is to find some proper harness and kit for her. She can’t stay in those ropes any longer.’

‘So you mean to keep her?’

April stiffened in alarm. Of course he had no reason to keep her. She was just a commodity to be used and sold as others chose.

‘I’m not sure,’ Maitland said. ‘I was thinking about going back to my place in the country for some fresh air. There’d be plenty of room for her there. I’ve about had my fill of the city.’

Swan looked troubled. ‘Sorry old chap. I had thought you might strike lucky. There’s are some damn fine looking fillies in these parts.’

‘Not your fault, Swan, it’s me. They’re pretty enough, I agree, but I want a real woman with a bit of spirit. These are all frills and small talk. Maybe it comes with being at sea all these years. A coat of fresh paint doesn’t disguise bad timbers and poor lines. You want something solid and reliable right through... However, that’s for another day. Right now I need to find some harness and whatever else you need to keep a girl.’

‘Well, the nearest establishment would be Vernon’s in Cavendish Road. They supply harness and such like as well as petmaids. Quality merchandise, no tat.’

April caught her breath. That name...

‘I’ll try there then,’ Maitland said.

When Maitland led April out of the door of his flat an hour later she found she was on a canopied walkway of green-painted cast iron overlooking a neatly tended courtyard that was surrounded by three-story blocks of similar apartments. Across the way she saw a bondmaid harnessed to a trolley stacked with small wicker hampers. She was pulling it along the walkway under the supervision of a woman in a maid’s costume. She stopped at a doorway beside which a similar hamper had been left out. The maid loaded this up and left another in its place. Laundry service Nethervale style, April thought.

Maitland led her by her halter to the nearest stairway and they descended to ground level. An arch guarded by wrought iron gates led out onto the street. April trailed after her master outwardly meekly while struggling to contain her hopes and fears. Might Niki still be at the shop or had she been sold?

When they turned into Cavendish Road she saw the pet shop sign ahead and her heart skipped a beat. As they approached the door she scanned the pets on display in the window. No Niki.

They entered the shop, which was much brighter and airier than Black’s. There were pet pens along the middle of the shop but April could not see inside them clearly.

A dignified grey-wigged man stepped from out behind a counter. ‘Good morning, sir, I am Victor Vernon. How may I be of assistance?’

This was the man who bought Niki, April thought with a thrill. Was she still here?

‘I’ve just acquired this girl and need to fit her out properly,’ Maitland explained. ‘Never owned one before, so I suppose I’ll be needing a collar, leash, restraints, food bowls and so on.’

‘I see, sir. Well I’m sure we can provide everything you need. Might I just examine your maid first to ascertain what might be most suitable?’

‘Is that necessary?’

‘Oh yes, sir. No two girls are quite alike. The wrong harness can not only spoil a girl’s appearance but also interfere with her ability to serve. The right harness properly fitted becomes so much part of a girl that she comes to accept it like a second skin and functions naturally within it’s constraints.’

‘It seems owing a maid is more complicated than I thought.’

‘Possibly so, sir, but I flatter myself that you have come to the right place to have those complications eased.’

Vernon walked round April, looking her over with a practiced eye, testing the solidity of her buttocks and thighs and weighing her breasts thoughtfully in his cupped hands. As he did so April tried to look out of the corner of her eye at the girls in the pens. No, Niki was not there, but what about the other side?

Vernon stepped back. ‘She is a fine strong animal, sir. As a pet she will require our heaviest grade of collar, muzzle, leash and harness. Their weight will suit her build and help ensure her obedience. As to the feeding bowls, sleeping basket and so forth I suggest plain sturdy models would suit her type.’

‘I wouldn’t want anything fancy,’ Maitland agreed with relief, eyeing a bowl hanging on the wall decorated with a flower pattern.

‘And what mode of restraint had you in mind for her?’

‘I beg your pardon?’

‘I mean, how would you like her legs constrained? We have different models to suit all needs.’

‘To keep her down on hands and knees, you mean?’

‘Well it is the fashion, sir and aesthetically pleasing. You will see very few bondmaids permitted to walk upright in Flauntwell, excepting ponygirls of course, and the fashion is spreading. A bondmaid on all fours is naturally in a subservient posture. There is also the theory that forcing them to adopt a truly animal-like existence it is more appropriate to their natures.’

Maitland looked at April thoughtfully. ‘I suppose it would rather be like having a dog. Never had the opportunity before. No place for them on a ship.’

‘A girlpet is dog and pleasure maid combined, sir. The best virtues of both.’

‘I hadn’t thought about it like that.’

‘To keep her in a receptive condition I assume you will also be require a supply of lubricating grease, smoothing ointment and muting fluid.’

‘Do you think she needs muting?’

Vernon blinked. ‘When was she last dosed, sir?’

‘I’ve no idea. Some time yesterday, I assume. As I said, I’ve just got her.’

Vernon looked at April’s ungagged lips in dismay. ‘You mean... she might be able to... speak?’

Until that moment April had not thought about even attempting to speak. Of course the dose Herbert had given her must have worn off by now. Dare she ask about Niki? She opened her mouth...

From a bottle he had whipped from his pocket Vernon dripped three drops of Jympson’s onto her tongue. April choked as the familiar hot cold numbness spread down her throat.

‘Excuse the presumption, sir,’ he said, ‘but I cannot bear the thought of a pet actually speaking in my shop. They are lovely animals, sir, but should not be permitted the use of actual language. It would diminish their natures, to say nothing of the offence if one was actually heard to speak in public.’

‘No harm, done,’ Maitland said. ‘I suppose I’d better have a bottle of muting drops with the rest, then.’

‘Thank you, sir,’ Vernon said, looking much relieved. ‘Now, if you would step this way we can select the right leg restraints, then a suitable collar and leash to match. We can have a nametag inscribed as well. What is her name, sir?’

Maitland patted his pockets before finding the sale papers Black had reluctantly handed over. ‘I hadn’t thought to look. Here it is... apparently she’s called “Isabelle.”’

‘I’ll have a tag prepared, sir...’

Half an hour later Maitland walked April experimentally round the shop.

Her feet were locked into spiked slippers with reinforced toecaps and her hands in paws. Her legs were secured half folded by heavy torsion spring braces, flexing at her knees, and held in place against the outside of her thighs and calves by broad strap bands. While they were secured she could not stand upright, only move in a crouch on her toes and padded hands. A muzzle covered her nose and mouth but her bottom remained bare, as Maitland had refused a plug-in tail as an unnecessary embellishment. She had a broad black studded collar buckled about her neck. Clipped to this was a heavy braided black leather leash.

As she made the circuit of the shop April could see Niki was not in any of the pens. Who had bought her? If she was kept locally as a pet then there was a chance she might still meet up with her. Yet Maitland had said he might be going to country. Was there any way she could make him stay longer?

‘I assume you will require a hunting crop for when out walking with her, sir,’ Vernon suggested.

‘Will I need it? She seems well behaved so far.’

‘They respond to firm discipline and pain, sir. A little warning flick now and then will save a beating later. Have you chastised her yet?’

‘Hardly had the opportunity. Besides there’s been no cause.’

‘Nevertheless I suggest you do so, sir,’ Vernon said. ‘It establishes your authority from the start of your ownership.’

‘Perhaps you’re right.’

‘May I also recommend you have her pubis pierced to allow the fitting of a chastity shield or labial padlock. Of course you alone will hold the key and she will know it. It marks the girl as yours as well as any brand. We don’t pierce pets ourselves but I can recommend some reputable jewellers. They will have a variety of rings and chastity devices if you wish to try them on her.’

‘I’ll think about it,’ Maitland said.

Vernon totaled the purchases and Maitland wrote out a cheque.

‘Thank you, sir,’ said Vernon with a little bow. ‘May I take this opportunity to congratulate you on making a proper pet of her despite her size. I believe a gentleman should have a sturdy girl on a leash to show he is capable of mastering her. I myself have experimented with selling them. Properly trained they make perfectly good dogpets. Why, I sold a fine strong blonde only the other day.’

Niki, it had to be Niki, April thought! Who did you sell her to? However she was only a muted girlpet. Though her heart was bursting she could not ask such a simple question.

April jerked and writhed under the strokes of her master’s crop.

It was not a hard whipping. He was not punishing her, simply asserting his power over her as Vernon had advised. She was being reminded of her proper place.

The leather loop of the crop stung but did not cut her flesh as it kissed the trembling mounds of her breasts, setting them jumping and shivering, and then over the soft palpitating curve of her belly as it curved down to the prominent cleft mound of her vulva. She did not try to fight the pain. She wanted to show her total submission: accepting his mastery, responding to his will but not resisting him. He must want to keep her. A rubber bit, wisely supplied by Vernon, filled her mouth so she could bite on it freely as she whimpered and gurgled and drooled.

She was bound spread-eagled on her back across her master’s bed, her wrists and ankles secured by brand new cuffs and chains. It was a simple room for sleeping unadorned by personal touches. She was now the most decorative item in it as her slightly olive skin darkened to narrow crisscross bands of purple where the crop had struck.

Maitland stood over her naked as he wielded the crop. It was the first time she had seen his body. His shoulders were broad, his hips narrow, his chest matted with dark hair and his manhood impressively large and stiffly erect. He was clearly enjoying mastering her, as was only natural.

She was responding to the pain with increased need, as only an indoctrinated bondmaid could. A wet patch was forming on the sheets under her groin and her nipples were straining towards the ceiling. She lifted her hips, pleading with her tear-filled eyes.

He dropped the crop fell upon her, ramming his cock into her sopping hungry hole with desperate urgency, heedless of her comfort which was as it should be. In turn she squeezed and sucked on him, using her lovemouth to say without words that she wanted nothing more than to have him deep inside her. When he spouted hot and hard she knew she had served well.

For a while Maitland lay sprawled across April, pressing her into the bedding under the weight of his body, casually using her as a living pillow. Then he slowly raised himself onto one elbow and smiled at her tear-streaked face, anxious eyes and lips still clamped about her bit. He brushed a lock of hair aside.

‘You are an uncommonly lusty bitch, Isabella,’ he declared. ‘Hmm... should I call you Izzy? Or Bella, perhaps?’

Her master was innocently taking away her name, but that didn’t matter as long as he kept her here.

He rubbed his hand down her sweaty body until he came to her simmering, slippery sex, still transfixed by his semi-hard cock. ‘This little cove probably does need to be kept under lock and key. Maybe I will get you pierced after all.’

April gave a whimper of delight.

It meant they would stay in Flauntwell for another precious day or two. She had to believe that anything might happen in that time.

CHAPTER NINE

It was morning two days after the pet circle meeting.

Niki lay across Lucy's lap. A small towel was spread out under her pubes to prevent her making a wet patch on Lucy's skirt. Lucy was tickling and fondling her cunny, making her squirm happily.

'That's for being a good girl last night,' she told Niki.

She drew back her hand and slapped Niki's bottom crisply, adding an extra layer of blush to the glow it already bore.

'That's to make sure you're a good girl today when we get you pierced!'

Niki squeaked in pain and pleasure. Lucy was rapidly learning how to be a proper mistress of a petmaid. Her confidence had risen sharply over the last couple of days...

Lucy had left the pet circle meeting wreathed in embarrassment, hardly daring to look Nesta in the eye as she mumbled her goodbyes, almost dragging Niki along the pavement after her. When they first got home she had retired to her bathroom to clean herself up, leaving Niki leashed to the arm of her chair. However by the time she re-entered the day room Niki saw Lucy was beginning to smile in wonder at the events of the day.

'I've heard stories but I never imagined respectable women could do such a thing,' she admitted as Niki knelt at her feet with her chin resting on her knee. 'Actually being pleased in front of each other with their legs wide they could all see each others... cunnies. And their pets all going round from one to the next kissing us so intimately. I thought I'd die of shame! I mean how could they? Then you started licking me and it was all suddenly right and natural and I understood...' She frowned. 'Oh, did that dreadful machine hurt you? It must have been far worse than being spanked.'

Again it was something Niki could hardly explain to a non-bondmaid even if she had been able to talk. She'd given her mistress pleasure so the pain had become something else. So she simply nodded at the same time smiling happily.

'I simply could not stop pulling that handle down,' Lucy continued. 'Having all those girls put their tongues inside me felt so outrageous and yet quite heavenly. My, but your nipples do look sore... what about your bottom? Let me look...'

Niki lay across Lucy's lap so her mistress could examine her.

'Your cunny lips are red as well.' She tweaked them and Niki winced. 'And there are spike dents all over your bottom.' She dipped a finger into her cleft. 'Yet you're so hot and sticky up there. Did you have a... you know, a sexual spasm as well?'

Niki smiled and nodded.

‘You really do enjoy being hurt as long as it’s done in the right way. You actually get pleasure from it.’

Niki nodded again.

‘I liked seeing you being hurt,’ Lucy admitted shyly, a blush once again spreading to her cheeks. ‘As you went round the circle I could see your smallest cunny lips being stretched backward and you were dripping and those spike heads kept jabbing into your bottom again and again and it was getting so red. When you were sideways on I could see your face, all wet with the other women’s lustful weeping, screwing up tight in pain. I don’t think I’m a cruel person, but it was so exciting. I couldn’t take my eyes off you. I thought: that girl belongs to me and she looks lovely when she’s chained up and suffering. Does that make me bad?’

Niki shook her head.

‘I hope not,’ she said, stroking Niki’s pubes and making her shiver, ‘because I want to do it again.’ Lucy took a deep breath. ‘In fact I want to know and use your body in every way possible. I want to do things I only dreamed of. I want to see tears in your eyes even as you’re pleasing me. Oh, listen, what a thing to admit! But then of course I can say things to you I couldn’t to anybody else because you’re just a girlpet and you’ll never repeat them. No, you’re not just a girlpet you’re my girlpet. I never thought how nice that would sound said aloud. Anyway, do you understand? Will you let me do all that to you? I know you have no choice, really, but I’d like to think you want to as well.’

Niki felt the familiar thrill of anticipation course through her even as her vagina squeezed about Lucy’s probing fingers. She smiled and nodded.

‘Oh, I’m so glad! I knew you were special. This is going to be fun for both of us.’ Again Lucy took in a deep breath as though nerving herself and looked at the clock on the mantelpiece. ‘There’s still time for some shopping. There was a nameplate on that machine of Marjorie’s. I wonder if they sell smaller sets of accessories for beginners?’

‘I am Osbert Black, Proprietor of Black’s House of Correction and Restraint,’ said the gaunt, dark-clad man. ‘How may I be of assistance, madam?’

‘I, ah, saw one of your machines in operation the other day,’ Lucy explained, trying to sound casually confident while forcing herself not to stare at the array of girls strapped, chained and impaled on the strange devices that filled the shop. ‘The “Duodentric Persuader”, I think it was called. It was... quite ingenious.’

Black bowed modestly. ‘Thank you, madam, that was one of my more inspired creations.’

‘And I happened to be passing and saw your sign and wondered if you had something smaller I could use on a single girl.’

Black surveyed Niki crouching at Lucy’s feet with critical eyes. ‘Has she misbehaved?’

‘No she’s been perfectly well behaved,’ Lucy said quickly. ‘I... simply want to see her suffer while her cunny is... stimulated. But it must be both together. She responds best to that.’

‘Ah, a true masochistic bondmaid,’ Black said wistfully. ‘Slave life affects some like that until it becomes a drug they cannot do without. If you control the degree of pain and pleasure you control them. The perfect slavish state of being, one might say. Would that all maids were so ideal. Some are anything but...’ He ran a finger under his collar, as though afflicted by a sudden uncomfortable recollection. ‘I would advise, however, that during a discipline session your pet should be supervised and their suffering kept within reasonable bounds. It does not do to leave them alone for too long.’

‘Oh she won’t be alone,’ Lucy said. ‘She’ll be under my personal control at all times.’

Niki lowered her head to smile happily.

Black indicated a device hanging on the wall ‘Then perhaps you will find this amusing. I call it the Self-Powered Reciprocating Impaler...’

That night Niki lay face down on Lucy’s bed on top of her naked mistress, who rested on her back with her legs spread wide. Lucy held a fistful of Niki’s hair so she could look at the expressions of pain and delight passing across her face. Their sweating breasts squashed together and their slick sticky pussies kissed.

Black’s patent impaler rested along the length of Niki’s body from neck, where it was clipped to the back of her collar, to ankles, which were cuffed to its sides. An adjustable extension arm sliding out from the base of the device was clamped to the footboard of the bed, holding the impaler and Niki braced. Her wrists, pulled behind her back, were cuffed to the middle of the shaft. A small right-angled bracket branching off the main shaft supported an anal plug that filled her rear.

Mounted on the shaft just below this was a metal box containing a powerful clockwork motor inside of which gears whirled and clicked. A metal arm extended from this box. It passed through a slot in the shaft, bent at a right angle through the humid heat of the junction of Niki’s thighs with her pubic mound and curved up into her cleft. Here the arm divided into an oval loop, running through the double valleys between her outer and inner pubic lips and framing the mouth of her vagina to allow for penetration if required. Then the two sides of this loop converged on her clitoris. This straining organ it ringed with another smaller oval loop. Projecting down from the inside at the top and bottom of this loop were small sharp metal prongs.

As the clockwork motor turned the arm was agitated up and down, rubbing the loop about her clitoris, alternately jabbing a prong into it from above and below. These eye-watering stabbing pains made Niki instinctively strain to escape them. However the only part of her body that she could move freely was her knees, where there was a sprung telescopic section of the shaft between her wrists and ankles. As she flexed her knees this section expanded and contracted, making her rapidly rub and jerk her upper body across Lucy’s own, lubricated by a film of sweat.

‘That’s right, Carrie,’ Lucy said huskily, kissing the tears from Niki’s cheeks, ‘let me feel your little button get harder. Oh... now it’s touching mine! Rub it into my cunny... a little faster...’

She reached behind Niki and adjusted a dial on the clockwork motor. The back and forth motion of the arm sped up.

‘Oh... yes!’ Lucy gasped.

Sobbing with effort Niki jerked and writhed helplessly and lovingly over her mistress’s body until their juices flowed together.

They met Nesta walking Akira in the park the next day. Lucy had bought Niki a rubber bone to carry and fetch. As she held it clenched between her teeth Niki knew it was another degree of degradation but instead of dejection she found herself revelling in the glorious shame of it. You’re a real bitch now, she told herself happily.

‘I see you’re having fun with her,’ Nesta observed with a smile. ‘I’m so glad. When you left the pet circle meeting you seemed rather unhappy.’

‘I was just a little... overwhelmed by it all,’ Lucy said, ‘but I’m over it now. You were right, Nesta. She’s such a lovely plaything. Last night I made her... well I won’t say what exactly, but I want to thank you for talking me into buying a pet. I had no idea how involving and interesting it could be. And it has taken my mind off Lawrence.’

‘I have to admit you were right to buy this one,’ Nesta conceded. ‘She may be big but she has a remarkable talent to please. The others were all talking about her tonguing ability.’

Lucy looked proud and patted Niki’s head. ‘I said she was special.’

‘They do make wonderful companions,’ Nesta agreed. ‘However I thought you might need some more encouragement. I mean everybody is having it done.’

‘Having what done?’

‘Getting their pets pierced of course. So I took then liberty of making an appointment in your name tomorrow at Clittermens of Hanover Road. They’re the same people I used to fit Akira. I’m sure you can find something to suit Carrie.’

Lucy raised her brows in surprise and then chuckled. ‘Really, Nesta, you must stop doing that. I can organize my own life, thank you.’

‘Won’t you go, then?’

Lucy looked down at Niki and smiled. ‘Oh yes, I’ll go.’

So it was the next morning, with her bottom freshly tanned and breasts jiggling merrily, Niki trotted along at Lucy's heels to the piercing shop.

Despite her jaunty trot, however, Niki's stomach was churning. She had been pieced before and knew how much it could hurt. On the other hand if her being pierced pleased her mistress and made her more appealing then she would be. She had no say in the matter. She was just a bondmaid. No, less than that now: she was just a girlpet. At least she was the girlpet of a single mistress she liked. That made a difference. She would be happy to suffer because Lucy made her feel cared for and needed.

Suddenly Niki was assailed by a wave of shame. She had been thinking about Lucy so much the last few days it felt as though she was being disloyal to April. No, what she felt for April was a different kind of love and desire, she told herself. Her growing feelings for Lucy were the signs of slavish love for an owner. That was quite natural. April was her one and only true friend and lover and always would be.

She would find her again. As Lucy's prize petmaid she would be taken out and shown off about the town. Every opportunity increased her chances of seeing April.

Clittermens window display mixed the commonplace and outlandish in typical Nethervale fashion.

The window on one side of the entrance featured a tasteful array of jewellery that, except for the lack of wristwatches, would not have looked out of place in any high street jewellers' window back in Niki's home-world version of reality. The window on the other side featured a lovely black bondmaid chained to a slowly rotating dais. She was decorated not only with ordinary finger rings, bracelets and necklaces but also numerous piercings. Her dusky skin showed off the gold and silver and sparkling gems in high relief.

A large gold nose ring threaded through her septum hung over her upper lip. To this was clipped a fine chain that hung in a graceful catenary that curved up to a swivel mount bolted to the ceiling above her head. Milky teardrop pearls hung from her dark full nipples. As she turned she beckoned to passers by and spread her legs gracefully to show off her vulva, running her fingers enticingly through her pussy.

Three rings hung in vertical row piercing each of her plump outer pubic lips. Through these a loop of chain had been threaded which was padlocked to a ringbolt in the floor of the dais. A smaller ring hung from the hood of her clitoris. Set in the ring a white diamond sparkled.

Inside the shop more bondmaid models were displayed against swathes of black and red velvet, spread-eagled against walls or kneeling on pedestals. Their bodies glittered with metal rings, filigree scrolls and constraining cups, moulded to the curves of their breasts and pubes. Some blinked out through apertures set in delicate scrollwork facemasks held on place by tiny padlocks locked about piercings in their nostrils, ears and lips.

Niki took in all this perforated flesh with nervous wonder. This went far beyond the rings the sisters of Theow had put in her. It seemed there was no limit to what could be done to her body.

A very superior shop assistant received Lucy graciously.

‘At the moment I just want something to put over my pet’s nether lips,’ Lucy told him. ‘I’ve seen some girls with sort of cups covering them, which look very pretty.’

‘You wish something decorative but which also prevents your pet from stimulating herself so her passion is contained until you choose to release it, madam?’ he suggested.

‘Yes, I suppose I do.’

He indicated a display case containing an array of artfully curved cups and baskets of wire and filigree. ‘We have several designs that would be suitable...’

Various models were discussed and held up to Niki for appraisal. As each was trial-fitted Niki felt hot slick warmth seeping through her labia at the thought of what wearing one would mean. Finally Lucy settled on a heart-shaped basket of diamond-mesh scrollwork with a curved profile and depth that matched the contours and swell of Niki’s pubic mound. It was called the “Diamond Dual-pin Vulva Shield”, and resembled the cup of a chastity belt but it needed no straps or chains to hold it in place. A pair of curved hooks with T-bar ends would be slotted into the sides of the mesh pillow, pass through both inner and outer labia and curve back out of the front of the cup to be locked by tiny padlocks. The tension of the hooks would not only hold it secure but also pull her sex lips wide within their cage.

‘Her pleasure organ will be completely secure from external stimulation,’ the assistant assured Lucy, ‘and yet her vale will be held open so she will be able to pass water through the apertures in the front of the mesh so it can be kept on all day if you wish. The fitting chair should be free now. Do you wish to watch your pet being pierced?’

Niki fought back a shiver of apprehension.

‘Oh, yes, I want to be there,’ Lucy said.

‘Then please bring her through, madam.’

The fitting chair was set up in a small back room. It resembled a basic version of a reclining gynaecological examination chair, except that such devices in Niki’s world did not have so many restraining straps, nor adjustable arms with cuffs and straps and a neck and cranial brace to immobilize the occupant’s arms and head for the purposes of nipple or facial piercing. Between the raised and spread legs of the chair were articulated arms and clamps of gleaming metal. Beside the chair were a set of steps, a stool, a table of instruments and a small thin man wearing a green apron and thick glasses.

‘This is Mr Bradawl,’ the assistant said, handing over the vulva shield to the man in question.

‘Good day to you, madam,’ Bradawl said. ‘If you’d like to have your pet climb onto the chair...’

Niki clambered up the steps and let Bradawl swing her round and sit her down on the chair. With practiced hands he spread her out and strapped her down, with her legs splayed wide and bent at the knees. Heavy straps went across her belly just above her hips and across the tops of her thighs and were pulled tight, totally immobilizing her groin. Then her head was clamped so she could not twist it about. A rubber bit hooked to the headrest went between her teeth.

‘We don’t want her making too much noise or biting her lips,’ Mr Bradawl said cheerfully. Niki’s heart thumped.

When Niki was secured Bradawl took up what looked like a small metal watering can with an open funnel on its spout and pressed it against Niki’s exposed vulva so that it cupped her mound. ‘Could you please have your pet empty her bladder, Madam. They sometimes lose control when I put the needle through them which makes a mess.’

‘Carrie: relieve yourself for the nice man.’

It was a sensible precaution. She had wet herself the last time she’d been pierced. Nervously Niki discharged her bladder into the can with a hiss and gurgle.

‘You might wish to comfort, her, madam,’ Bradawl said as he took his seat between Niki’s legs. Lucy stood by Niki’s head and stroked her cheek. Niki looked up at her and tried to smile round her gag. She was doing this to please her mistress.

The pain would be a price she happily paid.

Bradawl positioned the shield carefully, aligning the securing apertures with the swell of her labia and used a wax crayon to mark the right places on her skin. Then he adjusted the clamps and screwed them tight, squeezing her inner and outer labia together. Niki winced as her tender flesh was compressed. The paired clamp jaws were aligned rings of metal, isolating the target points on the sides of her love lips through which the needle was going to pierce her. It would hurt so much...

Yet her nipples were standing up, her juices were flowing and her clitoris was hard and erect, as though offering itself up to welcome her imminent suffering. Her vaginal tunnel was gaping wide and wet right in the face of this total stranger.

However this was Nethervale and Bradawl had clearly seen such a display many times before. As her circulation was cut off and a numbing tingle spread through her sex he played with Niki’s hardening clitoris, rolling it with his thumb until Niki closed her eyes and drooled about her gag.

‘That’s right, girl,’ he murmured soothingly. ‘You enjoy yourself. It’ll just be two quick pricks...’

Niki shrieked and slobbered beneath her gag as a long bodkin thrust quickly and precisely through one pair of labia and then the other. Even though her flesh was partially numbed it felt like being stabbed by a red-hot needle. As her eyes filled with tears Lucy pressed a cool hand to her forehead.

Bradawl was applying a gel to the shield hooks. 'This will reduce the bleeding and ease her pain,' he explained.

Dabbing the blood away he released the clamps. As sensation pulsed back into her labia the pain returned in a second wave. Bradawl put the shield in place and threaded the hooks through her flesh, pulling it wide. There were two tiny clicks as the padlocks snapped shut. A stinging burning replaced the agonising throb and then slowly subsided to something tolerable.

'A nice clean job,' Bradawl said. 'If you care to look, Madam...'

Lucy moved round to stand between Niki's splayed legs, staring in wonder

'Show her,' she said.

Bradawl held up a mirror over Niki's groin.

A moulded silver cage now capped her pubic mound, through which her pink flesh could be seen. As she stared a new sense of exposure merged with the pain. Her labial lips were peeled back and her secret valley was open to the air for all to see within its own tiny prison. And her mistress was the only one who held the keys.

It was lovely.

CHAPTER TEN

‘My name is Maitland, I made an appointment yesterday.’

‘Of course, Mister Maitland,’ said the jeweller. ‘It was about your dogmaid, I believe. How may I be of service?’

Maitland patted April’s head as she knelt in an alert crouch by his feet. ‘I’ve been advised it’s a good idea to put some sort of lock over her cunny to help keep her obedient and eager. Nothing fancy. She’s a sturdy animal so I’m looking for something solid and practical.’

April looked around the shop with its pierced and jewel-laden display girls and shivered in anticipation. She felt a terrible mix of fear and perverse thrill at the thought of what was so cruelly and yet so casually going to be done to her.

‘If I might examine your pet for a moment, sir,’ the jeweller said, indicating a stepped display table.

April clambered up and laid on her back with her knees wide to expose herself. The jeweller pried apart her pussy lips and tested their pliancy and fullness with professional thoroughness. Her vagina pulsed and lubricated under this examination with typical bondmaid helplessness.

‘She has the tone and form to take a full-sized labial lock,’ he agreed after a minute. ‘Do you wish the mouth of her passage and her clitoris to be covered? That will give you complete control over her ability to stimulate herself while still leaving her front paws free for walking.’

‘That sounds about right,’ said Maitland. ‘But nothing with flowery decoration or scrollwork.’

‘I think we have just the thing, sir,’ the jeweller said, taking a device of shiny metal from a display stand. ‘This is the finest quality labia guard we stock.’

It was a solid polished steel padlock, wide but slim, with a slender hoop. This had a more intricate device of spring steel threaded onto it that looked like the caricature of a headless man with a round wire mesh body a little larger than a thimble with its arms of braided steel cord spread wide and shorter dangling bowlegs of spring strip. Instead of hands the wire cord was formed into loops large enough to be threaded through by the hoop of the padlock, as did the spring steel feet.

The jeweller slipped the device off the padlock and slid it into April’s cleft. The little man nestled within the valley of her inner labia, his body covering her clitoris while his bowed legs held her lips wide, exposing the mouth of her urethra. His arms would go through her outer labia when they were pierced, then bend down and thread through the hoop of the padlock on the outside of her mound, after it had passed through her inner and outer labia and the rings of his feet.

‘It requires two sets of piercings, one of both inner and outer lips for the padlock hoop, but that makes it doubly secure,’ the jeweller explained. ‘She will be quite unable to stimulate herself and of course is protected against any form of penetration. Yet she will be free to pass water cleanly. It can be left on for days at a time if you so wish.’

‘That’s just the ticket,’ said Maitland. ‘I’ll take it.’

‘I believe the piercing chair is free now. If you would care to come this way, sir...’

April screeched and whimpered and bit on her gag bar as the bodkin slid through her most tender flesh. She strained at the straps that bound her to the piercing chair, but they held her immobile as the jeweler bent over her clamped labia and pierced the other side. Another searing stab of pain wracked her in wild contrast to the pulse in her perversely straining clitoris barely a thumb’s width away. How could such extremes exist so close together? Which was which? Her gaping vagina dripped shamelessly. It didn’t know either.

Her master continued to stroke her hair. ‘Good girl,’ he said. ‘Soon be over...’

His voice calmed her. Through her tears she saw his strong face looking down at her with a smile of approval. He was a witness to her pain and could see she was suffering for him. That was as it should be.

April knew that was deeply slavish thinking but could not help it. As the jeweller slipped the arms of the labia guard through her throbbing flesh she knew she was being marked for all to see as her master’s property. It was his will that she wear this device that so intimately controlled her body. He alone would hold the keys to the pleasure she could give and receive.

The padlock slipped through the newly drilled holes in her labia, bringing forth a fresh whimper, and snapped shut, locking all parts of the device together. She felt its weight tugging at her raw perforated flesh, which was mercifully going numb under the effects of the ointment the jeweller had applied. April sagged limply in her bonds.

‘If you would care to inspect the fitting, sir,’ said the jeweller.

Maitland moved round to stand between April’s wide-splayed legs.

Her clitoris stood erect in its prison, now denied all contact with the outside world unless its master permitted. The sprung legs of the little egg man pushed her labia wide and she felt cooling air on part of her normally close away from sight. The arms of the egg man, thrusting out through her thick red outer flesh lips to curve down, framing their swell, to join the padlock hoop, where it now ran across the dripping mouth of her vaginal tunnel in a solid bar. The padlock gathered up both flesh and metal as it passed through her: arm ring, outer and inner labia, both leg rings, inner and outer labia and finally the other arm ring.

The straps were undone and Maitland helped April off the chair and back down onto her hands and knees. The padlock swung under her, tugging her pussy lips, making her wince as it turned in its fresh raw sockets. She knew by rights she should have been dripping blood all over the floor but apart from a few drops oozing about the metal there was none. It was even less than she had bled when the Sisters of Flagewell Abbey had pierced her months ago. It could not just be down to the ointment the jeweller had applied. This was Nethervale and everybody knew bondmaids healed quickly. But was she healing

even faster than before? What was this place continuing to do to her? For a brief moment she felt a flicker of homesickness and longing for her familiar world. Then she was just a leashed pet again shuffling along at her master's feet as was right and proper.

Maitland settled his account and led her back outside Broach and Pinks once more.

April moved gingerly as she padded along at his heels, getting used to the press of the tiny cap about her clit and the pressure of the springy arms holding her sex wide. It would make peeing neater, of course, making her a better and neater dogmaid. What a thought but perfectly true and reasonable for a pet.

She was aware of the bob and sway of the cold heavy padlock hanging from its elastic fleshy mounting. It was both shameful and desperately exciting. It proclaimed to the world that her master held the keys to her intimacy. This was what it meant to be owned.

Maitland kept her padlocked all that evening. It was agony. The cup over her clitoris may have prevented her rubbing herself but it seemed to make her even more aware of its existence. The padlock hoop stopped her pushing anything into her love tunnel but just feeling it rubbing across its mouth was desperately exciting. With excitement came the swelling of her vulva, straining her newly perforated flesh. That hurt but it only seemed to arouse her further. She had to have sex.

She nuzzled her master provocatively as he sat in his chair, lolling her tongue and licking her lips until he unbuttoned his flies and she could gobble his shaft down her throat and gulp down his hot semen. Yet she still wanted more and made big mournful eyes at him until he laughed and dragged her off to bed.

Only when she was chained securely to his bed did he free her vulva from its shackles. His shaft hurt even more as it parted her sore sex lips, but that did not stop her bucking her hips wildly as an orgasm ripped through her. That hurt as well, of course, but it was lovely.

April was blissfully happy the next day as he walked her through the park. As Maitland strode along he chatted as men do to their pets.

'You'll enjoy going for walks at my place in the country. There's plenty of room there, besides woods and fields to play in. You'll like that, eh, girl?

Suddenly it dawned on April that they were leaving Flauntwell. How soon? Would they come back again?

She looked up at him appealingly, wishing she were not mute, pulling back on her leash and whimpering. He frowned down at her.

'What's the matter, girl?' he asked, sidestepping quickly to avoid a lady with a pretty blonde dogmaid who was walking along the path in the other direction.

A blonde dogmaid... It was Niki!

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Niki was distantly aware of Lucy tugging at her leash and swiping her bottom with her cane but she didn't feel the blows. All she wanted to do was to kiss and smell and rub against April who was lunging and snuffling and twining about her except their muzzles got in the way and clacked and scraped together. They were both sobbing and yelping and crying with frustration and joy while tangling their owners up in their leashes.

The big man holding April's leash was trying to pull her back, hit her with his crop, and apologise at the same time. 'Dreadfully sorry about this, madam! I do beg your pardon. Normally she's well behaved.'

Lucy was blushing and saying: 'No, no, I think my pet is at fault. I will discipline her most severely when I get home.'

'As I shall mine, I assure you,' the man replied earnestly.

Finally Niki and April, almost choked by the pressure on their collars, were pulled apart and forced to crouch whimpering at their respective owner's heels looking at each other with tear-filled longing eyes.

Catching her breath Lucy said: 'Oh, look. They've both got the same scar brands. They must know each other.'

'Very well, I would think,' the man said dryly.

Lucy suddenly laughed. 'Yes, very well indeed. Sorry, I'm not used to the ways of dogmaids. This is the first I've ever owned.'

'This is my first pet as well,' he replied. Suddenly he tipped his hat and bowed. 'Forgive me. We have not been introduced. Captain James Maitland.'

Lucy bobbed her head. 'Lucy Drinkwater.' She looked at Niki who was trembling and snivelling as she gazed at April. Trapped within her vulva shield her pussy ached with desperate need. 'Perhaps, as they seem so close, it might be a kindness to allow them some time together... if you are content to let your pet off her leash to accompany mine?'

'Of course, Miss Drinkwater. As you say, in the circumstances it would be a kindness.'

A new thought seemed to strike Lucy and she added quickly: 'Though of course Carrie will keep her muzzle on.'

Perhaps the same thought had occurred to Maitland, for he said with equal haste: 'Of course, as will Bella. That would only be proper.'

'Oh... excuse my presumption, Captain Maitland. You might have a prior engagement.'

‘No, not at all,’ Maitland said quickly. He looked round. ‘There is a bench. Would you do me the honour of sharing it with me, if that is not a presumption on my part?’

Lucy smiled. ‘Since our pets seem so well acquainted I think we might quite properly share a park bench.’

And so Niki and April were let off their leashes while Lucy and Maitland took their seats on the bench.

Niki wished she and April could make love nearly as much as she wished they could speak or even kiss. The need was actually a physical pain. But their muzzles prevented kissing, their muting prevented speech and she saw April’s vagina was as well guarded as her own by a large padlock and clitoral cap. All they could do was find a shady patch of long grass under a tree and lie in each other’s arms. Here they gazed into each other’s tear-wet eyes as they gently butted their heads together and rubbed their breasts, capped by straining nipples, into each other’s soft warm globes. Beneath the metal rings and wires and locks that sheathed their groins their pussies pulsed and wept with frustrated lust.

So instead of words or passion they exchanged gentle sighs and whimpers. Niki wanted to know everything that had happened to April in the three weeks (had it only been that long?) they had been apart, and wanted to tell her own story as well. However she had to be satisfied with knowing only the most important thing: that April was safe and well. In this way they hugged, smiled and cried softly.

All too soon they heard the voices of their master and mistress calling to them:

‘Bella!’ ‘Carrie!’ ‘Come!’

They had no alternative but to obey. They were collared and hobbled pets. They could not run away.

As they trotted miserably back across the grass they saw their owners standing side-by-side smiling. The sick fear that she and April would be parted never to see each other again was replaced in Niki’s heart by a sudden wild hope. She glanced sideways at April and saw the same calculation in her eyes.

As their leashes were clipped back on, Lucy said: ‘Well, it’s been so nice to meeting you, Captain Maitland.’ She laughed. ‘Even if the circumstances were a little unconventional.’

‘The pleasure was all mine, Miss Drinkwater. Perhaps we might, uh, bump into each other again?’

‘Not quite so literally, I trust.’

He smiled. ‘No, I think we may dispense with that aspect of the encounter.’

‘Well I come to the park everyday to exercise Carrie. It was recommended in a book.’

‘Not “How to Train Your Girlpet” by any chance?’

‘Why yes.’

Maitland smiled. 'I've been working my way through a copy as well. Keeping a petmaid is more complicated than I imagined.'

'Yes, they are... interesting creatures,' Lucy agreed. 'Well, Goodbye, Captain Maitland.'

Maitland took off his hat and bowed. 'Goodbye, Miss Drinkwater.'

Lucy held Niki bent over her knee as she spanked her. Instead of her light morning smacking she used the back of a hairbrush to emphasise her displeasure. She had removed her vulva shield so it would not spare her pouting sex from the blows.

'You should not have behaved like that!' she said between smacks that sent shivers through Niki's bottom cheeks. 'That was very bad of you. I know you wanted to see your friend, but you must do as you're told at all times!

Niki didn't care about the pain. All she could think about was April. As her bottom cheeks turned rosy red she blinked back the tears and dribbled onto Lucy's dress.

'Do you promise never to do it again?' Lucy demanded.

Niki nodded and whined.

'Good girl.'

Lucy put down the hairbrush and gently stroked the hot buttocks she had just been chastising. In a more wistful tone she said: 'I'm just grateful Nesta was not there to say I told you so. You really are very strong when you're determined. I suppose you must really care about Bella.'

Niki nodded and lowered her eyes.

'Do you love her? I suppose you can love in your way.'

Niki nodded harder and her eyes sparkled.

Lucy's hand slipped between Niki's legs. Niki parted her thighs to allow her to fondle her sex. 'Yes, I can tell you do. My, you are excited. Well I suppose she was very pretty. And I think she has a very gentlemanly owner.' She lifted and twisted Niki's head round so she could see into her eyes. 'Would you like to see Bella again?'

Niki nodded and whimpered plaintively. She squirmed round and delicately kissed Lucy's cleavage, then slid to the floor and kissed her slippered feet. Nuzzling aside the hem of her skirt she pushed her head up between Lucy's legs, burrowing under her chemise, through the soft valley of her thighs, which parted to admit her, until she reached the moist cleft of her mistress's lovemouth and showed her how much she wanted to see April again.

As her tongue delved deep Lucy sighed: 'Perhaps I'll have another nice talk with Captain Maitland. Such an interesting man...'

Maitland's crop laid a third scarlet stripe across April's bottom with a crisp thwack. She yelped but held still. This was a punishment she deserved

She was bent over the footboard of her master's bed with her face on the covers, the rubber bit clenched between her teeth. Her arms were drawn out to each side and cuffed to the caps of the foot posts while her legs were parted and ankles cuffed to the feet of the same posts.

It was a firm, methodical chastisement for her disobedience, as he had promised in the park. Her bottom burned fearfully but she knew he could have whipped her much harder. Even so the padlock threaded through her labia jumped with every blow, distending her flesh. When the crop actually touched it the impact was transmitted through the metal arms to her whole organ.

'If we meet Miss Drinkwater you can have a run with her pet again,' he told her as he went about the business of laying down twelve even stripes across her rump, 'as long as you are well behaved. I can tell you badly wanted to be with her but you'll not disobey my commands again, especially not in public... and especially not before a charming lady, do you understand?'

April sobbed and nodded.

He rested his arm and felt her glowing backside. 'There, I'm done. I trust I'll not have to do that to you again in anger.'

She twisted her head round so she could see him and shook her head, looking contrite.

He did not release her but instead cupped her metal-bound pubes. 'Wet as usual,' he chuckled. She felt him insert the key in the lock, snap open the padlock and pull it out of her. A moment later his shaft slid deep into her.

April sagged in relief. That was as it should be. He was reasserting his dominance over her after the punishment. She squeezed him tight in welcome. All would be well if he still wanted to screw her.

Her vagina was filled with her master's cock but her head was filled with thoughts of Niki. There was a hope now. Her master had not spoken of going back to his place in the country again since meeting Miss Drinkwater.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Maitland and Lucy met in the park at the same bench the next day... and the next... and the next. It was evident they enjoyed each other's company but also that they were being circumspect. As they talked they were very careful not to sit too close and never touched or even shook hands.

Niki and April discreetly observed all this as they romped about the park. Their interest was natural. While their owners remained on good terms they would continue to meet. After the first few anxious days it soon became obvious that, though they did not know what passed between them, Lucy and Maitland were rapidly becoming more than merely polite acquaintances. Soon they took to meeting both morning and afternoon in the park and April and Niki were on their way to becoming the best exercised dogmaids in the city.

What was the proper etiquette for courting in Flauntwell? Both Lucy and Maitland were independent adults and yet as far as April and Niki could see they were being painfully correct. Compared to the liberties their owners could freely take with them it seemed absurd. As bondmaids the only etiquette was to open their legs wide and suck hard when required. It was much simpler that way. However there was no accounting for the power of custom and tradition.

April and Niki exchanged simple comments on this burgeoning affair, spelt out a letter at a time by drawing with their paws on the grass.

HAS M TALKED ABOUT GOING AWAY AGAIN? Niki asked.

NOT FOR A WEEK April replied.

GREAT! MUST KEEP THEM HAPPY.

THINK M IS REALLY THINKING ABOUT L WHEN HE SCREWS ME.

SAME WITH L. SHE IS ACTING REAL DREAMY.

MUST KEEP HER THAT WAY!

WILL TRY. LOVE YOU.

LOVE YOU TOO!

Though April did not realize it at the time, the first sign of just how far relations had progressed between their owners was when Maitland visited Black's House of Restraint and Correction again. To April's relief he left her leashed to a hook on the wall outside like a dog while he went in. He was gone for a good half hour while she tried not to look up at the girl imprisoned in the gibbet cage as she once had been on that terrible night.

Why was her master coming back here?

When he came out he looked very pleased with himself. She wished she could ask why, but of course she could not and he did not feel inclined to confide in her.

A week later he returned and this time took her inside with him.

April had hoped never to visit the source of such painful memories again but on the end of Maitland's leash she had no choice. As she was led across to the counter she looked unhappily around her at the nameless girls who were painfully displayed on the strange devices April knew so intimately.

Nameless? She looked again and saw they now had nametags hanging on their collars. She brightened. Surely it was not a coincidence. Perhaps some good had come out of her suffering after all.

Herbert blushed and looked away at the sight of her, she noticed. For his part her master made no reference to their previous encounter and acted like a normal customer as Black greeted him. Had he simply, in his direct way, gone to the first place he knew that could provide whatever it was he needed?

Perhaps Black also took the view that the past was unimportant where business was concerned, for he also acted as if nothing untoward had ever passed between them. 'They are ready as you specified, sir,' he said, showing Maitland the contents of a pair of long cardboard boxes.

Maitland examined them. 'Yes, that looks fine. What about the keys?'

'Four copies, two with the special mountings as you requested, sir.'

'Good. I'll take this set now. A Miss Drinkwater will be in to collect the other shortly. You know her, I believe?'

'Certainly, sir, a most valued customer. They will be ready when she calls.'

That afternoon they met Swan walking along the street. After greeting Maitland he glanced over April and observed: 'Oh, so you decided to put a tail on her after all. I thought you said it was a bit of frippery you could do without.'

April now had a fine black rubber dogmaid tail curling up from between her buttocks that bobbed merrily as she loped along.

'I found in the handbook that it's best for a petmaid to have one fitted,' Maitland answered smoothly. 'Apparently it's a natural way for her to be able to show her emotions.'

April wiggled her buttocks, setting the tail wagging and lolled her tongue happily.

'Well I never,' said Swan. 'You live and learn, eh?'

What Swan could not see was the rest of the device inside April's rectum. That was the idea, of course.

Niki knelt on the coffee table with her knees spread and bottom up as Lucy fitted her new tail.

The external plume of hollow rubber was mounted on a brass cylinder fifteen centimetres long by three in diameter. Both ends were rounded. The forward end formed a screw cap while six round-ended steel prongs ringed the other end on which the tail was mounted. The root of the tail was hollow with an aperture for a slender rod key. This Lucy was turning in the lock. The prongs retracted. She slid the cylinder into Niki's greased rear, forcing her anal ring to gape and stretch to swallow the device. When the plaint ring of muscle had closed about the other end of the cylinder, hugging the root of the tail, Lucy turned the key the other way. Niki felt the prongs spring out inside her. Lucy gave the tail an experimental tug but the cylinder was held tight inside Niki by the prongs. It was like having a metal cock lodged up her rear, though it was not uncomfortable. She'd endured far worse things.

Next Lucy buckled a ball gag into Niki's mouth. It looked like a standard design except for a small hole in its centre.

'Bite hard,' Lucy commanded and Niki did so

Lucy smiled in delight at the result. 'Good, now when you go for your run with Bella in the park this is what you do...'

As Lucy and Maitland settled on their usual bench, Niki and April loped off across the grass. April was also wearing a ball gag today. They headed for a thick clump of bushes and plunged inside. In a hollow of dappled shade Niki spread her knees, put her head down and stick her bottom out. April positioned herself with her nose almost touching Niki's bottom cleft and bit on her gag ball. As the ball compressed a slender key extended out from the hole in its middle. This she inserted in the slot in the Niki's tail mount and twisted. Then, clasping the tail clumsily between her paws, she dragged the brass cylinder out of her lover's bottom and laid it carefully to one side. She now turned round and pushed her bottom out for Niki to remove her cylinder in the same way, which she handed to April. Then she bent down again. April fed her cylinder into Niki's bottom and locked it into place. Then she bent down so Niki could do the same with hers.

It was a strange and wonderful thrill to each have something warmed by the other's intimate body heat deep inside them and they smiled about their gags and rubbed their heads together. Only in Nethervale would girlpets bottoms be used as living letterboxes for things their owners could not have said out loud in a public park. Lucy and Maitland could have simply posted each other love letters, of course, but this was even more secure and certainly more intimate.

As soon as they got back to the flat Maitland had April bend over so he could unlock her tail. The cylinder came out with a pop. He wiped it clean, unscrewed the end and took out the ribbon-bound scented roll of paper from within. Sitting back in his chair he read it avidly. Varied emotions flickered across his face. Absently he ruffled April's hair as she knelt beside him.

It was a few evenings later that April saw Maitland dressing in his best eveningwear.

‘I’m going to a new play,’ he said. ‘Sorry Bella, it’s the basket for you tonight. No pets allowed in the auditorium and you don’t want to wait outside for hours.’ He gave a boyish smile. ‘However, I won’t lack for company. Miss Drinkwater is going as well.’

April felt a brief unexpected pang of jealousy at the thought of her master going anywhere without her. Then she realised the implications and wagged her tail to show she was happy for him.

After the play there was a concert and then an opera. In between these outings the interchange of letters by what Niki thought of as bottom post continued happily.

One night, as Niki licked and sucked Lucy’s pretty cunny, an organ of which she had by now become delightfully familiar, she noticed a curl of Lucy’s pubic hair had been snipped off. Had she carried that golden sprig in her tail plug to Maitland? This was getting serious.

After another week a new innovation was made.

Lucy had Vernon’s fit Niki with a leg brace system identical to the one April wore. Niki was pleased as it would get her off her knees and allow her to move faster. Then Lucy bought a full dogpet head mask.

This was made of black leather panels stitched together to form a dog head resembling a Labrador in profile, complete with large floppy ears. It strapped on round the back of Niki’s head. The mouth contained an integral double bit, split into a vertical upper and lower half, each curved to fit the inside of the mouth between the teeth leaving the tongue free. The jaws were hinged and sprung so they could be opened to allow the girl to drink from a fountain or even perform oral sex. A tight external strap muzzle kept the jaws firmly clamped shut when required.

Lucy coiled and pinned up Niki’s hair before bucking the mask on. As it tightened about her head she felt a new degree of constraint. Even her expression was being denied her.

‘You do look lovely,’ Lucy said, showing Niki her reflection in the full-length mirror in her bedroom.

It was a strange transformation. All that could be seen of her face through the mask were her eyes peering soulfully out of the eyeholes, or, when her jaws were unstrapped, her true mouth with the double bits across her teeth stretching her lips up and back. It did not look as grotesque as she had feared. Crouched on all fours as she was, with her hands and feet already disguised as paws, a dog collar about her neck and with a tail plugged into her it looked frighteningly natural. She was another step closer to becoming a true animal

Nesta was impressed by Niki’s dogmask when they met her for the first time on the street after acquiring it.

‘Why, what have you done to her?’ she exclaimed, lifting Niki’s head and turning it from side to side to examine the detailing.

‘Oh, haven’t you heard,’ Lucy said lightly, ‘dogmasks are going to be the new fashion.’

‘Well you must show her off to the circle,’ Nesta said. ‘When are you coming to the next meeting?’

‘Oh, soon... soon,’ Lucy said vaguely.

Lucy paraded Niki about masked for a few days so her neighbours and acquaintances got use to the change. Niki began to suspect that Lucy was at last learning to enjoy the attention that walking out with a fashionable pet brought her.

For her own part Niki found it was easier to behave like a dog with her face largely covered. Nobody could see her true expression or make her feel ashamed of what she was. It was curiously liberating even as it was confining. She could play her part with total freedom.

Passing Vernon’s one day they saw one of the girlpets in the window had a copy of Niki’s mask on. A few also began turning up on pets on the street. Perhaps they really were going to start a new fashion.

The downside of this alteration was she could not see April’s face.

It came as no great surprise, that first morning out, to find Maitland had put April in an identical dogmask. They were still free to romp about together while their owners talked, but she wished she could look at her lover’s face in its entirety and not just her eyes peeping out from her mask. Still their canine transformation did inspire them to new degrees of playfulness and they took to cocking their legs while trying to sniff each other’s groins like real dogs, inhaling through the noseholes of their fake muzzles. The intimate scent of her lover made Niki dizzy with lust.

Via the messages they wrote on the grass it became clear April did not know why they had been put in the masks either. What part in their clandestine courting were their owners planning next for their pets?

The answer came when Maitland took April to collect one of a new pair of special devices he had commissioned from Black. Again the second was left for Lucy to collect. Once back home Maitland showed the device to April, fitted it onto her and then explained in detail what she was to do.

‘Can I trust you to do this, Bella?’ he asked earnestly. ‘It means a great deal to me. I would not ask this of any other bondmaid.’

April nodded and wagged her tail and kissed his boots.

The next morning Lucy and Maitland met in the park as usual, though both looked distinctly nervous. April and Niki were freed from their leashes and ran off together. Concealed by bushes they each examined each other’s groins and the new fittings they bore.

Externally both appeared identical. In place of Niki’s vulva shield and April’s padlock were dog-like erect penises and dangling testes moulded in black rubber. The shafts were hung so they were almost horizontal and parallel with their bellies. They were held in place by internal plugs and pins locked

through their labial piercings. As they walked the ball-sacks swung between their thighs and the cocks bobbed and slapped against their stomachs. They had seen other dogmaids fitted with similar devices. They were used for coupling with another pet for the amusement of their owners.

April and Niki looked at each other with nervous excitement. In a manner of speaking they were soon going to become much closer.

They continued their run but they had no message tails to exchange. Then they were called back to the bench where they crouched down expectantly just as they had been instructed. Lucy and Maitland stood up, politely bid each other good day and casually but deliberately clipped their leashes onto the collars of each other's pets. Then they walked off in different directions.

April was more heavily built and Niki had lighter skin, but only somebody who knew them well and bothered to look closely would notice that. To the casual observer they would both return to their respective dwellings with the girlpets they had left with an hour or so earlier. Once in private, what owners did with their pets was their own business.

Niki looked about her with excited interest at the interior of Maitland's flat. She saw items of April's harness hanging up by the front door and a petmaid basket rested in one corner of the sitting room. This was where she had been living. She could smell her scent.

Without a word Maitland led her through to his bedroom. Sets of chains and cuffs had already been fitted to the corner posts of the bed. She clambered up onto the bed and laid on her back, spreading her arms and legs out so he could cuff her into place.

He secured her wrists and ankles. For a moment he contemplated her naked form with lustful appreciation, cupping and squeezing her upstanding breasts. Then his hand went to her rubber penis and testicles. Unlocking the pin that skewered her outer labial flesh and threaded through the base of the device he pulled it free. Her inner labia were clipped tightly together with a crescent-shaped spring clamp locked in place by a small padlock that passed through her delicate flesh petals. At the head of this tiny metal-bound ridge her clitoris strained and pulsed with excitement. He produced a key, opened the lock and released the clamp. Carefully he pried apart her sticky lips to expose the hungry tunnel of her vagina.

Hastily he stripped off his clothes. Through her mask Niki eyed his powerful body and swelling cock approvingly. April had got lucky with this one.

He had bared her pubes but he left her dogmask on. Niki understood. He was not going to couple with her but by proxy with her owner. She and April were not individuals but living tools of their owners will, vessels for their love and desire, messengers of their trust.

Maitland took up his crop, knelt on the bed between Niki's widespread legs and began to lash her. It was a light beating to make her receptive and a symbol of the temporary gift of his right to use another's property. Her breasts were sent jumping and jiggling as they were batted from side to side, turning from golden tan to raw blushing pink. Then he flicked the crop across her naked pubes and thighs,

splattering the juices that were overflowing her cleft. Niki arched her body and lifted her hips to meet the strokes, moaning and whimpering about her gag, the pain almost making her cum.

Maitland could not contain himself any longer. With a stifled oath he dropped the crop and fell upon her, ramming his cock into her gaping orifice again and again. 'Lucy... Lucy...' he gasped as he filled her pet with his passion.

April knelt on the end of Lucy's bed as Lucy undressed. Her pawed hands were not cuffed but a pair of slack chains ran down and back from April's collar ring to the footposts. Her head was still encased in the dog mask but the rubber cover of her fake cock had been pulled off. Beneath was a metal phallus with a lifelike bullet head and finely perforated sides that jutted up rampantly from her groin. It was pinned in place by a rod through her labia and braced by an angled plug deep inside her.

Lucy had a lovely body, April thought as she watched her strip. Niki must have enjoyed serving her.

When Lucy was totally naked she picked up a cane and climbed onto the bed to kneel in front of April. Carefully lifting April's heavy breasts one at a time she caned them lightly but thoroughly, making them bounce in her palm, until they were red and smarting and April was snuffling in pain.

Then she dropped the cane and lovingly kissed the stinging globes. Looking into April's masked face she said: 'Be firm with me, as he would be...'

Lucy turned about and knelt down on her hands and knees on the bed with her bottom invitingly presented towards April. She could see the pout of her pubes and the glisten on her slender labial tongue.

April shuffled forward, sliding over Lucy's body, mounting her like a dog from behind. Lucy braced her arms and took her weight. The tip of the metal cock probed for her entrance and then slid into her. Claspng her body tight with her pawed hands April began to ride Lucy, banging her hips into her bottom, making Lucy grunt and then gasp. Her sore breasts rubbed across Lucy's smooth back. She was her master's girlpet screwing her master's sweetheart for him. If this did not work out then no great harm would be done. A little game would merely have been played with bondmaids as pawns.

Lucy gasped and jerked and bucked her hips frantically as she orgasmed. Juices from her dripping sex fell to the sheets. Some ran through the perforations of April's hollow metal cock and tricked down into a cavity in its base.

They were swapped back in the park an hour later.

It was a brief meeting. They were allowed five minutes only to run about and then their proper owner's leashes were clipped back onto them again. Their slightly flushed master and mistress were in a hurry.

Back home they examined the marks their respective sweethearts had put on their property and caressed the flesh their sweethearts had touched.

Lucy laid Niki on her back, unclamped her labia and, nervously at first but with increasing passion, lapped up the sperm Maitland had left inside her.

Maitland detached the metal drain cock from April and tasted the reservoir of Lucy's captured juices kept warm by her body.

'What did he feel like inside you?' Lucy demanded.

'Was she as pretty bared as I imagine?' Maitland asked.

Their mute pets could not answer, of course, only smile and nod and role their eyes. They had born samples of the most intimate offerings of their potential lovers back to their master and mistress. Now their owners must fill in the details and make up their own minds.

The next day when they met Maitland and Lucy looking shy and excited. April and Niki were let off the leash to run free in the park without muzzles. They could kiss for the first time and they spent a happy time rolling in the bushes nibbling each other's nipples.

When they were called back Maitland and Lucy were sitting side-by-side on the bench holding hands. Lucy was blushing and Maitland was looking proud.

Niki and April squatted down obediently before them, wagging their tails.

'As you both brought us together and have been such good and faithful pets it seems only fitting that you should be the first to know,' Maitland said. 'Miss Drinkwater... Lucy, has consented to be my wife.'

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

April had attended a few weddings before but none like this at the church just outside Riddlemouth where, a six weeks after they had become engaged, Lucy and Maitland were married.

For a start this time she was stark naked and hobbled on her hands and knees chained to the collar of the girl she loved as they shuffled up the aisle after the bride and groom holding the hem of the bride's train in their teeth. Both she and Niki had bows in their hair and on their tails and tiny silver bells on the collars and hanging from their nipples. A second chain hung under the curve of their buttocks with its end links fastened to the padlocks sealing their pussy lips, ensuring they kept closer together and in perfect step.

Yet she could not have been happier.

Apart from the old-fashioned dress of the vicar and the slightly archaic vows, the service was not too different from one back home, except of course that the big heavy bible was mounted on a lectern with a naked bondmaid bound the front of it. Her ankles were cuffed together about its base and she was bent forward at the hips with the tray of the lectern resting on her back. Her arms were pulled back and cuffed to the lower outer corners. No doubt a dildo plug extending from the lectern stand and thrust deep up her rectum enforced the straightness of her back. A hoop and gag ball hinged to the front edge of the lectern was secured across her mouth, forcing her head up so that she gazed out at the congregation with enforced alertness. As a finishing touch her body had been dusted with gold paint to match the gilding of the lectern frame, turning her into an attractive living ornament no doubt at far less cost than a life-size statue.

The thought flitted across April's mind that once (an unbelievable year ago now) such a sight would have shocked her. Not any more, however, and especially not today.

'Dearly beloved...' began the priest.

When they stepped outside into a shower of confetti and a summer day such as only Nethervale could provide, April and Niki beamed at each other foolishly. It felt like they themselves had just been married. Now their owners were officially bonded perhaps in a way they were.

At the gate carriages pulled by plumed ponygirls waited to take the wedding party to the reception. April thought they looked beautiful.

After the food and drink and toasts the guests mingled. April and Niki overheard both Swan and Nesta assuring people that they had known long in advance of their mutual friends' plans. As the unlikely catalysts of this romantic union, April and Niki were paraded about and admired and petted. They blushed at the attention and had never felt happier.

Finally the newlywed couple climbed into their horse-drawn coach piled high with their luggage for the trip to Maitland's country house where he and his new bride would honeymoon. April and Niki

were given the privilege of riding inside the coach instead of in travelling cages on the roof as was common with bondmaids.

As the coach rattled out of Riddlemouth, Maitland proudly held his new bride's hand and kissed her. Then he looked benevolently down at April and Niki, who were kneeling on cushions by their feet resting their heads against their owner's knees, and stroked April's hair. Lucy did the same to Niki.

'Lucy, I think we have been uncommonly fortunate in our choice of pets,' he declared.

'I think so to, James.' Lucy agreed.

April beamed at Niki who grinned back. She found she had no cares at that moment. She was simply happy to feel she belonged. It was almost as if they were one family. Well, they were family pets.

As the rocking of the coach lulled her into a half doze April wondered about the new house. Neither they nor Lucy had seen it yet. How would she and Niki be accommodated? There was a double giripet basket she had seen in Vernon's that would be heavenly. Of course anything would do as long as she was with Niki. That was all that mattered.

It was early evening when they reached the honeymoon house.

The coach came to rest at the end of a sweep of drive. Maitland stepped down and gave a hand to Lucy. 'Welcome to Hunter's Leigh,' my dear.

April and Niki scrambled down behind them.

It was a fine three-story country house of mellow stone with sash windows and tall chimneys, surrounded by broad lawns and gardens, nestling at the foot of a wooded hillside. The household staff, who had been sent on ahead to prepare the house, assembled by the steps of the front door to greet them.

'Oh, it's lovely!' Lucy exclaimed.

Maitland showed Lucy proudly around with April and Niki padding after them, peering about with excited interest and barely resisting the impulse to sniff round their new home like real dogs. It was light and spacious yet homely.

The master bedroom came almost last on the tour. A full-sized four-poster bed dominated the room.

'It's a make Mr Black recommended,' Maitland said with a smile. 'I'll show you its tricks later.'

There were interesting looking pulley mounts, slots and rings set in the posts. April glanced at Niki and grinned. There were great possibilities for fun with a bed like that.

Apart from the dressing room there was one other door leading off the bedroom.

‘This was once a maid’s room that I gave orders to be converted,’ Maitland explained, throwing it open. ‘I thought it would make a good place to keep the pets. It’s means they’ll always be handy when we need them...’

The walls were fitted with hooks already hung with pet harness, leashes, crops and other accessories. To one side was a large waist-high cage tall enough for a bondmaid to kneel or sit up in but of course not to stand. Inside it was laid out with a large mattress made up like a proper bed. It was connected via a low crawl tunnel built against the wall to a second cage in the other corner of the room, which enclosed a squat toilet and a kneeling shower pan. Over it was a mirror and shelf for brushes, soap and Jympson’s bondmaid products.

April and Niki gaped at it in delight. They had their own room and a real bed and en-suite bathroom. It was perfect.

They had a late supper, with April and Niki eating off bowls by their master and Mistress’s chairs and nibbling at scraps taken from their hands. Then they all went up to bed.

‘You know, my dear,’ Maitland said, ‘these two deserve a treat for bringing us together. I believe they have a passion for each other that they wish to re-consummate. What say we shall have our night together and they shall have theirs... unless you wish Carrie’s services?’

‘I think that is only fair,’ said Lucy with a smile.

April felt her heart skip a beat. She and Niki kissed the toes of Maitland’s boots.

‘Come along, then,’ he said.

They locked them into their cage. Excitedly April and Niki put their hands and feet through the bars and their paws and pin slippers were unlocked and hung up. They turned round and pushed their bottoms up to the bars and their chastity devices were removed. Lastly they put their tongues out for their nightly muting drops.

Their owners smiled at them, dimmed the lights and closed the door.

April looked at Niki, now naked but for her collar and free to be touched and touch in return as she wished, with tears of joy pricking her eyes. They embraced, breasts flattening against breasts and kissed, gently at first but with increasing passion. They dropped down onto their soft bed squirmed about, reversing positions until they were head to tail in a 69. The rest of the world faded from their concerns. All April knew was Niki’s body and the taste of Niki’s perfect hungry hot slot and the sensation of her tongue inside her and the explosions of pleasure as they came in waves again and again.

It was their honeymoon as well and they celebrated it as only bondmaids could.

The next day both owners and slaves rose late but very content. April and Niki found themselves exchanging shy foolish glances almost as often as their master and mistress. It felt good to be alive.

That afternoon their Maitland and Lucy took them for a walk along the winding wooded hillside path that ran past the back of the garden. April and Niki enjoyed the exercise, taking delight in being proper girldogs; sniffing around, running after thrown sticks with their breasts bouncing and bobbing merrily and cocking their legs to pee against trees. In the dappled light under the canopy of leaves the air was warm and flower scented, the only noise the buzz of insects and chirp of birds. It was a perfect rural tranquillity, without even the most distant sight or sound of aircraft or cars to spoil it.

Romping on a little ahead of Lucy and Maitland they came to a place where the hillside grew steeper and the limestone bones of the land were exposed. A small pool had formed at the foot of this ragged cliff face with a tiny stream flowing out of it. Before the pool the trees parted as they marched down the hillside to reveal a slice of the vale beyond with the river Riddle meandering in the distance...

April stopped and swayed, suddenly feeling sick and dizzy. The world seemed to be twisting about her as her sense of place readjusted. By her side Niki was looking about her and whimpering, shaking her head in disbelief at the perverse joke fate had played on them.

They both knew where they were now. This was the hill above Ramswold. A year ago they had tumbled through a cleft in the rock wall above them out of their world and into this: into a life of pain, humiliation and slavery.

Sudden acute searing longing overcame April. How could they have forgotten all they had left behind? Memories flooded back, calling to them. Sobbing and trembling they made a dash for the cliff and tried to climb it, scrabbling at the stones, yelping as the pins in their soles jabbed them. But their paw-sheathed hands could not get a grip and their pain-hobbled feet would not support them.

Panting they slid back down onto their knees, weeping in frustration. Home was just ten meters away but they could not reach it.

Lucy and Maitland came up to them at a run full of concern.

'Why, whatever is the matter with them?' Lucy said anxiously. 'Are they unwell?'

'What have you seen, Bella?' Maitland demanded, noting the line of her gaze. 'Something up there frightened you?'

Still feeling sick with shock, April pointed with her paw-sheathed hand and then scratched in the soft dark earth by the poolside: WAY HOME.

'She can write,' Lucy exclaimed in surprise.

'Your home?' Maitland asked. 'Up there? What do you mean, girl?'

Niki was drawing in the earth now. It was the Ramswold brand. She pointed to the mark on her rump and April's.

'You come from Ramswold? But your brands show you were marked in Brampton Wood.'

Niki changed the tail of the R to a B, put a cross by it and gave a whimper of pain.

'I think she's trying to say their brands have been changed,' Lucy said. 'Perhaps they were stolen.'

Niki nodded.

April wrote again in the earth: WE ARE OUTSIDERS.

Lucy started. 'Oh my! I never suspected. They seem so normal.'

'I've heard stories,' Maitland said. 'They're girls who come from some strange other land that nobody has ever seen, aren't they? I thought they were myths.'

'Well myth or not it's said they make excellent bondmaids,' Lucy said. 'But they also sometimes spread foreign ideas and seditious talk of rights and freedom for slaves. It should be marked in their papers.'

While the fire of independence still burned inside her there was something else April felt compelled to do. She wrote: APRIL and pointed to herself.

Niki wrote: NIKI and pointed to herself.

'Oh... are those your real names?' Lucy asked.

April nodded and pointed again to the cleft in the rocks above them and wrote: THE WAY TO OUR WORLD. WHERE WE WERE FREE.

Maitland was scowling in thought. 'We seem to have acquired stolen bondmaids, and potentially dangerous ones as well. This is a lot to think about.' He glanced uncertainly up at the rocky hillside. 'Perhaps we should be returning home.'

They clipped their leashes back on their miserable and confused pets and led them back the way they had come.

Dinner that night was subdued. It seemed all the joy had gone out of the house. As they ate their meal April was aware of the troubled glances their owners were giving them. They had gone from trusted pets to suspicious aliens in a few hours. They did not want to cause them trouble but they could not hide what they were any longer. The shock of finding themselves back in Ramswold within a short walk of the gateway to their former lives had revived too many memories to deny.

They were not called to serve in the master bedroom, as they would surely have done normally. Instead Maitland locked them into their cage once more. However as his hand went to the bottle of muting drops he hesitated and then withdrew it.

‘I think, whatever you are and wherever you come from, you have sense enough to know when you should speak and when you should be silent,’ he said. ‘Tomorrow we shall hear your story in full, then we shall decide what to do with you.’

April and Niki did not make love that night. They just lay in each other’s arms for comfort and reassurance, drifting in and out of uneasy sleep. For the first time in many months April dreamed of home.

It was in the early hours with the grey of dawn showing through the window that April cleared her throat and whispered huskily to Niki: ‘I love you.’

‘I love you too,’ Niki croaked back.

It was the first time she had heard her speak for over four months.

The words came slowly and falteringly as they forced their vocal chords and tongues to work again and remember how to shape them. Anything above a whisper was an effort.

‘This is a fucking irony,’ Niki said with bitter humour. ‘We get brought back here after all that time trying to escape back home just when we stopped thinking about it. Is somebody playing tricks on us?’

‘I know,’ April said. ‘I’d almost forgotten there was anything else. If we hadn’t come here I think I would have gone on being a happy pet. Now I remember what it’s like to be free again.’

‘Me too, but I still like the Master and Mistress. I don’t want to hurt them.’

‘Neither do I, but I also want to go home. Everybody there must think we’re dead by now. My parents must have been put through hell. We’ve got to go back for them if nothing else.’

Niki reached out and rattled the bars of their cage. ‘Except we’re not free, we’re still bondmaids. The Master and Mistress own us. It doesn’t matter what we want. Why should they let us go?’

Maitland and Lucy sat in his study with April and Niki kneeling on a matt before them. The door was locked to ensure no member of the household staff would overhear them.

‘Now,’ Maitland said sternly, ‘I give you permission to speak, but you must do so respectfully. You may tell us your story so we may understand fully what sort of creatures you are. Then we will decide what to do with you.’

Niki nudged April and whispered: ‘Go on...’

‘My name is April Harper and this is Niki King, Master. In our world we’re free people. We don’t go around naked and collared. About a year ago we were on a walking holiday in what we call the

Cotswold Hills and you call the Papswell Rises. In a lonely spot on the path we were seen and chased by a gang of men riding quad bikes and...'

'What are "quad-bikes"?' Lucy asked.

'Small four-wheeled machines you can sit on that move without horses or ponygirls to pull them, Mistress,' Niki explained.

'How can they move without the wind or an animal to power them?' Maitland asked suspiciously.

'They burn a sort of oil in an engine that creates heat and smoke that moves pistons that turn the wheels, Master. They're fast but rather noisy.'

'Remarkable. Go on...'

'To try to hide from the men,' April continued, 'we dived into this narrow crack in some rocks on the top of the hill. We had to leave our bags behind to squeeze through. Except it was not an ordinary crack in the rock. Somehow it took us out of our world and opened up here into Nethervale above the little pond. We were soon caught by some farm lads who realised we were strangers. They handed us over to Tipstaff Gurney. He put us in jail until we were seen by Sheriff Hawkins who sentenced us to be marked as outcasts and outsiders and to be kept as permanent bondmaids so we could not pass on the "heresy" of freedom, or go back home and tell anybody about Nethervale. Then we were put up for auction...'

Maitland and Lucy listened patiently as April recounted their adventures. She told of their service in Hardrack Hall, being stolen away to Flagewell Abbey and the sadistic Sisters of Theow, their happy time with Marvell's Bondmaid Carnival, how they came into the possession of Harry Carlo's hired thugs who in turn sold them on to Charlie who altered their brands, and finally how he put them up for auction in Flauntwell.

When she was done April's throat felt sore. Niki laid her head on her shoulder. Maitland looked at April and Niki with a deep frown.

Lucy said slowly: 'I have never heard a bondmaid speak for so long. In fact I've hardly ever heard them speak at all. With muting drops and gags I'm sure many people in Flauntwell think they can't speak at all. But hearing all this... well, it makes them seem almost like real people.'

Maitland stood up decisively. 'I shall go down to the town and check the facts of their story. I believe the Sheriff has no sessions here until next week, but I know Gurney fairly well. I'm sure I can get what I want from him. Meanwhile these two are to stay in their cage, Lucy.'

'Yes, James.'

After Lucy had locked April and Niki into their cage once more she hesitated.

‘I’m sorry for the way I have treated you,’ she said simply. ‘I never thought of your kind as people before now, with real feelings and worries. You were just woman-shaped animals without real souls, like the church teaches. You especially Carrie... I mean, Niki.’

‘No, Mistress,’ Niki said. ‘You were kind to me and I enjoyed serving you. I loved the things we did together. I’m a slutty masochist at heart. It’s just that another part of me wants to be free and remembers my family and friends back in our world. I want to go home.’

‘That my husband must decide,’ Lucy said.

‘It is your choice as well, Mistress,’ April said. ‘We belong to you to. You have a say.’

Lucy smiled faintly. ‘I can see why the Sheriff sentenced you to perpetual servitude. Those are dangerous ideas. I sympathise with you, but am his wife now and by law and custom I should submit to his will in all matters of importance.’

She left them alone to ponder their fate.

Lucy took them back down to the study again that afternoon. Their master had two piles of oddly coloured clothing and personal belonging laid out before him on the desk. It took April a moment to recognize them as their own clothes that had been stripped from them a year earlier.

‘I confirmed your story with Gurney,’ Maitland said. ‘He remembers your case very well, though not the exact place this doorway to your world lies, only that it was somewhere up on the hillside.’

‘I don’t think I ever described it in detail, Master,’ April volunteered. ‘We were very confused at the time.’

‘That may be understandable. Anyway, perhaps out of curiosity he still had your effects stored away. For a consideration I have obtained them.’ Gingerly he picked up April’s mobile phone. ‘What is this?’

‘A mobile phone: a device to talk to people over long distances, Master. But the battery must be flat by now.’

‘The battery?’

‘A way of storing electricity... that’s something like lightning... to give power, Master. But there would be no signal anyway... I mean it will not work here.’

‘Women carry such things in your world?’

‘Yes, Master.’

Maitland shook his head. ‘You are strange people with strange ideas. I can see why Hawkins sentenced you as he did. You serve a useful purpose as bondmaids or pets, abiding by our laws, but free you might cause trouble. The thought of this... this gateway to your world so close to this house troubles me. If you went back what else might be encouraged to come through? Some men on these

“quad-bike” machines you speak of, or people with “mobilephones”? What sort of upheaval might that bring about to the natural order of things? We cannot risk that. We will treat you well and we will not separate you. If you promise to hold your tongues in public we will not mute you again. But if you cause any trouble we will move away from the temptation of your home. One way or the other you will stay in Nethervale as bondmaids.’

‘James, please reconsider,’ Lucy interjected. ‘It would be cruel to keep them when they are so close to their home. You’ve heard them speak. They’ve committed no crime except to come here by accident. They... they’re like shipwrecked mariners. You told me how terrible that fate would be. If I was in their place would you not rescue me?’

‘But you are not like them, Lucy, and can never be so,’ Maitland declared. ‘They are outsider women from a different world. The judgement of the court was that they never be released in case they endanger Nethervale. Fortunately their kind seems fit to be our slaves and so that is what they will remain. That is my final word.’

It was teatime and April and Niki sat hunched together mournfully in their cage. Their master had ordered they be kept there until they accepted his judgement. Lucy, clearly torn between wifely obedience and her sympathy with April and Niki, had become coldly distant to Maitland.

At length April said: ‘I think now I get what really frightens people in Nethervale.’

‘What?’

‘Change. Nothing changes here, that’s why it’s so backward. I’m not even sure time passes normally. The seasons certainly don’t. And have we ever seen anybody really old or really young here? No children even. It’s like the country is going through the motions but never getting anywhere. We’ve been the ones to make things happen. Think of the people’s lives we’ve changed just by being here and being a bit different. Mrs Badger, Phoebe Balfour, Eloise Debawsher, the Marvell’s and now Lucy and Maitland.’

‘I suppose we have shaken things up a bit,’ Niki conceded. ‘And maybe you’re right and we are in some sort of kinky time warp. It just means we’ve got an eternity of living in cages to look forward to. We’ll know it even if the locals don’t.’

April sighed. ‘Yeah, that’s the downside.’

Niki stroked the bars. ‘Funny, two days ago I thought this looked like a suite at the Hilton.’

It was later that evening when they heard raised voices filtering through the door leading to the master bedroom. April felt a pang of guilt, knowing they had been responsible for the rift between husband and wife. More changes...

Suddenly the door was flung wide and Lucy, in her nightdress, entered. She opened their cage and said: ‘Come through to our room.’

Maitland, in a dressing gown, was pacing about the bedroom with an angry scowl on his face. As April and Niki knelt down on the rug by the bed Lucy said:

‘Look at them, James, look how sad they are. You showed Bella... April, great kindness when your rescued her that cold wet night.’

‘I would have rescued a dog on that night. I looked on her as a bondmaid, not as a person. When I was in town this morning I went to the library to look up more on outsiders. That is how it has always been with them. They make good bondmaids and are happy to be so.’

‘Well I believe they are as good as me,’ Lucy persisted, ‘but for circumstance I could be either one of them.’

‘You’re simply feeling guilty because now you’ve heard them speak you think they are like us and you’ve mistreated them.’

‘Yes, because I have. I had always shied away from owning a bondmaid until Nesta talked me into it. Now I know why. Deep down I knew it was wrong!’

‘They enjoy being treated like that. It comes naturally to them. They admit it!’

‘They have no choice but to find some joy where they can. Then they become prisoners of ritual and tradition, as we all are, and think it proper.’

‘Would you free all bondmaids then?’

Lucy took a deep breath. ‘Yes, I would. And I will start with these two.’

April and Niki exchanged looks of surprise. They’d never heard that before in Nethervale.

Maitland looked despairing and angry. ‘That is dangerous talk, Lucy. They have infected you with their alien ideas. More proof that they must be kept as they are.’

‘How will you stop me freeing them? Beat me? Chain me up?’

‘I don’t want to talk of such things.’

‘Will you bend me to your will like a bondmaid?’

‘You are not a bondmaid!’

‘But I could be so easily. If I break the law I might be sentenced to servitude. The church says that then some miraculous transformation takes place and I become less than human, but I would still be the same person. Is that what men fear or what you secretly want in a lady? If there were no bondmaids would you make us slaves in their place? If bondmaids are as human as a lady then a lady can be a bondmaid.’

‘You are trying my patience, Lucy. They are going back in their cage and will be muted. But first I will thrash them for filling your mind with nonsense!’

‘Then mute and thrash me with them, for they are my sisters!’

‘Don’t you dare say such a thing!’

Blushing with fear and anger, Lucy strode into the cage room and returned a moment late with a crop and the bottle of muting drops. Before Maitland could believe what she was doing she had dropped some onto her tongue and then swallowed. She gasped and swayed for a moment, then she handed her husband the crop. Pulling her nightgown up to her waist she knelt down on the end of the bed with her bared bottom facing him.

For a moment Maitland gaped at her and then at the whip in his hand. Then he gritted his teeth. ‘As you wish, Lucy! But you who have brought her to this shall suffer as well!’

Grabbing April and Niki by the hair he hauled them to their feet so their pin slippers jabbed into their soles and pushed them against the posts at the foot of the bed. Hinged hoops swung out of recesses and closed about their necks. They scrabbled ineffectually at the posts at their backs with their pawed hands for balance as they bent their knees and tried to stand on their toes to prevent the hoops digging painfully into their necks.

Seeing what her husband was doing to them Lucy started to rise but he cuffed her back down. ‘Stay in your chosen place, madam! This is how bondmaids are punished.’ He looked back at April struggling to stay on her toes. ‘I should never have interfered,’ he said bitterly. ‘Black was right to leave you out in the rain. Your sort deserve to suffer!’

Picking up the Jympson’s bottle he squeezed April and Niki’s jaws open and muted them. ‘Now you are all as dumb as the beasts in the field.’

Maitland took up the crop, turned to Lucy and felt the unblemished smoothness of the proffered target. Lucy trembled at his touch but held her position.

He delivered a dozen hard strokes across his wife’s pale buttocks and the cracks echoing round the room. Each one made her soft cheeks distort and ripple and left a searing red stripe in its wake. Her body was wracked by incoherent gurgles and yelps of pain until the last blow fell, when Lucy slowly rolled onto her side sobbing freely, curling up into a ball, her bottom glowing and her pretty face red, tear-streaked and contorted with pain.

However Maitland was not finished yet. As he went to the cage room he said: ‘You wish to be treated like a bondmaid then so you shall, and your sisters shall be your millstones!’

As she struggled to stay upright and ease the pressure of the hoop on her throat April sobbed in fear and gut-wrenching dismay. She had thought Maitland was a firm but fair master. She’d been happy to submit to him. Now he seemed to have gone mad... and she feared it was all her fault. She and Niki were agents of change in a world that was hidebound and virtually immutable. They had brought Lucy

and Maitland together and now they were tearing themselves apart before their eyes, all because of them. What monster had they created?

April gasped as Maitland screwed her with brutal force, snarling into her face as he did so. His bare chest ground against her breasts. He was now as naked as she was.

She hung by her cuffed wrists, stretched up above her head, against the bedpost, facing outwards from the foot of the bed. A dildo rod up her rear multiplied the pain. It passed through a slot cut in the post and was free to pivot vertically. Her legs had been pulled wide and bent back and up where they were cuffed behind the post to a ring on the other end of the dildo. This forced her body into an exaggerated outward bow, thrusting out her breasts and pulling down hard on her arms.

Niki was secured to the other post in an identical fashion. The ropes they were suspended from ran through pulleys at the top of the posts and then angled downwards to the cuffs that enclosed Lucy's wrists. She hung naked and spreadeagled between the bedposts, her legs spread and ankles cuffed and roped to rings at the base of the posts. Such was the tension on her bonds that her feet did not touch the floor. As Maitland had promised, April and Niki would be her millstones as the weight of their bodies drew her painfully tight and wide.

Maitland pulled out of April's sex trailing a string of her juices on the head of his cock and used the crop on her breasts again, still stinging from the last set of stripes he had laid across them, making them shiver and bounce.

'Are you satisfied I am treating you all alike?' Maitland asked Lucy. 'I have not spent in them yet. I choose to spread my pleasure around. Have you had enough of being treated like a bondmaid yet?'

Lucy lifted her chin from her trembling chest, shiny with her tear drips and shook her head feebly.

'Then I shall continue with this rare sport!'

With his stiff shiny cock standing out before him he moved across to Niki and began to lash her breasts and belly. Niki yelped and whimpered as she twisted and squirmed about her impaling rod. April winced with every crack of leather on flesh.

Taking her by the hips Maitland rammed his cock into Niki's gaping sex.

'If I dip my shaft in them and then into you what does it matter?' he grated. 'By your reasoning you three are all the same to me. Just cunnies to be used as I wish.'

He pulled out of Niki and moved to stand in front of his wife. Cruelly he laid his crop across her neatly rounded breasts, drawn high by the tension on her arms. Through eyes bleary with tears April watched them bounce and jiggle.

Then Maitland rammed into her golden-crowned sex, making her throw her head back and whimper at his animal force. 'Can you feel their juices on my shaft? Is this what you wanted? Oh, not hard

enough for you? What about your rear? Shall I finish with your tightest orifice? I have not had you there yet. At least my manhood is well lubricated now.'

He pulled out and moved round to climb onto the bed and kneel behind Lucy's trembling body. Slapping her already red-raw bottom he steered his cockhead into her anus and thrust all the way up inside her. Lucy's eyes bulged and a strangled shriek came from her muted lips as she was sodomized.

'Had enough?' Maitland growled in her ear as he reamed her entrails. 'Will you give up this madness and obey me now?'

Please stop being so brave, April begged silently. We're not worth it.

But Lucy shook her head.

Maitland reached round and clasped her sore breasts and pummelled into her, lifting her in her bonds so that April and Niki jerked further down and outwards. Lucy moaned in pain and a stream of hot pee spurted from her cleft and splattered across the rug.

Then their hips seemed to be moving in time but in opposite directions, her bottom banging against his rampant penis even as it seemed about to cleave it in two. April saw the look on their faces as they were caught up in the sudden primitive urge that sent spasms and shudders through the bodies. Nature could not be denied. Out of cruelty and pain came the most perfect joy.

Maitland filled his wife's bottom with his seed and then collapsed against her sweating, shivering, tormented, strung-out body, hugging her to him as their combined weight pulled April and Niki's arms up tighter to their pulleys. There was a long silence save for his unsteady breathing and her almost inaudible sobs.

In that strange stillness April felt some presence depart from the room, exorcised by pain and passion.

Finally in a quiet, broken voice Maitland said: 'My poor dear brave Lucy... what have I done? I love you whatever you believe. You've beaten me. If it means so much to you they can go free.'

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

It was two days later.

Maitland and Lucy led April and Niki by their leashes along the woodland path. Maitland also carried a carpetbag with him.

When they reached the pool under the cliff, Lucy unclipped their leashes. Methodically she unlocked and removed their paws and pin boots and chastity devices. Lastly she unlocked their collars. For the first time in a year they were completely unrestrained or confined.

Unsteadily they stood upright on two legs, as they had not done in many months. They were dogpets no longer. With their collars gone they felt strangely light-headed.

Maitland undid the carpetbag and handed them their boots and clothes. With clumsy fingers they pulled them on, fumbling with the fastenings, the fabrics feeling hot and strange against their skin. Finally they were dressed, their twenty-first century walking gear of shorts, vest-tops and ankle boots contrasting strangely with Maitland and Lucy's costumes. It was a sign of the gulf between them that had not been there when they had been their naked girlpets just minutes before.

'Well, we'll be going,' April said awkwardly. How did newly-freed slaves say goodbye to their former owners? 'Thank you.'

'I am sorry again for how I treated you, girl... April,' Maitland said humbly.

'You had a right to do what you liked with us, master,' April said, not wanting to see the pain in his face again. 'You saved me first. It all worked out in the end.'

'I have a right to beat my wife, but that does not mean I should have done so just because she disagrees with me,' Maitland replied. 'It was fear I think that drove me, but it was still wrong. That she can find it in her heart to understand and even to forgive me after what I did is beyond what I deserve. Lucy has taught me a great lesson about the courage of conviction.'

Standing at his side, Lucy slipped her hand into his and squeezed, then she smiled at April and Niki. 'And I've learned from the two of you a little what it feels like to be a bondmaid. It's complicated because some of it I enjoyed... but that's not your concern any longer. You've both done me a great service and I will never forget you, but now you must go home. '

Awkwardly Maitland held out his hand and they shook it. Then they hugged and kissed Lucy.

Turning to the rocky slope they scrambled upwards while Maitland and Lucy looked on.

With every step April seemed to feel anticipation building around her. This would work she knew it. They would get back home.

There was the cleft in front of them, a mere crack in the rock. Yet as she reached out it seemed to spread. She shouldered her way into it with Niki at her heels. The cleft did not seem wide enough yet it

grew ahead of her as she pushed deeper. There was a moment of closeness and resistance like fighting their way along a birthing passage, and then with a final surge they were through and tumbling out the other side into the sunlight and onto close green grass. As they fell they collided with a pair of backpacks lying discarded by the mouth of the cleft.

Their backpacks...

The roar of engines and petrol fumes filled the air as figures loomed over them.

‘Got ‘em!’ a man said triumphantly as a hand grasped April by the hair.

‘Thought you could hide from us, did you sluts?’ said another, grabbing Niki.

Shocked and dizzy they were hauled to their feet and their arms were held pinioned behind them. Four large men all dressed in dark studded leathers and crash helmets with tinted visors, from under which long greying straggling hair and beards flowed, surrounded them. They reeked of beer and stale cigarette smoke. Behind the men a ring of four quad bikes growled and puttered.

‘Oh, fuck, fuck, fuck...’ groaned Niki in disbelief.

‘That’s the idea, girlie,’ said the quad biker who was looking April up and down closely. She saw him grin wolfishly.

‘No, please don’t...’ April began, shaking her head.

With a ripping sound the man tore a strip off a reel of silver repair tape that hung from his belt and plastered it across April’s mouth. The man beside him did the same for Niki.

The thought penetrated April’s still dazed senses that they had come prepared.

‘I like to hear girlies squeal, but not outside,’ the first biker said. ‘It gets you noticed.’ He ripped off more lengths of tape. April and Niki’s wrist were crossed and taped behind them. While they were held firmly he slid his hands into the waistband of April’s shorts.

‘Now let’s see what cuts of cunt meat we’ve got here...’

‘Looks pretty prime to me,’ the man holding April said.

They tore the girls’ shorts and panties down, slapping their thighs to discourage kicking, and pulled them off over their boots, leaving them naked between hips and sock tops.

‘Hey, bare as a baby’s ass and smooth as silk!’ he said appreciatively, pinching and cupping April’s depilated vulva.

‘Looks like they’ve had some rings in them not long ago,’ the second said, fingering the piercing holes in Niki’s labia and ignoring her muffled grunt of protest.

‘Nice tattoos...’ said the man holding April, twirling her round so the others could admire the BW scar brand on her rump.

‘We’ve got us some choice sluts here,’ the first biker declared. ‘Let’s take ‘em back to the ranch and have some fun. Get the ropes... no, get the wires...’

Coils of wire were taken from two of the quad bike’s toolboxes and one end of each was hooked to their baggage frames. The rest, about three metres, was unreeled and brought over to April and Niki. The men started to make nooses out of the ends.

‘No, not for their necks,’ said the first biker. ‘These sluts deserve something special...’

They pulled their legs wide and threaded the wire painfully through their pierced labia, then twisted the ends together. April and Niki whimpered as the tightening wire pinched their flesh, bringing tears to their eyes.

‘Now you’re going to come along with us and join our screwfest,’ the leader said.

The bikers gathered up April and Niki’s discard clothes and backpacks and then re-mounted their machines.

With revving engines they started down the hill towards a line of trees. As the wires from the two machines to which April and Niki were so intimately fastened grew taut their labia stretched like pink tongues. Muffled yelps of fear and pain sounded from behind their gags as they jerked forward to save their flesh from being torn.

With their bare bottoms twinkling, April and Niki stumbled helplessly along after their new captors.

THE END

The Bondmaid saga will conclude with “THE BONDMAIDS’ RETURN”